

May 1945

Fourth International

"Peace" Comes to Europe

- *An Editorial* -

- USSR and Stalinism. *By Gabriel*
Socialism Reaffirmed—III. *By Lily Roy*
Stalinist Policy During the War *By Spero*
Position of SWP Minority *By Felix Morrow*
-

The Arsenal of Marxism

Disarmament and the United States of Europe

By LEON TROTSKY

Twenty Cents

Manager's Column

Among the thousands of workers reading THE MILITANT are many now becoming interested in FOURTH INTERNATIONAL. Those agents alert to this rich source of subscriptions are reporting success. Herb Newell of Allentown writes: "We revisited a new MILITANT subscriber who was very interested the first time he was contacted. Our conversation was very good. He appreciates the problems facing the workers and realizes the necessity for a program. When we told him about FOURTH INTERNATIONAL, he eagerly subscribed. Enclosed is his subscription."

* * *

Maggie McGowan of Toledo also reports FOURTH INTERNATIONAL subscription sales among new readers of THE MILITANT: "One of our subscribers in the shop wanted to take advantage of the special F.I. offer, but he lost his card. So he asked one of the comrades in the plant to send it in for him with an explanation. Enclosed is \$3. He wants a one-year subscription for himself and one for his friend in the shop."

* * *

The branches are doing a good job in building up newsstand sales. Mike Bartell of Chicago writes: "Please send us 50 more copies of the April F.I. immediately. Comrade Moran has placed the F.I. on nine additional newsstands with the result that we have run short. We can assure you of a considerable increase in our F.I. bundle every month from now on."

"Also please send us ten copies of the March issue since we have also run out of those."

* * *

R. Haddon of San Francisco reports her plans for building up newsstand sales: "If you can spare them, we should like to have about 50 to 75 copies of the impressive F.I. sub-blurb. We should like to attach these to newsstand copies of the magazine and see if we can't get some subs out of our regular readers who purchase the magazine off the stands. We are especially interested in hitting our new Berkeley readers and consider this a method of finding out who reads our magazine over there. Also we plan to place THE MILITANT on some stands in the East Bay just as soon as we can."

This request was received from Al Lynn of Los Angeles: "... In ad-

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Managing Editor: E. R. FRANK

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dition to the 40 copies which will probably just fill out the gap on the stands, I wish that you would send another 10 as I think that we may run short due to the contents of the magazine and the fact that we intend to have a lecture by Comrade Murry on the USSR."

Recently an F.I. subscriber came

into our office to get a one-year subscription for his Indian friend in Boston. He informed us that he thinks his friend is interested in the magazine because of the material it carries on India. He continued, "My own specialty is India and frankly speaking, your magazine is the only one in the country that

carried good documentary material on India."

* * *

Other readers comment about FOURTH INTERNATIONAL.

F. B. of Detroit: "Month after month the FOURTH INTERNATIONAL continues to be the best analytical periodical in the country, and the March issue is certainly no exception. Since I first began reading it late in 1942 I have watched historical events repeatedly verify the correctness of the analyses as they appeared months previously in the F.I. No one can expect better proof than this."

"In the March issue the article that was most inspiring was the one on the European Theses. It is heartening to see how close is the stand of the European section of the Fourth International to that of the American section. This fact points to the correctness of the stand of the Socialist Workers Party on the European situation."

J. K. of New York: "The Simmons article in your April issue rings the bell. The working stiff is being subjected to a deluge of hate propaganda and hysterical nationalism and material like Simmons' is very necessary to arm the thinking workers who read FOURTH INTERNATIONAL."

"I also enjoyed reading Trotsky's article on Spain. That should be scored and underscored and circulated all through Europe where once again the same problem faces the working class."

"Can I get the early bound volumes of the F.I.—those that appeared around 1934-35?"

(Bound volumes of FOURTH INTERNATIONAL, then called NEW INTERNATIONAL, for 1934-35 are no longer available. We have single issues for these years containing articles by Marx, Engels, Lenin and Trotsky, which can be purchased for 40c each.)

* * *

N. Collins, our agent in San Diego, informs us that FOURTH INTERNATIONAL can now be purchased at 242 Broadway where THE MILITANT is sold.

* * *

A reader of FOURTH INTERNATIONAL in Canada is passing his copy of the magazine on to others. He says: "The February magazine interested me very much and I have already passed it on to certain members of Parliament in the C.C.F. Party. They are very interested. They are also reading 'Third International After Lenin.' It is a good book."

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FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

VOLUME 6

MAY 1945

NUMBER 5

REVIEW OF THE MONTH

Imperialist Peace and the Perspectives of Capitalist

Reconstruction for "Liberated" Europe—

The Fourth International on

May Day, 1945

The End of World War II on the European Continent

**"PEACE" COMES
TO EUROPE**

The belligerents in the second world slaughter have succeeded in reaching a clear cut military decision. Germany has been completely crushed. On the continent of Europe the agony of the imperialist war is thus concluded; the agony of the imperialist "peace" has begun. Amid the blaring trumpets of victory, the "democratic" imperialists are boasting that "civilization has been saved." They mean of course that the world still remains safe for capitalism. Having survived the war, they confidently expect to survive the peace as well. But what does this mean in reality?

The answer to this question is to be found in Europe. For the second time within twenty-five years, Europe which emerged so terribly impoverished from the war of 1914-18 is confronted with the problem of "reconstruction." Post-Versailles Europe was able to attain temporary stabilization within 5 years, that is by 1924. But even then, this postwar stabilization of capitalism was due primarily to the absence of mature and genuine proletarian parties in the advanced countries of Europe. World imperialism was thereby enabled to dam up the first wave of the proletarian revolution within the boundaries of the former Czarist empire.

The objective conditions under which the work of capitalist "restoration" must be conducted in the period ahead, however, differ not only quantitatively but qualitatively from the objective conditions in the period of 1918-24. A brief summary will serve to illustrate the new and unprecedented situation.

Europe entered the first imperialist war after decades of unbroken peace, with huge reserves of wealth and the highest living standards in its history. The arena of military operations at that time was restricted to a relatively small sector of the European continent. France and Belgium were the main battlegrounds. By and large, the direct impact of the war was felt by the predominantly agricultural areas of France. The most industrialized sections of Europe, first and foremost Germany, while gravely impaired, could be set in order again. The colonies, another vital sector of the world capitalist system, remained virtually immune. As a matter of fact many of these colonies underwent a certain development in wartime. As a consequence post-Versailles Europe could draw from the outset

not only upon its industrial apparatus at home but also upon the raw materials, foodstuffs and other reserves of the colonial empires. Moreover, in the very course of the first imperialist war key sections of the capitalist world economy went through a period of unparalleled expansion.

**UNREPEATABLE
CIRCUMSTANCES**

First and foremost there was, of course, America. Freed from the competition of its European rivals, with the war market in Europe representing an unlimited and highly profitable outlet, with the colossal resources of the North American continent to draw upon, US imperialism developed its productive forces to the highest point attained under capitalism. In Asia, too, capitalist economy was able to record important advances through the hot-house development of Japan's industries. And in Europe itself, the neutral countries like Denmark, Holland, the Scandinavian countries, and even backward Spain, passed through a period of war prosperity.

Finally the bourgeoisies of the victor countries in Europe—England and France—themselves disposed of sufficient resources, supplemented by the pillage of Germany, to postpone for almost two years the inevitable economic crisis resulting from the war. By extending the artificial war prosperity into the initial post-war period they were thus able to weather the highly critical stage of demobilization and reconversion to peacetime production. The combination of all these factors, in the absence of genuine revolutionary parties, made possible the post-Versailles stabilization of Europe. And even then it took half a decade. And even then this stabilization was so temporary that within four years, by 1929, Europe and the whole world were convulsed by the most terrible economic crisis and depression.

Not a single one of the above-listed favorable conditions obtains today.

When the continent was again plunged into the whirlpool of war in 1939, European economy as a whole was in a chaotic condition. The war has completed the devastation of the preceding peacetime period. The arena of military operations embraced the entire continent. Europe's productive apparatus has been gutted. Even insular England has not been spared, suffering war damage which in all likelihood equals and even exceeds the 1914-18 devastation of France. The country that has suffered the most in point of destruction of the productive apparatus is unquestionably Germany, with the rest of the continent not far behind.

BALANCE SHEET OF THE WAR

On May 6 the *New York Times* summed up the situation as follows: "Economically, the basis of Europe's prewar economy is gone." The May issue of *Fortune* magazine, one of the Big Business organs in the US, flatly states that not only the economic basis of capitalism in Europe but its financial system and political superstructure lie in ruins. "This time," says *Fortune*, "the foremost war victim is Europe's economic system. Its social, technological, financial order has to be restored in toto." In other words, it is not a question of capital "repairs" but of rebuilding from the ground up.

Nor has Europe's colonial empire remained intact. As a matter of fact, the colonies have this time served as one of the main arenas of struggle. The destruction in the Orient has been on a scale comparable to that in the Occident. It will take years to bring back the colonies to their prewar levels of production. Instead of aiding in Europe's reconstruction, the colonies themselves are in need of rehabilitation. Furthermore the war in the Far East still continues.

The expansion of America's productive capacity in the present war constitutes in essence a by-product of production for war. Nothing could be falsier than the idea that this capitalist colossus has grown richer in this war, just as it did in the last. The monopolies and the other war profiteers have indeed benefited, but the country as a whole has been gravely strained by the war. The current prosperity is a fictitious one. And while the American imperialists possess the reserves with which to prolong the artificial boom of the war into the postwar period, such a repetition of the maneuver employed by the European bourgeoisies in the post-Versailles epoch will only render the inescapable economic crisis all the more catastrophic when it does erupt in this country. So far as Europe is concerned the crisis has long been raging there, and the lowest depths have not yet been plumbed. It is an economic crisis whose scope and intensity may well lead to consequences that will match the suffering and havoc of the war itself.

CAPITALIST BARBARISM

In the midst of charred ruins and famine, unemployment is hitting all-time highs in such countries as France and Italy. The ranks of the unemployed are dwarfed by still another vast army of paupers, the dispossessed populations of wrecked cities and villages, the "freed" slave laborers of Germany, and the bulk of Germany's own population of 80 millions who have been designated in advance as slaves by the Big Three conferees at Teheran and Crimea. Armies of homeless children are now a commonplace. Their number in France is estimated at half a million; dispatches from Italy paint a picture no less gruesome. The situation in Germany beggars description.

Transplanted to "civilized" Europe today are conditions of mass degradation and misery that have hitherto been witnessed under barbarous Asiatic regimes. That is how far Europe has been hurled back by the war.

The reports of Nazi horror camps, undeniably genuine, constitute only a segment of the horror that Europe has already gone through, and even ghastlier horrors ahead. Reports from Europe blandly admit that the coming winter on the continent will be far worse than at any time during the war itself. The article from May issue of *Fortune* reiterates that conditions in Europe at peace will be far worse than they were under Nazi occupation, and then goes on to quote "a most distinguished authority" who said:

"In the British and American area of occupation the conditions for the people will be those of a sweatbox, to say it politely."

Allied propaganda concerning Nazi atrocities is intended to prepare public opinion not only for the savage peace terms for Germany agreed upon by the "Big Three" at Crimea but also for the even vaster abominations of their projected "sweatbox" in Europe.

Under far more favorable conditions it proved impossible for the continent as a whole during the post-Versailles era to return to the pre-1914 levels of production. After a shortlived period of stabilization, capitalist Europe plunged into a crisis which terminated in war. In view of the existing situation what sort of stabilization can Europe possibly look forward to under the decayed capitalist system? The only conceivable "stabilization" would have as its basis greatly reduced levels of production, with the toiling people reduced to the status of coolies—and all this solely in preparation for other crises and wars.

THE ONLY WAY OUT

The negative and destructive aspects of capitalism in every sphere of social life have thus come to the fore as a result of the second slaughter of the peoples. All the contradictions, evils and crimes of capitalism have become so monstrously aggravated and multiplied that the very physical survival of the peoples demands its immediate abolition. The very scope of the ruin compels that steps toward socialism be taken without delay. There is no other way for Europe to rise again; there is no other way of salvaging the continent ruined by the war; there is no other way of alleviating the sufferings and tortures of the toilers and the exploited.

Once the hypnosis of the war is dispelled, it will no longer be possible for the imperialist victors and their Stalinist accomplices to hide the grim truth. The full impact of the war and its consequences upon the consciousness of the duped and tortured millions still lies ahead. The great teachers of revolutionary Marxism warned consistently that under capitalism society was confronted with the alternative: advancement through socialism or regression into barbarism. This scientifically grounded forecast is the reality of our generation. Plunged headlong into capitalist barbarism, the peoples of Europe and of the whole world must seek and can find salvation only through socialism.

The Fourth International on May Day 1945

THE ADVANTAGES OF TROTSKYISM

In May 1940, five years ago, the Emergency Conference of the Fourth International adopted its historic *Manifesto on the Imperialist War and the Proletarian Revolution*. It was the last great programmatic document written by Leon Trotsky. In it he made the following appraisal of the world movement which he founded:

... It is impermissible to put on the same plane the present revolutionary vanguard with those isolated internationalists who raised their voices at the outbreak of the last war. Only the Russian party of the Bolsheviks represented a revolutionary force at that time. But even the latter, in its overwhelming majority failed, except for a small emigre group around Lenin, to shed its national narrowness and to rise to the perspective of the world revolution.

The Fourth International in numbers and especially in preparation possesses infinite advantages over its predecessors at the beginning of the last war. The Fourth International is the direct heir of Bolshevism in its flower. The Fourth International has absorbed the tradition of the October Revolution and has transmuted into theory the experience of the richest historical period between the two imperialist wars. It has faith in itself and its future.

On May Day 1945, the day which for more than half a

century has symbolized the international solidarity of the working class and the struggle for the communist future of mankind, we the followers of Leon Trotsky can proudly record the undeniable great strides achieved by world Trotskyism. No other movement has withstood the test of the second imperialist war.

GROWTH OF THE CADRES

In country after country the organizations of the Fourth International are emerging from the crucible of the war much stronger than they entered it. The Fourth International was the only world organization that met on the eve of the war. It was the only world working class organization that was able to convene international conferences in the course of the war. The first of these was the Emergency Conference held in May 1940; the second was the European Conference which met in France in February 1944 under the very noses of the Gestapo.

In the very midst of the war fusions took place of Trotskyist groups into unified parties, among them the Revolutionary Communist Party of Great Britain, the Bolshevik-Leninist Party of India and Ceylon, and most recently, the Internationalist Communist Party of France. Throughout, our comrades in India and France have had to conduct their activities, as they still do, under conditions of illegality.

In other countries where the original cadres were decimated by the Nazi executioners, the movement has been reconstituted. The revolutionary Communist Party of Belgium and the reorganization of our Greek thinkers are among the sections that have passed through this experience.

Some groups, like the German and Spanish, have continued their work under conditions of emigration—in many instances in Nazi-occupied Europe.

Among the most significant conquests of the world Trotskyist movement are its sections in the colonies and semi-colonies: India, China, Indo-China, Egypt, South Africa, Palestine, Cuba, Mexico, Chile and other lands.

Revivals of working class movements are swiftly followed by news of the formation of Trotskyist groups where none had existed previously. Thus, shortly after the downfall of Italian fascism, we received word of Italian Trotskyists in Southern Italy. We confidently expect in the near future to hear from our co-thinkers in Northern Italy.

GRANITE FOUNDATIONS OF MARXIST THEORY

The newspapers, theoretical organs and publications of the Trotskyists appear in many languages. The readers of our magazine have had the opportunity to acquaint themselves with the Marxist documents of our Indian and European comrades. These writings faithfully reflect the great vitality of the respective sections of the Fourth International and the unbreakable ideological bonds between them.

The unity of the world Trotskyist movement is sealed by the revolutionary will to struggle, indomitable perseverance, unswerving loyalty, iron discipline and the glorious tradition of struggle that they share in common. It can be said without any fear of exaggeration that no other political movement in history has ever faced such odds and withstood such persecution as have the Trotskyists.

The bourgeoisie, whether "democratic" or fascist, does not mistake its mortal enemies. The "democratic" jailers in the USA kept guard over 18 leaders of the American Trotskyist movement, who were sentenced for their opposition to imperialist war on the day this country entered the conflict. Churchill's

police clapped the leaders of the English Trotskyists in prison at the first favorable opportunity. Our Indian co-thinkers suffered the same fate at the hands of the colonial despots. Both the Gestapo and the GPU have ruthlessly hounded the Trotskyists.

OUR MARTYRS

The list of our martyrs is very long. Among those who fell in the course of the second world war while fighting under the banner of the world revolution are:

Leon Trotsky, murdered by Stalin's GPU, August 20, 1940.

Robert Sheldon Harte, member of Socialist Workers Party, US; slain by the GPU in Mexico, May 24, 1940.

Comrades Renery, Van Belle and Lemmens, members of the Revolutionary Socialist Party of Belgium, murdered by Hitler's Gestapo in 1943.

Leon Lesoil, Belgian Trotskyist leader, died in a Nazi concentration camp, 1942.

Eleven members of the Archeo-Marxist Party of Greece; seven, including **General Secretary Vite**, shot in Athens and four executed in Salonika by Nazi firing squads, 1944.

C. Poulipoulis, Secretary of the Greek Trotskyist Party, and two other leaders, shot by Nazi firing squads in 1943.

Wintley, leader of the German Trotskyist group in France, executed by the Nazis, 1944.

Sixty-five comrades who edited *Der Arbeiter* (The Worker) including 30 German soldiers—arrested in Brittany in October, 1943, deported and murdered by the Nazis.

Jean Meichler, former manager of *Unser Wort*, killed by the Nazis in Paris, 1941.

Marc Bourhis, former secretary of Concarneau district of the French Internationalist Communist Party, shot by the Nazis in October 1941.

Guegen, former Communist Party Mayor of Concarneau, who joined the Trotskyist movement—shot by the Nazis in 1941.

Timbaud, member of French Internationalist Communist Party, slain by Nazis in October, 1941.

Lebacher, young Trotskyist worker of Drancy, France, brutally tortured and murdered by the Gestapo.

Thiolon, a teacher in the 11th Arrondissement, Paris, murdered by the Gestapo.

Van Hulst, young Trotskyist worker of Suresnes, slain by the Gestapo in France.

Cruau, regional leader of the Trotskyist movement in Nantes, slain by the Gestapo.

Jules Joffe, member of the French Internationalist Communist Party, shot by Nazis, 1942.

Lucian Brawlowski and Belle Lampert, arrested with Comrade Joffe; fate unknown.

In his May 1940 Manifesto, Leon Trotsky wrote:

At the beginning of the new revolution, the opportunists will once again strive, just as they did a quarter of a century ago, to imbue the workers with the idea that it is impossible to build socialism on ruins and devastation. As if the proletariat is free to choose! It is necessary to build on those foundations which history provides.

The Fourth International marches forward and will conquer because it is consciously carrying out the task inexorably posed by history: the organization of the working class for the conquest of political power and the establishment of socialism throughout the world.

For a Clear and Consistent Policy on the Question of the USSR and on Stalinism

By GABRIEL

The following article is another contribution by a European comrade to the *Fourth International* discussion of the question of the Soviet Union and the Stalinist bureaucracy.—Ed.

* * *

The nature of the USSR, the question of its defense as well as the attitude toward the Stalinist bureaucracy have time and again aroused sharp discussion among us. Even before the war these questions began to seriously disturb the ideological homogeneity of our ranks. The war, by dragging the USSR into its vortex and by accelerating the bureaucratic and chauvinist degeneration of Stalinism, could not fail to aggravate this situation.

Today on the eve of the termination of the imperialist conflict in Europe and at the beginning of a new revolutionary period, it is imperative for the proletarian vanguard to adopt a perfectly clear and consistent position on the question of the USSR and on Stalinism. Failing this we incur the risk of having all our political *activity* compromised and our organizational unity threatened at every moment by inevitable splits.

1. The Nature of the USSR

The discussions among us have often been complicated on the one hand by the use of different terminology to designate the same political *tasks* and on the other hand by the lack of concrete data concerning the real economic and political life in the USSR. The most diverse criteria have been employed by some in determining the nature of the USSR and they have therefore arrived at the most diverse conclusions. For those who continue to remain true to the spirit, if not the letter, of Trotsky's thought, the question of the class nature of the Soviet Union can be resolved only as follows:

The definition of existing social relations in the USSR remains as the point of departure for a sociological definition of that country. What are the property forms, and what are the relationships between the different social categories (class relations) in the USSR—these are the only valid *criteria* for Marxists desirous of defining the nature of the USSR scientifically. There is virtually unanimous agreement in our ranks on defining the property forms in the USSR as statified property. Differences exist on the meaning and the flux of this statification.

For us such a property regime:

a) can emerge only from a proletarian revolution which alone is capable of expropriating private property on such an extensive scale;

b) can maintain itself only by evolving in the direction of socialism through the world proletarian revolution;

c) cannot be incorporated again as it is in the capitalist system. In the event that a prolonged retardation of the world revolution results in the reintegration of the USSR in the capitalist system, the statified property in that country will be replaced by private property (e.g., the destruction by the Germans

of Russian statification in the Ukraine). This integration would at the same time mean the wholesale destruction of the Soviet productive forces, including the working class population which grew as a result of statification, planned production and the monopoly of foreign trade.

To believe that capitalism is capable of statifying property on as large a scale as in the USSR, and thus assuring—in the present *imperialist phase* to boot—the development of the productive forces is to believe that capitalism is capable of changing its very nature. Thus every attempt to identify the property regime in the USSR as state capitalism, or to maintain that this regime as it exists can be incorporated by a “cold method” in a capitalist regime, flows from a total misconception of the nature of capitalism. However, the bare fact of statification of property does not automatically resolve the problem of the existing class relations in the USSR.

We grant in general that on the basis of the backwardness of the Soviet Union and its imperialist encirclement, the bureaucratic caste of state functionaries and economic technicians—who at the beginning of the revolution represented a necessary evil and who were destined to disappear to the degree that the economic and cultural progress of the Soviet masses (thanks to the assistance rendered by the world revolution) would render them fitted for the tasks of administration—this bureaucratic caste, we repeat, has assumed quantitatively an unforeseen political and social importance and has “in some ways” (Trotsky) appropriated the state and therefore the statified property.

What does this social category represent today? Does it represent a “temporary growth on a social organism” (Trotsky) or rather a new exploiting class, a growth which “has already become transformed into a historically indispensable organ” (Trotsky)? An exploiting class, Trotsky correctly pointed out, is a social organ which can arise only as consequence of the profound internal needs of production itself. The present property regime in the USSR is different from and more progressive than the capitalist regime, if one applies the Marxist criterion of the development of the productive forces.

What does the Stalinist bureaucracy represent? Does it represent the ruling social stratum which historically corresponds to such a regime, that is, does it represent the necessary social organ for the historical development of this regime (of statified property and planned production) which would be impossible without it? Or on the contrary does it represent a parasitic growth upon this regime which has developed owing to the confinement of this regime within the national framework of a single backward country? In the first case we would actually be dealing with a new class; in the second, with a transitory caste.

The entire evolution of the USSR goes to prove, in our opinion, that the important role usurped by the bureaucracy in Russian economic and political life by far transcends the existing need in a backward country of transplanting and ap-

propriating the technique and the organization of production of advanced capitalist countries, in part through the bureaucratic automatism which stifles the control, the initiative and the creative spirit of the masses.

The development of the productive forces in the USSR derives from the statification of the means of production and the planning principle but not at all from the direction of economy by the bureaucracy, which allegedly is still indispensable at the present stage. On the contrary "bureaucratism, as a system, became the worst brake on the technical and cultural development of the country" (Trotsky). We therefore reject the definition of the bureaucracy as a new exploiting class because no historical justification for it can be demonstrated and we retain the definition of a transitory exploiting caste.

The essence of the socialist system which the proletarian revolution will substitute in place of capitalism lies in its internationalist character.

The proletariat cannot constitute itself as the ruling class without insuring, within a minimum period, the satisfaction of the fundamental needs of the new society and the rapid development of its culture, and in this way obviating the necessity for the bureaucracy as the organizer of the national income. But this task is insoluble within the framework of a single country and above all a backward country. This is the fundamental lesson of the Russian experience. Only the extension of the proletarian revolution to a number of advanced countries can furnish the cultural and economic base required to reduce the scope and duration of a bureaucracy to the minimum that is compatible with the preservation of the character of the workers state emerging from the revolution.

The Stalinist regime in the USSR therefore represents a bureaucratic distortion of the workers state in a backward country, encircled by imperialism.

This regime is situated, although only temporarily, between capitalism and socialism. It represents neither an autonomous and lasting social system, nor a new and lasting autonomous exploiting regime. This regime has prolonged its life owing to a combination of variable factors and the weakening of the imperialist encirclement, owing to the inter-imperialist antagonisms, the broadening of the social base of the bureaucracy, the prolonged retreat of the international revolutionary movement and the still inadequate economic and cultural development of the Soviet masses.

The power of resistance of the Stalinist regime is the product of the simultaneous interaction of these factors and the retreat of the world revolution owing to which the masses remain confined in an inferior condition in relation to the bureaucracy. Will the Stalinist regime be able to maintain its stability in the near future? Up to now this stability has been threatened by: a) imperialism; b) internal capitalist elements; c) the Soviet masses; d) the world revolution.

With the imperialist war drawing to its conclusion in Europe and presently in the world, it can be assumed that the USSR will emerge victorious from this test, and that imperialism has missed a first-rate opportunity to annihilate it. A new open attack against the USSR, given the relationship of forces that will exist at the conclusion of this war, can take place only after a lapse of several years. The principal antagonism that will emerge from this war—the antagonism between the US and the USSR—will not lead to an open military clash, for a number of reasons which we shall adduce further on, until there is an indispensable regrouping of world imperialist forces. Similarly, the odds are against imperialism's being able to ac-

complish by an economic offensive in the near future the overthrow of the statified and planned economy of the USSR.

The latter, having withstood the test during the war, will resume its progressive climb more easily and rapidly than in the past, despite the momentary setback to its productive forces caused by the destruction of the most developed areas in the country.

Internally the pressure of the capitalist elements, the enriched peasants and elements among the upper circles of the bureaucracy (functionaries, army officers, technicians) who aspire to a freer, more secure and more lasting possession of their material privileges (through inheritance) is less weighty than the broadening of the base of the middle bureaucracy which owes everything to the regime and which feels itself threatened by the restoration of capitalism that cannot incorporate statified economy in its structure.

Thus the only serious threat to the Stalinist regime in the immediate future remains the threat issuing from the revolutionary international proletariat and the Soviet masses.

It is a mistake to persist in the expectation of Stalin's imminent collapse as a result of the external pressure of capitalism today. The war has strengthened Stalin. Externally it has weakened the imperialist encirclement of the USSR and has postponed for at least several years the threat of a new military intervention. Internally it has lowered the living standard of the masses, eliminated the most militant and experienced elements of the population, and thanks to the military victories has raised the prestige of the bureaucracy.

Only the rise of the world revolution, through its repercussions in the USSR itself, can now bring about the overthrow of the Stalinist regime. The Stalinist bureaucracy is the first to take this fact consciously into account. Hence flows the essentially open, counter-revolutionary character of its present policy.

2. The Defense of the USSR

We have always meant by the slogan of "Defense of the USSR," the defense of the statified and planned economy, and nothing more. We have called this "unconditional" defense. We defend the statified and planned economy of the USSR *independently* of the policy of the Soviet bureaucracy, independently of whether it happens to be more or less revolutionary, or more or less reactionary. At the same time we favor the most intransigent policy of revolutionary opposition to the Stalinist regime, calling for the formation of an underground Bolshevik-Leninist party in the USSR and for the revolutionary overthrow of Stalin. We have characterized the latter action of the masses, when it takes place, as a *political revolution*, which while making deep inroads in the economic sphere would leave intact the Soviet economic foundations, *i.e.* its statified, planned economy.

In practice, the difference with those who have defended the thesis of the "social revolution" thus reduced itself to a purely terminological dispute. In times of "peace" the task of the revolutionary overthrow of Stalin knows of no intermission. It is permanently on the order of the day. In time of "war," or rather in time of direct military action against the USSR by one or more capitalist states, while carrying on our revolutionary propaganda against Stalin, while demonstrating to the masses the necessity of his overthrow, we postpone this task to the "next and perhaps very near stage" (Trotsky).

And here is the only valid justification today for this attitude: Why and how do Marxists defend the colonies? They defend them on the one hand because "the surplus value ob-

tained by the exploitation of the colonies is one of the pillars of modern capitalism," and on the other hand because imperialist domination in all the colonies "prevents the free development of the productive forces. That is why its destruction constitutes the first step of the revolution in the colonies and that is why the aid accorded to the destruction of foreign domination in the colonies is in reality not aid extended to the nationalist movement of the native bourgeoisie, but rather the clearing of the road for the oppressed proletariat itself" (*Supplementary Theses on the Colonial Question, Second World Congress of the CI*).

Every territory that is wrested, regardless of the manner, from the exploitation of imperialism, aggravates the latter's internal crisis and expedites its downfall. On the contrary, every territory opened up to its exploitation prolongs the life of imperialism.

By its economic system the USSR constitutes an area closed to imperialist exploitation. On the other hand, it represents a system superior to that of imperialism. The interests of world revolutionary strategy dictate to the Marxists the task of preventing imperialism from finding a way out by insinuating itself into the USSR, by exploiting its material and human resources, by curbing its economic development.

The incorporation of the USSR in the capitalist system would represent an alleviation of the difficulties of imperialism and above all an economic victory for it.

What is false at the present stage of the evolution of the USSR is to maintain that its defense is dictated chiefly by its sociological and political characteristics: "workers state," "outpost of the revolution," and the like. None of this terminology corresponds to the actual situation, and it can serve only to arouse the worst illusions among the masses and in our own ranks. We defend the USSR as an economic system closed to imperialist exploitation and economically superior to capitalism, and for no other reason.

During the war, when direct military action of the imperialists threatened the USSR, we called for a kind of united front with Stalin, temporarily withdrawing from the agenda the question of his revolutionary overthrow.

Our slogan will be: "*For the Regeneration of the USSR as a Workers State! Down With Stalin!*"

3. The Advance of the Red Army and the Question of the Occupied Countries

The occupation of the Baltic countries, Poland and Bessarabia by the Red Army in 1940 and their incorporation in the USSR created some confusion in our ranks. The Stalinist bureaucracy, not wishing to share with the former ruling classes the power and privileges which devolved upon them in these countries, proceeded to expropriate and statify private property. This was a progressive measure. But its progressiveness was "relative," as Leon Trotsky correctly noted.

For "its specific weight depends on the sum-total of all the other factors. Thus, we must first and foremost establish that the extension of the territory dominated by bureaucratic autocracy and parasitism, cloaked by 'socialist' measures, can augment the prestige of the Kremlin, engender illusions concerning the possibility of replacing the proletarian revolution by bureaucratic maneuvers, and so on. This evil by far outweighs the progressive content of Stalinist reforms in Poland" (Trotsky).

It ought to be added that, in order for the nationalization of property in the occupied countries, and even in the USSR, to become the basis for a genuinely progressive development,

it must be supplemented by the administration of economy by the masses themselves and by an equitable distribution of the national income. Herein lies the real character of the workers state and of socialism. But this task is unrealizable without first overthrowing the bureaucracy.

Today, thanks to a new conjuncture arising from the imperialist war, the USSR is again in process of annexing these territories. For the same reasons as in 1940 the Stalinist bureaucracy is obliged to statify their economy. The task of the revolutionary workers in these territories is to take an active part in the expropriation of private economy, to establish the most friendly relations with the proletarian masses of the Red Army, while maintaining their implacable opposition to the bureaucratic regime of Stalin, and while propagating the necessity of his revolutionary overthrow.

We oppose all territorial annexations to the USSR which have not received the free consent of the population. We are for the independence of all these territories, along with the Soviet Ukraine, and even Soviet White Russia, if the White Russians desire it.

In the countries entered in the course of the war by the Red Army we maintain absolute distrust towards it so long as it remains under the orders of the Kremlin bureaucracy. Having made formal commitments to the American and British imperialists and fearing above all the extension of the revolution, the Stalinist bureaucracy utilizes the Red Army in countries, apart from the territories annexed to the USSR—Rumania, Bulgaria, Hungary, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Finland—not to statify their economy and not to help their revolution but to assist a capitalist clique in seizing power and in establishing a pro-Soviet foreign policy while safeguarding the continuity of the capitalist regime. It would be therefore false in these cases to represent the entry of the Red Army as beneficial to the masses. To do so is to literally disarm them politically and to weaken their vigilance and opposition.

It is through the presence of the Red Army in these countries (Finland, Poland, Hungary, Rumania, Bulgaria) today that the Soviet bureaucracy curbs the development of civil war and revolution and plays the decisive role in saving the capitalist regime.

Certainly, the entry of the Red Army, which is regarded by the masses as the army of the revolution, acts to accelerate both the revolutionary processes in these countries as well the solution of certain democratic problems, particularly that of agrarian reform. But while, in order to guarantee its exclusive domination, the bureaucracy is obliged to proceed to statification and planning in the territories which for strategic reasons are to be annexed to the USSR; in other countries the bureaucracy not only remains indifferent to the deep-going social changes to which the masses aspire, but—fearful of the extension of the revolution—itself undertakes, through the presence of the Red Army, the consolidation of the *tottering* bourgeois regimes.

4. The Present Policy of Stalinism

With the abandonment of the ultra-left policy of the "Third Period" (1929-1933) and the inauguration of the "People's Front" policy, the Stalinist parties began to depend not exclusively on the Soviet bureaucracy but also on their respective bourgeoisies. Since that time the bureaucracy of the Stalinist parties has entered into ever closer and more intimate relations with its own bourgeoisie by systematically practicing the policy of class collaboration and national unity, by sinking their roots more and more deeply into petty bourgeois strata, by immersing

themselves, in the spirit of reformism, in the state apparatus of the bourgeoisie (parliament, municipalities, etc.). Hence they became no longer disposed, at least in their entirety, to blindly follow the directives of the Soviet bureaucracy, except to the degree that these directives were not in flagrant contradiction with the interests of their own bourgeoisie.

On the other hand this dependence of the Stalinist parties on their own bourgeoisie was strongest where the national bourgeoisie was powerful and prosperous. Thus even prior to the war, Browder, secretary of the American Communist Party, declared in all sincerity that in case of a conflict between America and the USSR he would support his country without hesitation. Similarly, on the announcement of the signing of the Russo-German pact in August 1939, an important section of the bureaucracy in the Stalinist parties broke with the rest of their colleagues, refusing to defend the policy of the Soviet bureaucracy against their own bourgeoisie, and creating a state of uneasiness in the parties which was finally dissipated only with the entry of the USSR into the war against Germany. The war has enormously accelerated this process.

The unconditional and all-out support given to the "resisting" bourgeoisie by the Stalinist parties, their active participation in its organisms, crowned by their entry into the "resisting" Allied governments have precipitated the chauvinist degeneration of the bureaucracy of the Stalinist parties and have strengthened the bonds which unite a growing section of its cadres with its national bourgeoisie. Thus in order to understand the present policy of Stalinism in the various countries, its possibilities and its limits, it is necessary to take into account the growing influence of the bourgeoisie, alongside of the traditional dependence on the Soviet bureaucracy in matters of foreign policy.

5. The Present Foreign Policy of the Soviet Bureaucracy

Throughout the prewar period the Soviet bureaucracy, conscious of the strength of imperialism and its own internal weaknesses, lived in perpetual fear of being drawn into the whirlpool of a world conflict. In order to avoid this danger it deliberately sacrificed the interests of the revolution by pursuing a policy which consisted of allaying the misgivings of imperialism and dissipating its mistrust.

However, the war, as was inevitable, did not spare the USSR. The Soviet bureaucracy was forced into the war and was forced to wage war with the maximum energy in order to survive as an exploiting caste.

The war caused unprecedented havoc in the USSR, devastating entire regions, including the richest and the most industrialized sectors, consuming vast quantities of material wealth, decimating the living forces of the country, causing a considerable setback to the productive forces. Several years will be required to regain and surpass the 1940 levels.

During the war the main preoccupation of the Soviet bureaucracy was to avert the annihilation of the regime of stified and planned economy in the USSR on which its existence depends, and to mobilize the maximum forces against German imperialism which attacked it directly. Having succeeded in escaping, thanks to the inter-imperialist antagonisms, a general coalition against the USSR, it was able to victoriously assume the offensive (aided by the superiorities of the Soviet economic system and the devotion of the Soviet masses) and to definitely avert in this war the threat of military defeat.

In the present stage, which is the final phase of the world war, the main preoccupation of the Soviet bureaucracy is to

terminate the conflict advantageously and to assure a durable peace in order to reconstruct the USSR.

The bureaucracy will attain these two aims on the one hand by the strategic strengthening of the USSR through the incorporation of a part of Finland, the Baltic countries, a part of Poland, Bessarabia and through the acquisition of points of support in Bulgaria and in Thrace (control of the Dardanelles); on the other hand by strengthening itself on the diplomatic arena through the creation of a number of buffer states pro-Soviet in their foreign policy, such as Finland, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Rumania, Bulgaria, through the reduction of Germany to a second-rate power and through the establishment of friendliest and most intimate relations with France and Italy.

What the Soviet bureaucracy seeks in the final analysis is the creation of a system of relationships between the various states on the continent that will neutralize all of Europe for a period of time (as in the case of China in Asia) in face of the Soviet-American antagonism, the primary antagonism emerging from this war.

6. The Soviet-American Antagonism

In fact, if we leave aside the antagonism existing between America and England which will not lead to any open conflict between them, so long as England is able to find compensations for her concessions to Yankee imperialism, by despoiling the other vanquished, allied or hostile imperialisms (France, Italy, Japan, Germany), the principal antagonism which will emerge from this war and which will sow the seeds of the next world conflict, unless the socialist revolution intervenes in time, is the antagonism between the United States and the USSR. However, it would be absolutely erroneous today to seek the fundamental reasons of this antagonism in the different class character of the two countries and to dangerously muddle the question by using outlived and false phraseology.

America and England oppose the USSR not because the Stalinist USSR represents today the "outpost of the revolution" but solely for the following reasons:

a) Because independently of its class character the USSR has become a power which excludes the establishment of an equilibrium on a European or world scale.

b) Because the USSR remains an economic area closed to imperialist penetration and control.

Neither America nor England can rest peacefully so long as the USSR, which has grown inordinately, exists and remains inaccessible (or at least its accessibility is rendered very difficult) to the economic and political control of imperialism.

They are obliged to face this situation with constant vigilance and henceforth seek to create, as against the attempts of the Soviet bureaucracy, a system of relations among European and Asiatic states adequate for maintaining their pressure on the USSR and suitable for use as bridgeheads and strongholds in the eventuality of open conflict against the USSR.

Hence flows the difference in policy between the USSR and America in relation to the settlement of the German, Polish and Balkan questions in which their antagonism in Europe finds its crystallization today. The Soviet bureaucracy would like to reduce Germany to complete impotence, fearing that a capitalist Germany would inevitably become in the near future an outpost of imperialism against the USSR. For opposite reasons, America, while domesticating German imperialism, will take into consideration its usefulness in the struggle against the USSR.

Similarly with the Polish question: Fearing a strong Poland the USSR has annexed part of it and wishes to convert the other part into a friendly buffer state. America and England maneuver to avoid this dismemberment of Poland.

In the Balkans, Russian pressure, with bases in Bulgaria and Yugoslavia, has sought to reach the Aegean Sea and to flank the Dardanelles; it was thwarted only because of the counteraction of England and the United States who are basing themselves on Turkey and Greece.

However the perspective of an immediate conflict between America and the USSR must be excluded for the following reasons:

a) No objective in the foreign policy of the Soviet bureaucracy impinges on the nerve centers of Yankee interests.

b) The Soviet bureaucracy will cede all those points on which America is adamant.

c) America is conscious of the revolutionary crisis issuing from the war in Europe and of the counter-revolutionary usefulness of the Soviet bureaucracy.

d) American imperialism in its expansion can satisfy itself for the time being with the immense gains accruing to it from this war without having recourse to the exploitation of the USSR.

On the contrary, the Soviet-American conflict will mature if thanks to the development of its productive forces the USSR breaking out of its national framework threatens imperialism on a world scale; if, after having regrouped and rebuilt its forces decimated by the war, imperialism is caught up in a crisis and once again acutely feels the narrowness of the world market; and if after having first of all crushed the revolution it is able to mobilize the masses against the USSR. None of these factors will come into play for several years at least and in any case not unless the revolutionary crisis arising from this war is terminated by the defeat of the proletariat.

Thus instead of counting on the possibility of an imminent conflict between America and the USSR in the next period which coincides with the revolutionary crisis arising from the imperialist war, and instead of envisaging Stalinist policy through the false prism of American-USSR relations and their consequences, it is necessary to take as our point of departure the fact that the Soviet bureaucracy will see its principal adversary in the rising revolution in Europe and in the world.

The leaderships of the Stalinist parties today submit on the one hand to the pressure of the counter-revolutionary orientation

of the Soviet bureaucracy and on the other hand to the pressure of their own bourgeoisie.

In these conditions to advance as a likelihood the hypothesis of an approaching turn of Stalinism to the left, that is, a break with its present policy of class collaboration is literally tantamount to disarming the revolutionary vanguard ideologically.

Stalinism plays the same role today that the Second International played at the conclusion of the first world war. Hopelessly enmeshed in the net of class collaboration, it is the principal force which maintains the tottering bourgeoisie in power and which breaks the revolutionary elan of the masses. Its crisis and decline as the principal force in the workers movement will be the result of contradictions maturing in its own ranks.

In their first phase of radicalization, the masses, still attracted by the radiance of the October Revolution over the USSR and the past revolutionary action of the Communist parties tend to regroup themselves principally in the Stalinist parties.

Nevertheless the latter's arena for perfidious maneuvers is limited. While the ruined European bourgeoisie is incapable of granting any substantial reforms, the masses, exasperated by the five years of unprecedented misery and oppression cannot be appeased with promises and half-measures. The question of power is opened up throughout Europe. In the gigantic class struggles now beginning the Stalinist bureaucracy will inevitably reveal its true counter-revolutionary face. It will inevitably come to know the mistrust, the contempt and even the hatred of the revolutionary masses.

But the regroupment of the revolutionary masses around another revolutionary pole will not be an automatic process. If the Fourth International, in its policy and action, shows itself incapable of crystallizing and assimilating the proletarian current which will part company with the Stalinist parties, then the rupture of the masses with the latter can take the form of a disorderly retreat, disorienting individuals politically and proving fatal to the general resistance of the proletariat to the new attacks of fascism.

The Fourth International enters as the principal factor into the process of the transformation of the present revolutionary crisis into the triumph of the revolution.

Should it fail in this role many decades will pass before it will be possible again to speak of the emergence of humanity from capitalist barbarism. But in order to fulfil this mission the Fourth International—already firm on many planks of its program—must bring up to date its position on the question of the USSR and Stalinism.

Two Statements of the Political Committee of the Socialist Workers Party

1. On the Internal Situation

All members of the Political Committee, representing both the majority and minority point of view as developed at the Eleventh Party Convention, have jointly discussed the party situation and have unanimously agreed upon the following statement to the party membership.

1. There are no clearly defined differences at the present time on programmatic questions.

2. There is no disagreement on the analysis of the situation in the United States and the problems and tasks of the party as outlined in the convention resolution.

3. The differences on the convention resolution dealing with "The European Revolution and the Tasks of the Revolutionary Party" are not fundamental in character. The differences, insofar as they have found definite expression thus far, are rather

secondary in character and relate primarily to questions of interpretation and emphasis. It remains to be seen whether, in the course of events and further discussion, the present differences will be reconciled in agreement or developed into principled divergences.

4. There are no concrete organizational questions in dispute at the present time.

5. There appear to be differences, or tendencies towards differences, on the organization question in general; on the conception of the party, its attitude toward other parties, its methods of functioning and the methods of building it. It remains yet to be seen, however, whether these differences can be reconciled in the course of common work and free discussion, or will be deepened, become more definitive, and require explicit elucidation in conflicting resolutions on the question.

6. In view of the large area of general agreement, and the limited, and as yet rather undeveloped nature of the disagreements, the P.C. members of both tendencies—majority and minority—are unanimously of the opinion:

(a) It is possible and obligatory to collaborate harmoniously and constructively on the basis of the convention decisions to carry on the work of the party and build up the party.

(b) There is no basis for sharp factional struggle or for the existence of factional formations in the party ranks.

7. An educational discussion of the existing differences is to be continued and regulated by the N.C., as authorized by the convention.

Political Committee, S.W.P.

2. On the Convention Vote

1. The December and January issues of the *Fourth International* reported the vote at the November 1944 convention, on the European resolution, to have been a vote to adopt the resolution "by 51 to 5."

2. Comrades of the minority took exception to this, claiming that the minority delegates voted for the resolution. It has therefore been agreed between majority and minority to present the facts as verified by the convention minutes, which are as follows:

a) The vote at the convention occurred not on the resolution, but on motions, one presented by the National Committee majority and two by the minority.

b) The majority motion is as follows:

"*Motion of National Committee majority:* That the convention endorses the general line of the European resolution as

amended by the Political Committee; the convention rejects Morrow's criticisms of the Plenum resolution and his amendments, as well as Logan's criticisms and amendments, as contrary to the general line of this resolution.

Motion carried (51 voting for)."

c) The minority motion is the following:

"*Motions of National Committee minority:*

(1) To accept the line in the Logan amendments.

(2) To accept the line of the National Committee resolution.

Motion lost (5 voting for)."

3. On the basis of this vote the majority claims that the vote on the resolution was 51 to 5 and the minority claims that the resolution was adopted unanimously even though the amendments were rejected.

Political Committee S.W.P.

The Policy of the Stalinist Parties During the War

By SPERO

Translated from January 1944 issue of *Quatrieme Internationale*, theoretical organ of the European Executive Committee of the Fourth International, for the information of our readers.

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In comparing the attitude of the workers' parties on the eve of the war of 1914-1918 and on the eve of the present war, we must not fail to emphasize an important difference. The internal crisis and the betrayal of the Second International were laid bare only after the outbreak of the first world war, whereas the decomposition of the Third International along social patriotic lines was already complete between 1935-1939, the period commonly known as the "People's Front," which followed the notorious ultra-leftist "Third Period" of 1929-1933. Upon its entry into this war, the Third International was already shot through with communo-chauvinist ideology, the seeds of which can be found in the theory of "socialism in one coun-

try," elaborated in 1924 by the Soviet bureaucracy.

Already at that time it was Trotsky alone who refused to accept as a "palliative" this "soothing" theory which despite its lack of consistency did offer a slight hope to the Russian workers who were isolated from the world revolution and struggling against enormous internal difficulties. On the contrary, Trotsky insisted, even at that time, that the theory of "socialism in one country" was no mere theoretical trifle of no great practical importance, but as he wrote a little later "a mortal blow struck at the International," which would break "the backbone of internationalism."

The communo-chauvinist ideology was perfectly suited to the Soviet bureaucracy which, owing to the country's backwardness and its isolation in the capitalist world, developed into a privileged caste. But it was a less suitable ideology for the Stalinist parties working in the capitalist countries and recruit-

ing their militants in part from among the workers' sections in these countries.

It was through the medium of their respective bureaucracies that the social patriotic ideology permeated the various Stalinist parties. Up to the termination of the "Third Period" the social basis of these parasitic layers was secured exclusively by subsidies from the Soviet bureaucracy.

But beginning with the "People's Front" period, the infiltration of the Stalinist parties into the layers of the petty bourgeoisie, into the state, municipal, trade union and parliamentary apparatus has provided their bureaucracies with a new though secondary source of nourishment—the same source that has fed the Social Democratic bureaucracies: the super-profits of their own imperialism.

As a result of this process, nationalist tendencies within the Stalinist parties have not only gone unchecked but, on the contrary, have become so powerful that the parties have sometimes tended to move away from their traditional dependence on the Soviet bureaucracy. At the outbreak of the second imperialist war, the ideological situation in the Stalinist parties was as follows:

Certain powerful elements among the party bureaucracies were not disposed to take orders from the Soviet bureaucracy for the defense of the USSR, except insofar as this task fitted in with the interests of their own imperialism. This was particularly true in the "democratic" imperialisms of France, England and the United States.

Thus the Soviet-German pact (1939) provoked a genuine crisis in the ranks of the social-patriotic bureaucrats, as evidenced by mass desertions in France and elsewhere and by a profound unrest in the Stalinist parties of the "democratic" countries. This unrest was really not dissipated completely until after the (Stalin-Hitler) pact was broken and the USSR entered the war.

The war has speeded up the chauvinist decomposition of the Stalinist parties, relegating them to the role which for a long time had been their only justification for existence: political and military defense of the USSR in the same sense that the Soviet bureaucracy undertakes this defense. In fact, the Soviet bureaucracy wanted the Third International and its parties to fulfil no role other than the one they could play in facilitating the Kremlin's relations with the capitalist states, in other words, its foreign policy and diplomacy.

Just as in the period when she was defending "her peace," so too during the war, Moscow has understood the defense of the USSR exclusively in terms of alliances with the imperialist gangs who—each for their own purpose—have all been out for the same goal: the defeat of Germany. Thus the duty of the Stalinist parties was clear and simple: to make concessions which even they themselves characterized as "enormous"; to completely give up all class politics, and thus to make their peace with the imperialist anti-German alliance, "so that the brave Socialist fatherland might avail itself of the material aid of capitalism against Hitlerism."

Here briefly are the results of this policy:

In May 1943 Stalin formally dissolved the Third International.

In December 1943, a decree of the Supreme Council of the

* "Information du Militant," published by the Central Committee of the French Communist Party "exclusively for the leadership of the recognized sections." May 1943.

USSR abolished, as of March 14, 1944, the *Internationale* as the Soviet anthem.

In Europe and in all countries under German occupation, the Stalinist parties became the chief inspirers and organizers of the nationalist movements led by the native anti-German bourgeoisie and by Anglo-American imperialism.

In England, in the United States and in all Anglo-American and French colonies, fullest support to the "Allied" governments.

It is hardly surprising that with their policy of systematic submission to the wishes of the international bourgeoisie, the bureaucracies of the Stalinist parties found themselves unable to bottle up the discontent of the rank and file who were finding it hard to understand the justification for such conduct. The report of the Central Committee of the French Stalinist party, which we have cited above, states the following:

We know that many of our comrades are boiling with impatience and we have received a number of bitter letters addressed to the Central Committee. But we exhort everyone to remain patient and to retain faith in the proletarian Party which will know, at the right moment, how to take the appropriate and necessary action.

The constant attempt of the bureaucracy is to mask its treachery as a pretended *maneuver*.

Grovelling before the banner of the bourgeoisie, complete abandonment of class politics, support of Roosevelt in the United States, Churchill in England, de Gaulle in France, and the grandson of Bismarck in Germany—all this is palmed off as a "maneuver" to obtain the help of "capitalism" against "Hitlerism" (*sic*) in the Soviet Union's war against Germany. All this is depicted as a "maneuver" to win over the patriotic mass movements, to hoodwink the possessing classes and "at the right moment" to take them by surprise with the Revolution. It is with such puerile philosophy that the Stalinist bureaucracy continues to wield political influence over large sections of the working class and to assuage the unrest among the most tested and most intelligent proletarian elements.

History of the "Maneuver"

Ever since Lenin died, the argument of "maneuver" has been used to camouflage the rapid descent of the Third International into opportunism and social patriotic degeneration. The political history of Stalinism from 1925 on is nothing but the systematic substitution of unprincipled maneuvers in place of the strategic line.

A maneuver can be thought of only as an episodic move of a subordinate tactical character and limited in its duration and usefulness, but can in no case replace the revolutionary power of the class. But in the politics of the Stalinist bureaucracy the maneuver is blown up to the proportions of a strategic line which no longer represents the struggle against the bourgeoisie, and for its revolutionary overthrow, but rather collaboration with the bourgeoisie so as to gain at any given moment a few advantages for the foreign policy of the Soviet bureaucracy.

The entire "People's Front" period palmed off as a maneuver terminated in the outbreak of the imperialist war and the collapse of all proletarian resistance. The bourgeoisie, and it alone, has profited from this "maneuver."

With the activity of the proletariat paralyzed and their class interests subordinated to "national" interests—which are the interests of the bourgeoisie—the latter had its hands free to plunge into the war whose outbreak had been retarded solely by the threat of revolutionary ferment among the masses. By

continuing during the war this same policy of national unity the Stalinist bureaucracy is today preparing the way for the triumph not of revolutionary strategy but for the triumph of imperialism.

The most ingenious "maneuver" is incapable of solving such fundamental contradictions as those between the classes, or between the USSR and the capitalist world. It is at best a dismal manifestation of empty-headedness to think in terms of duping the vigilance of the possessing classes who are so well trained and expert in camouflaging themselves behind the "national colors."

In justification of their enormous concessions to the international bourgeoisie, the Stalinists cite the assistance rendered by capitalism in the struggle of the USSR against "Hitlerism." But just what was this "assistance"? Was it the shipment of arms and ammunitions—shipments kept at the barest minimum for sustaining the efforts of the USSR, which by its entry into the conflict in June 1941 had deflected the avalanche of the German war machine away from England and America and supplied the Anglo-American imperialisms with an un hoped for opportunity to gird themselves free from all surprise and disturbance? Or was it perhaps the establishment of the famous "second front"—the only way in which real military aid could be given the USSR and which despite all wailings and implorings and even veiled threats of the Stalinist bureaucracy, has remained since 1941 in the realm of projected operations*?

Undoubtedly, it will not be long before the Anglo-American forces will undertake the invasion of the continent. But this will not come as the end-product of the political wisdom of the Soviet bureaucracy, which knew so well how to assuage the uneasiness, hesitations and fears of Anglo-American imperialism by its ingenious maneuvers. No, it will come as a well-considered action of Anglo-American imperialism, undertaken at a moment chosen by the latter, or rather at a moment when the objective conditions of the development of the war make this measure absolutely necessary for its own interests.

Let the pundits of the "maneuver" tell us how by exercising their supple spines at the feet of "democratic" imperialism they have up to now advanced by a single day the disembarking of the "Allies" or the establishing of the "second front," or even the speeding up of arms and munition shipments either to the USSR or the "maquis" armies in the occupied countries?

Imperialism arrives at its decisions in accordance with its class interests, and no "maneuver" will get it to launch its offensive against "Hitlerism" prematurely. The moment and the measures will be chosen in accordance with its own interests.

It would, however, be naive to think that the Soviet bureaucracy and the top circles among the bureaucracies of the Stalinist parties are simply making mistakes, all in good faith, about the means to be employed in arriving at one and the same revolutionary goal, namely: the conquest of power and the establishment of socialism. For many years they have not been thinking in terms of maneuvers in the interests of revolutionary strategy, but in terms of a new strategy thoroughly thought out and consistently applied which aims at obtaining through class collaboration an occasional advantage or two for the foreign policy of the USSR. When a "maneuver" is applied over a period of many years, it is no longer a question of a tactical episode, but of an entire political line. It is a question of strategy.

The top circles of the Stalinist bureaucracy constitute a

parasitic body, hostile to revolutionary aims and methods. The argument of a "maneuver" serves as their smoke-screen before the proletarian rank and file of the Stalinist parties. It is the proletarian rank and file and not the bourgeoisie who are the sole victims of the "sly tricks," and double-dealings of the Stalinist leaders. When, for example, the latter, with a perfectly straight face, explain to the Stalinist militants that "the antagonism of the Giraud crowd towards de Gaulle's policies is the product of Giraudist opposition to de Gaulle's ideas which are more liberal, more tolerant and more sympathetic to communism (*sic!*) whereas Giraud's policies stand for the best future interests of capitalism," (*loc. cit.*), it is certainly not de Gaulle who is duped by the flirtation of Marty and Florimonde Bonte at Algiers. Nor do Marty or Bonte nurse any illusions concerning Gen. de Gaulle's true sentiments toward communism. The ones who are tricked are the poor fellows who are dying by the hundreds under the banner of the Stalinist party, without suspecting that the policy of their party is leading, alas! not to the revolution, but straight to the future triumph of bourgeois reaction, which de Gaulle serves as a far more skillful and "sly" agent than Giraud.

The concept of "maneuver" which has been implanted in the minds of Stalinist militants corrodes and saps the revolutionary spirit of a proletarian party which is, by its very nature, hostile to unprincipled combinations, to games of hide-and-seek, and to palming off rotten opportunism as the highest political wisdom.

The misfortune lies precisely in the fact that the epigones of Bolshevik strategy extol maneuvers and flexibility to the young Communist parties as the quintessence of this strategy, thereby tearing them away from their historical axis and principled foundation and turning them to unprincipled combinations which, only too often, resemble a squirrel whirling in its cage. It was not flexibility that served (nor should it serve today) as the basic trait of Bolshevism but rather *granite hardness*. It was precisely of this quality, for which its enemies and opponents have reproached it, that Bolshevism was always justly proud. Not blissful "optimism" but intransigence, vigilance, revolutionary distrust, and the struggle for every hair's breadth of independence—these are the essential traits of Bolshevism. (Leon Trotsky, *Third International After Lenin*, pp. 140-141.)

Present Situation

The Stalinist parties have definitely broken away from the proletarian axis and have degraded themselves to the status of political instruments analagous to the Social Democracy. Like the latter, the Stalinist parties do not work towards the revolutionary overthrow of the bourgeoisie but for the perpetuation of class equilibrium, to which they wish simply to give a pro-Soviet political orientation. Thus whereas Social Democracy prepares anew to serve as the political agency of the strongest imperialism, namely, that of the United States, on which the stabilization of European capitalism depends, and consequently also the material and political rehabilitation of the Social Democracy itself depends; the Stalinist parties, on the other hand, tying themselves more and more closely with the interests of their own imperialism, will still represent for a certain period the real interests of the Soviet bureaucracy.

We have already seen that the antagonism between the USSR and the US must sharpen until either the social conquests of October still existing in the USSR are overthrown, or the Revolution triumphs. The line of demarcation between the Social Democracy and the Stalinist parties will be clearly drawn by the conflicting tendencies within the framework of their common

*This was written prior to the Allied invasion of France.—Ed.

interest of maintaining class equilibrium—the former orienting themselves toward the interests of the United States, the latter towards the interests of the Soviet bureaucracy.

This contradiction is of secondary importance in view of the identical principal role that is being played by the Social De-

mocracy and the Stalinist parties, both of them serving as the instruments of a class collaborationist policy. But nevertheless it offers certain perspectives which must not be lost sight of in the period of the gigantic revolutionary crisis which we are entering.

Socialism Reaffirmed—III

By LILY ROY

[The first two installments of Lily Roy's answer to an Indian Burnhamite, which appeared in the March and April issues of *Fourth International*, presented a Marxist analysis and refutation of the theory of "managerial" society. Comrade Roy begins by demonstrating that the fascist state is not at all a "new kind of state" but simply the barbarous political form assumed by the capitalist system in its death agony. The author then goes on to demolish the contention that the fascist state and the Soviet state are states of the same nature. To this fraudulent thesis popularized by Burnham she counterposes the correct analysis of the Trotskyist movement that the Stalinist regime in USSR represents a degenerated workers state. The third and concluding installment in this issue is an exposition of the historical necessity of the overthrow of capitalism and the establishment of Socialism.]

How was the bureaucracy enabled to carry out this process? Precisely by reason of the isolation of the Soviet Union consequent on the failure of the international revolution. This deprived the Soviet proletariat of that aid from the proletariat of the advanced capitalist countries which would have enabled them to counteract the adverse effects of Russia's economic and cultural backwardness. The backwardness reflected itself politically in the pull away from the socialist direction exercised, on the one hand, by the overwhelming peasant, *i.e.* petty bourgeois, mass of the population, and, on the other, by the body of trained functionaries, managers and skilled workers which was sharply differentiated from the general toiler mass. It was by an alliance between these two forces against the proletariat that the political expropriation of the working class was carried out.

It is to be stressed, however, that the bureaucracy which thus seized the political power was itself the product of the new property relations created by October and depended on them for its privileged position. Consequently, at the same time as it expropriated the workers politically, it continued to defend these property relations. Continued to defend them; but with a difference.

What was the difference? In this, that it administered the state property increasingly in the interests of itself and the labor and collective farm aristocracy on which it leaned for support. This fact expressed itself in the diversion, through unduly differentiated payments, of a disproportionate share of the national income to these sections. That is to say, the bureaucracy *distorted* the property relations resulting from the October Revolution.

Distorted, but not displaced them. If these property relations had indeed been displaced, *i.e.* if the bureaucracy and their allies had taken over to themselves the state property which the workers had seized from the capitalists, the Soviet Union would have reverted to capitalism. This the bureaucracy has not yet done. *But*, along this road the bureaucracy is fast drifting. Why? Because the very existence of these property relations constitutes a continuous threat to the political power and economic privileges of the bureaucracy and its allies. For, in

the long run, property relations dominate, and determine, political relations. If the bureaucracy is to perpetuate itself in power, therefore, it must in the long run undermine the very property relations it brought into being and substitute therefore, a new set of property relations. And this, in its own way it is steadily doing; as is shown by that series of reactionary manifestations like the creation of a *rentier* stratum of Soviet bond-holders, the abolition of workers' control, etc., etc., which Mr. Masani so tendentiously summarizes.

What is the conclusion all this leads to in regard to the class nature of the Soviet Union? To the conclusion of Trotsky, the ablest, severest, and yet most completely scientific analyzer of Soviet facts who has yet lived, namely, that the *Soviet Union is a degenerate workers state*; a workers state, because it is still based on the property relations created by October; but a degenerate one, because it is ruled politically by a bureaucracy which distorts these property relations.

This is what the contemporary Soviet state is. And, incidentally, this disposes of the last remnant of the managerial thesis, the term "Managerial State." This proves, in the light of the above, to be merely a label stuck on the degenerate workers state with a view to assimilating it with the Fascist state. Now that we know the real class nature of the Soviet state even as we discovered earlier the true class nature of the Nazi state, the label becomes completely unstuck and falls into the dust heap of useless and therefore discarded political constructions.

We begin now to see the reason for the tremendous intensification of the coercive functions of the state which the Soviet Union has seen under Stalin. It is an expression not of the dictatorship of the proletariat over other classes but of the dictatorship of the bureaucracy over the working class itself. Hence the devastating purges, the frame-up trials, the sheer murders and the constant bloodletting, not to mention the falsifications of history and the rank lies, which have characterized the Stalinist regime. These constitute the desperate efforts of a bureaucratic caste to maintain itself in power against the increasing resistance and the growing revolt of the very class which created it and of whose control it has freed itself.

Now, Mr. Masani seeks to suggest that Marxists hold that *this* dictatorship, namely, the Stalinist dictatorship over the working class will "liquidate" itself voluntarily some day or other. Here are his sarcastic words on the subject:

Marxists often refer to socialist thought before Marx as Utopian. One wonders whether anything can be more Utopian than the touching faith of Communists that a dictatorship like that in Russia, which has not hesitated to "liquidate" its political opponents in the party in lakhs for the past six or seven years in a bloody struggle for power, is going one fine day to awaken to the fact that it has served its historical purpose and must now liquidate the GPU and the coercive purpose of the state, which must then "wither away"! This makes Max Eastman indulge in the quip: "Marx described as Utopian the

conception that good men can bring about socialism. Stalinists actually believe that bad men can be relied upon to do so."

The sarcasm is certainly deserved—by the Stalinists. But if the opinion expressed in the above passage is attributed to revolutionary Marxists as distinct from Stalinist flunkies, then it is utterly untrue. No Marxist holds that the dictatorship of the proletariat can be equated with the dictatorship of the Communist Party, *i.e.* in Russia today, of the bureaucracy, over the proletariat. No Marxist holds that *this* dictatorship, *i.e.* of the Stalinist bureaucracy, will "one fine day awaken to the fact that it has served its historical purpose and . . . liquidate the GPU and all the coercive purpose of the state." No Marxist holds this for the simple reason that the "historical purpose" of the Stalinist dictatorship is not the building of the international socialist society but the misapplication of the property forms created by the October Revolution to the benefit of the bureaucracy and the social strata on which it rests for support, *viz.* the labor and collective farm aristocracy of the Soviet Union. That is its historical purpose; a purpose which requires, as we have seen, the increasing intensification of the state and not its progressive abolition.

Looked at in this way, we can understand not only the nature of the problem but also its true solution. This solution plainly is not the Masanian formula of the abandonment of the proletarian dictatorship but precisely its restoration in full. That is to say, what is called for is the taking back by the working class into its hands the political power of which it has been expropriated by the very bureaucracy which it set up to manage the state property and administer the state apparatus. This is the solution, Mr. Masani—the overthrow of the political dictatorship of the bureaucracy before it can undermine the October gains from within, *i.e.* the restoration of the proletarian dictatorship in full, and not the abandonment either of the October gains or of the proletarian dictatorship, as you erroneously imagine.

Why the Class Struggle?

It is inevitable that a person who reconsiders the very necessity of setting up the proletarian dictatorship with its statified property, should also "reconsider," *i.e.* abandon, the very process which brings these things into being, *viz.* the revolutionary class struggle. This, Mr. Masani does.

Here is how he puts it:

A third Marxist assumption that appears to be unable to stand a review of the past two decades is that socialism can be achieved by appealing to the collective selfishness of the working class and its collective hatred for the property owning classes. The fact of the clash of interests between different classes in society is, of course, obvious. But unfortunately the appeal to the collective selfishness of the workers leads quite as often to their becoming a party to exploitation and injustice. We have already seen how the British working class, being given a minor share in the profits of the Empire, becomes through the Labour Party a party to the perpetuation of Imperialism, which is the very antithesis of a world socialist order. Besides, can one ever get to a superior society based on co-operation and love by appealing to selfishness and hatred?

So, Mr. Masani, the fact of the clash of interests between different classes is . . . "obvious!" What then of the fact of the class struggle? Not so obvious, is it? During a strike, for instance, or a lock-out? Or is the former to be traced, not to the clash of interests you mention, but merely to the "collective selfishness" of the working class and its "collective hatred for the property owning classes" which you find so horrifying?

It is, then, merely a question of morals, apparently. Sub-

stitute a little love and much co-operation—with a dash of state compulsion, of course—and everything will be lovely in the neo-Gandhian garden. Yes, lovely. But lovely for whom? Co-operation by the working class with the capitalist class is co-operation by the exploited with their very exploiter. It connotes, therefore, acquiescence by the working class in its own exploitation. Which, Mr. Masani, is all that your capitalist, being no neo-Gandhian himself, wants. "Permit me to exploit you and I don't care whether you love me"—that is *his* philosophy; on which you go one better with your demand that the worker should love his exploiter.

Whither does such co-operation lead? Precisely to the abhorrent outcome which Mr. Masani has quoted from Britain. Co-operation by the British working class with the British capitalist class connotes, nay, necessitates, also co-operation with the latter in the exploitation of the colonies, *i.e.* an alliance of the British working class with its own exploiters *against* the toilers of the British colonies. That is where your "co-operation and love" lead, Mr. Masani.

Let us see whither it would lead, on the contrary, if the British working class, instead of applying the class co-operation theories of Mr. Masani and the British Labour Party before him, would only apply a little of the class *struggle* theory which Mr. Masani so violently abhors. If the British working class sets out to fight its British exploiters and to overthrow them, is it not inevitable that they would ally themselves for the purposes of that very struggle (or, as Mr. Masani would have it, in the *selfish* interests of their own struggle) with the very colonial masses who are also struggling against the selfsame exploiter, the British capitalist class? And would not that be the *disappearance* of imperialism, instead of the *perpetuation* of it, to which, as we have seen, the theory of class co-operation leads? We ask the question; but we shall not give the answer because, just like the clash of interests between classes, it too is obvious.

What Mr. Masani forgets, overlooks or knowingly seeks to smear over is the fact that the class struggle is *inherent* in capitalist society. Marxists do not *create* the class struggle, Mr. Masani: it is already there. *Recognizing* this fact, however, they seek to *develop* it as a means, the only means, to the ultimate abolition of the class system itself and therewith the class struggle. The *only* means, Mr. Masani—as we shall finally see in the concluding sections of this book.

Socialism the Only Alternative

Mr. Masani holds—and this is the fourth and last "assumption" in Marxist theory that he wishes to "reconsider," *i.e.* to abandon—that socialism is not the only alternative to capitalism. Let us quote his own words, as we have always done in this book:

Yet another belief—and one held till now by all socialists—is that socialism is the only alternative to capitalism. I must confess I held this view myself till round about 1937 or 1938. You had somehow to destroy capitalism and then as day follows night socialism must dawn. But *must* it? That old type capitalism is played out is obvious. But will socialism inevitably follow or is there not a third "something" that is likely to emerge? (His italics.)

Now, for Mr. Masani's own sake we are bound to say that it's a pity he did not stop with his first sentence in the above passage; for, then, we would have been able to state for once that he had accurately described the position of all Marxists. Marxists do hold that socialism is the only alternative to capitalism. But—and that's the pity of it, Mr. Masani—they do not

mean thereby what you say you imagined they meant, *viz.* that "you had *somehow* to destroy capitalism and then, as day follows night socialism *must* dawn." What they do mean we shall soon see.

When Marxists declare that socialism is the only alternative to capitalism, they thereby mean, firstly, that socialism is the next *higher* stage in society's evolution; and, secondly, that it provides the only *progressive* solution of capitalism's contradictions. Capitalism is not an eternal system which has existed from the beginning and will prevail to the end. On the contrary, it is only one system in an historical series (primitive communism—slave owning society—feudalism—capitalism), each of which evolved out of its predecessor, and each of which constituted a higher social stage than its predecessor inasmuch as each carried the development of society's productive forces, and therewith also production which is the material basis of life and civilization, forward to a higher level. In this series, capitalism was the last and highest: in a comparatively brief historical period it developed society's productive forces and production itself to a pitch unprecedented in human history.

Like all preceding social systems, however, capitalism too must die; it is indeed already dying—which is what Mr. Masani no doubt means when he says "that old type capitalism is played out is obvious." It is dying because it is being choked by the working out of its inherent contradictions, the basic one of which is the contradiction between the associated labor process and the individual appropriation of the product. To put it differently, the very production relations which enabled capitalism to develop the productive forces of society to the highest level in human history are today strangling those productive forces, and therewith society itself.

Production relations, *i.e.* the relations of men to each other in the productive process, find their social expression in property relations, *i.e.* the relation of men to things, and the characteristic feature of capitalist property relations is private ownership of the means of production. This relation of men to things reflects itself socially in the emergence, or rather existence, of two opposed classes at the two poles of capitalist society: the capitalist owners of property, *i.e.* the capitalist class on the one hand, and the propertyless owners of labor power, *i.e.* the working class on the other.

The capitalist property relation described above has this important consequence, *viz.* that the actual producer, *i.e.* the worker, cannot have access to the means of production, *i.e.* cannot produce, except through the capitalist. That is to say, the worker has to hire himself out, *i.e.* sell his labor power, to the capitalist. And the capitalist buys this labor power of the worker only if he (the capitalist) can make a profit out of the transaction. No profits; no employment.

How can this profit be made by the capitalist? Only in one way. Only by compelling the worker to produce, in the course of the production process, more values than those he receives in the form of wages. The worker is compelled to produce *surplus value* for the capitalist; which is only another way of saying that he is compelled to do a certain proportion of *unpaid labor* for the capitalist. The capitalist relation is thus an *exploitative* relation. Which is why we had repeatedly to point out to Mr. Masani that if you preserve private profits, you are bound to preserve exploitation.

It is plain from the above that what enables the capitalist to exploit the worker is precisely private ownership of the means of production. Which, again, is why we pointed out to Mr. Masani that the only way to abolish capitalist exploitation is to abolish capitalist private property.

Now, capitalist private property is but the capitalist means to private profit. No profits; no production: that is the capitalist law. For, the whole purpose of the capitalist production process is—private profit, which is but another name for the self-expansion of capital. The capitalist throws into the productive process a certain quantity of capital as a means to expanding it. That is the whole point in the process—for the capitalist. If at the end of the process the capital thus thrown in has not expanded, *i.e.* increased in quantity, the whole process is, from his point of view, useless. Which is why we say that capitalist production is but a means to capitalist profit. Production, which is essential to society, is only incidental to the process; profit is its motive, and profit its purpose.

Now, a characteristic of capitalism is the tendency of the rate of profit to fall—a tendency which has been proved historically to be a fact. That is to say, the amount of profit realized on a given quantity of capital invested has been falling steadily. Caught in this falling rate of profit, yet driven by the insatiable thirst for profit, the capitalist class has had to pile capital investment on capital investment as a means of at least maintaining, if not increasing, the actual total of profit made, as distinct from the rate of profit realized. That is to say, the realization of a given amount of profit required an ever increasing quantity of capital investment. And this connoted an increasing development of the productive forces of society. Private profit, or rather the hitching of production to private profit, was thus the very secret of capitalism's development of the productive forces of society.

It was, however, also the snag in the capitalist process. For every development of the productive forces of society must ultimately lead also to an increase in the actual production of commodities. And on the sale of these commodities ultimately also depends the actual *realization* of the profits which are imminent in the product during the productive process. And here, capitalism regularly and inevitably stalled. For, the consumers' commodities that are produced must in the end find their market in the very working mass from the exploitation of which surplus-value is extracted. And this very exploitation, the returning to labor of *less* than the equivalent it produces, ensures the incapacity of the working masses to purchase the very commodities they have produced.

Capitalism therefore moved periodically into crisis. This crisis manifested itself in an increasing mass of unsold goods in the capitalists' hands at the one end, and in an increasing mass of pauperized and unemployed workers, at the other. Unable to sell the accumulating mass of goods, the capitalists had no alternative but to cut down or stop production. And this, in turn, connoted more and more men thrown out of work, and therefore a progressive intensification of the crisis.

In every crisis but the last, *i.e.* previous to the 1929-1932 crisis, capitalism broke through the vicious circle not only by the beating down of wages as a means to restoring profitability, but also by the opening of fresh foreign markets and by technical improvements which enabled greater production at lesser cost, *i.e.* by reducing the costs of production as a means to cheapening commodities and enabling them to be sold at a profit for a lower price. That is to say, capitalism rose out of the former depressions by *developing* the productive forces of society and extending the area of the world over which it had its grip. That was the secret of the capitalist colonial process.

With the complete extension of capitalism over the globe, however, the outlet of further colonial expansion, including intensified colonial exploitation, became progressively less available to capitalism as a whole. At the same time, the tremendous

development of the productive forces of society, accompanied by the relative decrease in the labor force that technical improvement connoted, headed capitalism into the most tremendous crisis it had ever known. This was the depression of 1929-1932, which was unlike its predecessors in its universality, in the catastrophic precipitateness of the fall in prices, in the gigantic accumulation of unsold goods, and in the tremendous volume of mass unemployment.

The crisis of 1929-1932 proved to be different also in another fundamental way. Capitalism discovered that it could no longer restore its profitability by the *development* of its productive forces, but only by *restricting* their development. International restriction schemes, government-sponsored "rationalization" schemes involving the deliberate destruction of enterprises etc., etc., such were the new devices which, in addition to the perennial device of wage-cutting, capitalism employed to climb out of the crisis, *i.e.* to restore the profitability of capitalist enterprise, in 1929-1932. In other words, profits, the former driving force of capitalism's development of the productive forces of society, had become an absolute fetter on, and an obstacle to, their development.

It is important to note a further feature of the 1929-1932 crisis, *viz.* that the boomlet which followed it was unable to pull capitalism back even to the level from which the depression had begun. Every previous depression under capitalism had been followed by a boom which pulled capitalism to levels higher than those reached previous to the depression. This time it was otherwise. The rise of 1934-1937 was only a boomlet, and a new "recession" was already becoming apparent at the time the present war began in spite of intensified world re-armament. Capitalism had plainly entered on the era of its general decline.*

Why Socialism?

This is precisely the outcome, which Marx had prophesied for capitalism as a result of his analysis of its inherent laws of development, *viz.* that capitalism was historically doomed by reason of its inherent contradictions. Marx, however, was no mere academic researcher; he was a dialectician, that is to say, he sought to discover not only the law of motion of capitalism but also the solution for capitalism's problems. And this, he laid bare on the basis of the very contradiction which was driving capitalism to its doom.

The basic contradiction of the capitalist system, we have noted, was that between the associated labor process and the individual appropriation of the product. The former was the secret of the increase in the productivity of labor which capitalism has witnessed; the latter the snag that stalled and ultimately choked production. This contradiction itself flowed from the divorce of the actual producer, the worker, from the means of production; that is from the capitalist property relation—private property. The solution of the problem obviously lay in the restoration to the producer of free access to the means of

*In view of Mr. Masani's remark: "that old type capitalism is played out is obvious"; and of his strictures in another place on "laissez faire" capitalism, it is worth stressing that the capitalism which finds itself in the impasse we have described above is not merely "old type" capitalism or laissez faire capitalism but new type capitalism, monopoly capitalism. Laissez faire capitalism long ago, by the end of the 19th Century, evolved through the development of the capitalist competition process itself into finance-capital dominated monopoly capitalism, *i.e.* imperialism, whose characteristic form of organization is the capitalist trust. It was in this stage that capitalism reached its highest development; and it was also in this stage that capitalism entered on its decay.

production *i.e.* in the abolition of the capitalist property relation, *viz.* capitalist private property.

This restoration could, conceivably, be in one of two directions: the restoration of the means of production to the producers *individually*—a *regressive* "solution" which would connote the return of man to an earlier and lower stage of social development inasmuch as it would destroy the associated labor process with its enhanced productivity; or the restoration of the means of production to the producers *collectively*, *i.e.* socialization of the means of production, a *progressive* solution inasmuch as it would preserve the associated labor process while freeing the productive forces from the fetter of private profit.

It will be clear now why Marxists say socialism is the only progressive alternative to capitalism, the only solution of the contradictions of capitalism which can carry mankind to a higher stage of social organization. For, this solution alone preserves the technical gains of capitalism and enables them to be used as a basis for further development of the productive forces in the service of mankind.

Socialism is thus the road *forward* from capitalism, the next higher stage of progressive social evolution. This is what Marx proved scientifically by analyzing capitalism itself. He also did more. He showed that the direction of capitalism's own development was towards the socialist solution; that is to say, he proved that within capitalism itself the technical basis for the socialist society was being created. How? By the increasing concentration of capital, on the one hand, which, on the other, connoted the increasing socialization of the production process. The economic basis for socialism was being created under capitalism. The world was ripening under capitalism itself for socialism.

Marx thus gave to socialism a scientific—and as we shall see, also a revolutionary—basis. There had been socialists before Marx, that is to say, imaginative thinkers who had conceived of the socialist society as a desirable and higher stage of social organization. These were the Utopian socialists. Marx was the first scientific socialist.

Marx was also a revolutionist. "Philosophers *interpret* the world in various ways," he said, "the point, however, is to *change* it." Wherefore Marx showed not only *what* the solution to capitalism's problem was, but also *how* to implement it. For Marxism is a dynamic, and active philosophy of social change, and not a static and contemplative philosophy of social interpretation.

The final agent of social change is man. For, on the manner in which man acts on social forces depends the *pace and outcome* of their development. The recognition of this is fundamental to Marxism and relieves it of that mechanistic fatalism which would otherwise arise from the scientific demonstration of the twin facts that capitalism is developing towards its doom and that capitalism is creating within itself the economic prerequisites for the socialist society. When Marx spoke of the "inevitability" of socialism, he meant, on the one hand, that, given correct human action it could come into being, and, on the other, that he anticipated that this human action would be taken. He did not mean that socialism was bound to come, mechanically of itself, independent of human action. On the contrary, he expressly stated that the destruction of capitalism could lead to socialism—or barbarism.

That the latter could come out of capitalism's disintegration, that it, too, is an alternative, the world has proof of already in the phenomenon called Fascism. Fascism is the product of capitalist decay; it is, indeed, organized capitalist decay. Should

the socialist solution fail to be applied, capitalism is doomed to accelerated disintegration through an oscillatory process, interrupted and hastened by wars, of depression—boomlet—deeper depression, which is the reverse of the boom—depression—higher boom oscillation which characterized its rise. For, whatever else be possible, one thing is impossible—the stabilization of capitalism at any given stage of development or decay.

It is plain from the above how utterly shallow is Mr. Masani's conception of the Marxism which he says he once believed. "You had *somehow* to destroy capitalism and then, as day follows night, socialism *must* dawn." That is Marxism according to Mr. Masani. It certainly is not Marxism according to Marx. Which, no doubt, was why Marx said, as Mr. Masani alleges, "thank God I am not a Marxist!" If he did say so, he must have been thinking of contemporary examples of Mr. Masani and his ilk.

No! Marx did not say or imply that if you *somehow* destroy capitalism socialism *must* dawn. That is a fatalist and mechanistic conception with which Marxism has nothing in common. What Marx did teach and demonstrate was that if you destroy capitalism *in a certain way*, that is, by a certain form of social action, the road to socialism would be opened. In what way? In the revolutionary way. As we shall briefly explain.

If socialism is to be the outcome of capitalism's downfall, it is necessary that mankind take conscious action in that direction. Now, the governing law of social development is the class struggle. To ensure social development in a given direction, it is necessary to act appropriately on the class forces of society. The basic classes of capitalist society are the capitalist class and the working class. Between them there is already a struggle going on; the struggle by the capitalist class to maintain its system of exploitation, and the struggle by the working class to overthrow it. What Marx taught and demonstrated was that the road to socialism lay through the carrying forward to its logical conclusion of this struggle by the working class against the capitalist class. Why did he teach this? Not out of "selfishness" or "hate," as Mr. Masani would have it; but by reason of scientifically established necessity.

Marx showed that the successful carrying forward of the struggle of the working class to free itself from capitalist exploitation would open the road to socialism by demonstrating that the working class could not emancipate itself without also emancipating all society. In order to emancipate itself, the working class would have to expropriate the capitalists and socialize their property. But the process of socializing the means of production, distribution and exchange is also the process of

bringing in the "international, classless and democratic" society which Mr. Masani agrees is still the ideal to be aimed at—an ideal, however, which he postpones to the Greek Kalends.* The process of the working class emancipating itself from capitalism is therefore also the process of emancipating all mankind from exploitation.

Now, the carrying forward of the class struggle to success connotes the overthrow of the capitalist state power and the expropriation of the capitalist class. You cannot keep the capitalist state power and expropriate the capitalist class as Mr. Masani seems sometimes to assume with his managerial revolution and his trustee capitalism. You cannot, because the capitalist state power is precisely the instrument for the defense of capitalist property. It cannot be used for the opposite purpose. It must be replaced. Replaced—and not merely destroyed. By what can it be replaced? Only by the workers' state power which will carry through to the end and consolidate the expropriation of the capitalists.

We thus see what Marx saw and demonstrated: that socialism is the only progressive alternative to capitalism and that the bringing of the socialist society into being *demands* the carrying forward of the revolutionary class struggle to its logical conclusion, *i.e.* the overthrow of the capitalist class and its state, and the setting up of the proletarian dictatorship with its statified property. These are the necessary means to the given end. Abandon the end, and you abandon the means—which is really what Mr. Masani has done, and not the other way round as he seeks to imply by the order in which he has set out his four "reconsiderations" of Marxist "assumptions." Yes, Mr. Masani—abandon the end, and you abandon the means. What is more, since you are so interested in the question of ends and means, abandon the means, and you imperil, nay miss the end. For ends determine means, and means condition ends. That is their dialectic interrelation; an interrelation which the masses understand from experience though you cannot understand it from too much reading of superficial philosophy. Therefore we can be sure, Mr. Masani, that although you may "reconsider," *i.e.* abandon, socialism, the proletarian masses will not. While you and your mentors, the renegade intellectuals of putrefying capitalism, retreat along the road to reaction and Fascism, the workers of the world will go, *via* the class struggle, *via* the proletarian dictatorship and the "nationalization" of private property—**FORWARD TO SOCIALISM!**

*A time which will never come, since the Greeks had no Kalends.

The Political Position of the Minority in the SWP

By FELIX MORROW

The following article by Comrade Morrow deals with the controversial issues which arose during the pre-convention discussion and which then came before the Eleventh Convention of the Socialist Workers Party. In this article, which is published for the information of our readers, Comrade Morrow presents his own views and position. For the position of the SWP majority we refer our readers to the December 1944 issue of *Fourth International* which carried the European resolution adopted by the Convention and the editorial article "The Eleventh Convention of the American Trotskyist Movement"; and also to E. R. Frank's "The Imperialist War and Revolutionary Perspectives," which appeared in the February 1945 issue of our magazine.—Ed.

In the December *Fourth International* there appeared an article by the editors, "The Eleventh Convention of the American Trotskyist Movement." One of its sections was entitled "Convention Minority." It proceeds from the correct statement that the minority had its origin at the party plenum of October 1943 where a dispute arose over the plenum resolution. But what actually were the issues in dispute at the plenum; what happened to those issues in the course of the dispute; to what extent the majority and minority had arrived at a common position by the time of the November 1944 convention—on these,

the really important questions, the editors of *Fourth International* have not a word to say.

Nor do they help the reader by their choice of documents which they publish in the same issue. The reader is told that the minority "took issue with the resolution" on "The European Revolution and the Tasks of the Revolutionary Party." In actual fact, however, this resolution in its *final* form was voted for by the minority. Instead, the reader is left with the impression that the final convention resolution of *November 1944* represents only the position of the majority, while side by side with it is published, as representing the position of the minority, my *December 1943* criticism of the *October 1943 plenum resolution*. True, my article of December 1943 is relevant to a complete understanding of the dispute. But my article is relevant when one reads it in conjunction with the October 1943 plenum resolution which it criticised; it belongs to *that stage* of the dispute. Without a word of explanation, however, the December 1944 issue of *Fourth International* counterposes my 1943 article to the final convention resolution of November 1944! The reader is not told that this resolution of a year later does not repeat the errors which I objected to in the 1943 plenum resolution. Thus the puzzled reader finds me complaining about things which he does not find in the final convention resolution. What is going on here? the reader must wonder. He is provided with an answer by the article of the editors and by the speech in the same issue of Comrade Frank, reporter for the National Committee. These two items tell the reader that behind the minority's ostensible position lie far more deepgoing differences: the minority has "an exaggerated appraisal of the role of bourgeois democracy and its potentialities," a false economic theory on which it bases this appraisal, it thinks US imperialism has "inexhaustible powers," it has been fooled by the democratic veneer of the imperialists, etc. etc.

What the Real Disputes Were

The three principal issues in dispute at the October 1943 plenum, and their final fate, should have been outlined in the article of the editors which purported to describe the dispute. It is now necessary to do this.

1. *The theory of "Franco-type governments" as the sole method to be employed by US imperialism and the European bourgeoisie in ruling Europe.* On this the minority stated: "That the draft plenum resolution erred in excluding the possibility of the use of bourgeois-democratic methods by the European bourgeoisie and its American imperialist masters; they would in all probability attempt to stem the European revolution not only by the use of military and fascist dictatorships but also where necessary by the use of bourgeois democracy." A few sentences from the minority amendments along this line were included in the final text of the plenum resolution, but side by side with them remained the contrary view of the majority's main formulations. In September 1944 the Political Committee issued its draft resolution on the same subject for the coming Eleventh Convention: this again enunciated the theory of "naked military dictatorship" as the Allies' sole "pattern" for ruling Europe. The minority offered amendments to delete this theory. Until the very eve of the convention the Political Committee stood its ground. But then it presented a series of "clarifying and literary amendments" which deleted the formulations on this question which the minority had proposed to delete. Thus came substantial agreement between majority and minority on this question.

2. *The failure of the Political Committee to say one word, in its draft plenum resolution, about the method of democratic and transitional demands, i.e., the method of winning the majority of the workers and peasants to the revolutionary party.* Amendments to rectify this omission were introduced by the minority. Instead of accepting them, the Political Committee introduced into the final plenum resolution the statement that the 1938 Program of the Fourth International "makes clear the value and necessity, as well as the limitations and subordinate character, of democratic slogans as a means of mobilizing the masses for revolutionary action."

This formulation was confusing because (1) it did not affirm the method of democratic and transitional slogans—the method includes both and does not counterpose one to the other—as the method of winning a majority of the masses and (2) it appeared to minimize the role of democratic demands in the coming period in Europe. Hence the dispute on this question continued after the plenum. The Political Committee a year later corrected its position substantially, when its draft convention resolution dropped the plenum resolution's characterization of "the limitations and subordinate character" of democratic demands and instead spoke of a "bold program of transitional and democratic demands" as the method "to rally the masses for the revolutionary struggle." The one concrete democratic slogan proposed by the minority—for Italy: immediate proclamation of the democratic republic—was rejected by the majority; but the resolution took no position on the question. All that is in the final resolution is the formally correct generalization on the role of democratic and transitional demands. So far as the resolution is concerned, therefore, nothing remained in it of the original dispute on this question.

3. The third important dispute which originated at the October 1943 plenum was formulated as follows by the minority: "That the draft resolution erred in minimizing the Stalinist danger; we must recognize that the victories of the Red Army have temporarily strengthened the prestige of Stalinism; and we must, therefore, include in the resolution a warning of the very real danger of Stalinism to the European revolution." Rejecting this view, the majority persisted in repeating in the final plenum resolution its original formulations: a whole section on "The Significance of the Soviet Victories" which saw in them only progressive consequences; and a condemnation of "defeatists" who "foresee only a repetition of the Spanish events in Stalin's political maneuvers in Europe" whereas the majority proclaimed "the vast differences in conditions between the Spanish revolution and the coming European revolution." But a year later the Political Committee had to retreat; its September 1944 draft convention resolution abandoned the formulations of the plenum and—as the minority had originally proposed—warns of the "unmistakable danger signals that Stalin is prepared to repeat his hangman's work in Spain on a continental scale." Thus this dispute, too, was resolved.

The Alleged Disputes

1. Are the Imperialisms "Equally Predatory"?

Not a word about all this appears in the December article of the editors of *Fourth International*. Instead it lists "three main flaws" in my 1943 article and thereby conveys the impression that these "flaws" were the issues in the dispute. Actually these "flaws" were secondary details. But since the editors make so much of them, it is necessary to examine them.

"1) The contention that American imperialism is less predatory in character than German imperialism; that 'this difference between the two great imperialisms aspiring to subjugate Europe is based on the difference in the economic resources of the two'; and that therefore 'it is quite false' to refer to them as 'equally predatory.'"

The editors thus quote my phrase that the two imperialisms are not "equally predatory," but take good care not to try to refute me on the real question I had posed: is it not a fact that US imperialism is employing very different methods than Nazi imperialism in Europe? I had written: "Hence it is quite false when the plenum resolution, without distinguishing between the long-term and short-term perspectives, says: 'Europe, today enslaved by the Nazis, will tomorrow be overrun by equally predatory Anglo-American imperialism.' Equally imperialist, yes, but not 'equally predatory.' One could permit oneself such language loosely in an agitational speech; but it has no place in a plenum resolution, which should provide a coldly precise estimate of *the different methods which are being employed by different imperialisms.*" Instead of politically grappling with the different methods of the two imperialisms, the editors of *Fourth International* pick out the one phrase about not "equally predatory." Very well, let us examine it.

The robbery and looting practised by Nazi imperialism we all know about: outright confiscation of Jewish property; dismantling and shipping factories and machinery to Germany; looting of gold stores and art treasures, etc. Nazi oppression, too, we know about: the cremation plants, the mass executions of hostages, totalitarian rule, mass deportations and forced labor, etc.

Are the Allies doing the same in Italy and France? Obviously not. Call the Allies' rule, if you will, predatory, robbing and looting. But you cannot call it "equally predatory" as that of the Nazis. If you call it that, as the majority has insisted on doing, it makes us look ridiculous to the world which knows better.

2. (a) Why Bourgeois Democracy?

"2) From this appreciation of the 'less predatory' character of American imperialism, Morrow proceeds to construct his theory that the European masses will in the period ahead fall prey to illusions centering around the character and role of US imperialism. He contends that these illusions will persist because:

"Unlike Nazi occupation, American occupation will be followed by improvement in food supplies and in the economic situation generally. Where the Nazis removed factory machinery and transportation equipment, the Americans will bring them in. These economic contrasts . . . cannot fail for a time to have political consequences."

"On this double foundation of a 'short-time' improvement in European living standards and the consequent reinforcement of bourgeois democratic illusions, Morrow greatly exaggerates the role of bourgeois democracy in Europe."

This description of my position makes it seem that I stated that bourgeois democracy would have a role in Europe solely as the result of "illusions centering around the character and role of US imperialism." One has only to turn to the minority's plenum and convention amendments to see that this is not so.

The majority originally based its denial of the possibility of bourgeois democracy primarily on the *subjective aims* (methods) of the Allies: "The Allies will not sanction the slightest democracy," etc. Thus the majority failed to understand that the subjective aims (methods) of the ruling classes change under the impact of the class struggle. The minority, on the other hand, followed a different method. It saw an evolution

toward bourgeois democracy in Europe as the *objective resultant* of the class struggle and of the struggle between the contending capitalist classes. The Allies may not desire this objective resultant, the working class may and in fact strives for something more, nevertheless this is the objective resultant of the conflict among the various forces at this stage.

Factor No. 1 for us was the struggle of the European proletariat and its objective effect on the state power. That was the factor we began with, and not the aims of US imperialism. With the collapse of fascism and the rise of the masses again to their feet, the question of what is to come can only be answered in terms of the situation of the revolutionary Marxist parties in the various European countries. Trotsky said more than once that the collapse of fascism could be followed by the socialist revolution only under the condition that great mass revolutionary parties had managed to form themselves under the extraordinarily difficult conditions of fascism; otherwise one would first have a period of bourgeois democracy. No such mass revolutionary parties exist yet. The struggle of the masses is limited by the fact that it still accepts the leadership of the reformist parties. The *objective resultant* is bourgeois democracy.

Another factor making for bourgeois democracy is the resistance of a section of the French capitalist class, led by de Gaulle, to US domination. There was much indignation at the plenum, notably from Comrade Cannon, when I defined the Gaullists as a bourgeois-democratic tendency. The majority could not understand this quite simple phenomenon, that a section of the French capitalist class, first to resist German imperialism and then to resist US domination, was for a period basing itself on the masses through the mediation of the reformist parties. Even as late as the December *Fourth International* we have the speech of Comrade Frank which defines the present French government as a military dictatorship; fortunately, the final convention resolution has nothing in it about de Gaulle at all, so that Frank's statement cannot claim convention ratification.

In sum, the minority saw an evolution toward bourgeois democracy as the objective resultant of (1) the rising struggle of the proletariat; (2) the limitations of that struggle due to the present hegemony of the Stalinists and Social Democrats and the smallness of the Fourth International parties; (3) the resistance of French imperialism, supporting itself on the masses, to US domination; (4) the ability of US imperialism to shift from methods of military dictatorship to bourgeois democratic methods under the given conditions; (5) the pressure of the US and British masses in opposition to imposition of dictatorships.

These were the factors we saw making for bourgeois democracy and not "illusions centering around the character and role of US imperialism." Nevertheless such illusions do exist among the European masses, due precisely to the methods employed by US imperialism different from those of Nazi imperialism.

2. (b) Why the US Will Aid Europe

I am told that the majority leaders made speeches in the branches against Morrow's outrageous theory that US imperialism was going to feed and reconstruct Europe. That, of course, was not my thesis; I said that US imperialism would bring goods and machinery whereas the Nazis took these things away. Can this seriously be denied?

On the question of American food to Europe, the minority introduced the following amendment:

"The Allies have not stopped talking about the sending of food to Italy. They try by that to save the remnants of hope in their benevolence. No doubt, when the Italian masses return to their offensive, this talk may materialize in a precipitated sending of food. Food will become, as it has often been in the past, a counter-revolutionary weapon, a means of blackmail against revolution and a tool to revive confidence in the bourgeois system."

Isn't this ABC Marxism? Then why was the amendment rejected? Can the majority comrades seriously deny that the concentration of shipping for military purposes has been a cause of small food shipments and that when this eases much more food will be sent?

Even leaving aside the fact that US imperialism will be forced to send food and machinery to Europe in order to back the European bourgeoisie against the danger of proletarian revolution, is there any reason why US imperialism would not make large loans for food and machinery (not to mention selling the goods and being paid in gold, art treasures, materials, etc.)? Comrade E. R. Frank thinks there is such a reason: "Wall Street wants not the rebuilding of European economy, but to render impossible its revival as a competitor." False in this is the inference, from Wall Street's hostility to competitors, that it will not help them rebuild. Since when has any capitalist nation refused to sell and lend to another because that would eventually result in the latter becoming a competitor? That is simply one of the contradictions of capitalism.

Trotsky never said that America would not sell or lend heavy machinery to the European countries. It was not in this way that he thought of America as ruining Europe. He knew very well that it was with the aid of America's 1924-1928 loans that German industry was reconstructed and that this *could happen again after the next war*, if not in Germany itself, then certainly in other countries of Europe. Simultaneously, however, with its loans to Germany, US imperialism was spreading everywhere so that when German industry was reconstructed it found its possible markets preempted by American and other imperialisms. America was aiming to put Europe "on rations," said Trotsky, *in the sphere of world markets*.

One must understand the elementary distinction between America lending Europe money and materials to help rebuild its industrial plant and then America barring the reconstructed industries from returning to a large part of their former markets.

Comrade E. R. Frank thinks it can't happen again. He says: "If it was possible for American imperialism to stabilize European capitalism after the last war by loans on the basis of a bourgeois-democratic regime in Germany, then today American imperialism sees as its only program the dismemberment and destruction of Germany as an economic power and the preservation of capitalism with its own bayonets propping up dictatorial regimes."

Why is it no longer possible for US imperialism to make big loans, if not to Germany, then to the other European countries? Comrade Frank says it isn't possible, but gives no reasons. He finds it well-nigh incredible that I should write: "The short-term perspective is that American imperialism will provide food and economic aid to Europe and will thus for a time appear before the European masses in a very different guise than German imperialism." What is wrong with my statement? He says: "Morrow apparently took for good coin some of the stories floating around about building TVA's on the Danube." This joke shows that Comrade Frank fails completely to understand the distinction between helping Europe rebuild and barring it from markets.

Both to save Europe from revolution and to keep American factories going, US imperialism will help Europe rebuild its industrial plant. But it will keep Europe "on rations" so far as permitting Europe to retrieve its former markets. And without these markets, Europe is condemned to ruin under capitalism.

Had the editors thought of these elementary considerations, they could never have objected to my statement that "Where the Nazis removed factory machinery and transportation equipment, the Americans will bring them in."

3. The Question of Ultra-Leftism

Finally, we come to the third "major flaw" in my article:

"3) The contention that 'the main danger *within* the Fourth International' lies 'in the direction of ultra-leftism.'"

How did the question of ultra-leftism arise in the first place? I tell this in my article of December 1943: "In the plenum discussion, a number of supporters of the draft resolution justified its passing over the problem of democratic demands, and its preoccupation with reiterating programmatic fundamentals, by referring to the danger within the Fourth International of opportunism and revisionism." In answer, I stated in part: The young parties of the Comintern suffered primarily not from opportunism but from ultra-leftism. It was against this tendency that Lenin in 1920 wrote '*Left Wing Communism—an Infantile Disorder*'. If, despite the tremendous prestige of the victorious Bolsheviks, the Comintern was so pervaded by ultra-leftist deviations, the same phenomenon is far more likely to confront the Fourth International at the end of the war.

I confess that it would never have occurred to me that anyone in our movement would take issue with this statement. Our parties in Europe are young parties. Even where, as in France, there is some continuity with the past, the leading cadres are decimated and new and inexperienced elements must provide leadership. All I was saying, then, is that ultra-leftism is an infantile disorder. *The only practical conclusion I drew is that we must warn our European comrades of the necessity of a program of democratic and transitional demands*. This practical conclusion is at last accepted by the majority—which then proceeds to attack me for the entirely incidental references to the danger of ultra-leftism!

The majority arguments on this score are truly astonishing. "It is far more correct," Comrade Frank lectures me, "to say that in the period of revolutionary rise the main danger comes from the opportunist direction. Consider Lenin's own party. In 1917 . . ." etc. But I was talking about young, infant parties just beginning to make their way; and Comrade Frank refutes me by telling us about the opportunism of Zinoviev and Kamenev on the eve of the Bolshevik seizure of power! He then proceeds to enumerate some examples of opportunism in the Comintern parties in 1919 and 1920. True. But the same period was also full of ultra-leftist errors: the one kind does not exclude the other, except in the head of Comrade Frank.

Finally, this crushing argument from Comrade Frank: "It was only at the Third Congress of the Comintern, after the first wave of the revolutionary tide had already passed, that the struggle was first launched against the ultra-leftist danger." The Third Congress took place June 22-July 12, 1921. But Lenin's '*Left Wing Communism—an Infantile Disorder*' is dated April 27, 1920 and was explicitly issued to prepare the discussion at the Second Congress which took place July-August 1920, *i.e.*, in the period of revolutionary rise.

Arguing for democratic demands, I referred to the danger of

ultra-leftism. There should not have been a moment's disagreement with my truism. But this discussion ends, according to the editors of *Fourth International*, with nothing less than a convention rejection of my "theory" of ultra-leftism!

The same is true of the other two "main flaws" found in my article by the editors: they are not rejected by the convention resolution for the good and sufficient reason that they were

not the real issues in dispute. And the real issues in dispute were no longer in dispute by the time of the *final* resolution, because the majority had abandoned its original positions. That is why the minority could vote for the resolution. Such are the indisputable facts which the editors failed to report in what purported to be a summary of the nature and results of the dispute.

Theses on Liquidation of World War II and the Revolutionary Upsurge

I. The Decomposition of the Capitalist System and the Second Imperialist War

EDITOR'S NOTE: In our March issue we published sections II and III of the theses adopted by the European Conference of the Fourth International in February 1944. Several comrades objected to our having omitted the whole of section I, as well as the theses relating to the Soviet Union. The omitted material appears below. In reading the theses relating to the USSR, the date of their adoption—February 1944—should be borne in mind. In the intervening period various sections of the world Trotskyist movement, including the European sections, have been engaged in a discussion of the Russian question in the light of the new objective situation. The latest documents from Europe clearly indicate an agreement that a change in tactics is indispensable. The previous emphasis on the defense of the USSR and the subordination of the struggle for the overthrow of Stalinism to the needs of this military defense cedes place today to the needs of defending the European revolution against all its enemies, first and foremost, the main internal enemy—Stalinism.

* * *

1. Like the war of 1914-1918, the second imperialist war is above all a striking manifestation of the revolt of the productive forces created by capitalism against the narrow confines of the national state which destroy the organic unity of the world market and against the anarchistic functioning of capitalist economy. The imperialist phase of capitalism has been engendered by the internal needs of the productive forces whose tendency is to destroy the frontiers of the national states and to create a unified European and world economic entity.

But to the degree to which the financial oligarchy of the big conquering imperialist states, by enclosing the world market in a network of trusts, cartels and consortiums, only aggravated the contradictions and accentuated the anarchy, clashing more violently than ever against the restricted purchasing power of the masses, it led with inexorable necessity to the monstrous explosions of war.

2. The immediate cause of the second imperialist war was the change in the relation of forces among the imperialist powers which no longer corresponded to the division of the spheres for capital export, markets and raw materials established by the Versailles Treaty.

In the interval of the twenty years that elapsed since the first world conflict, and despite the attempt of the great imperialist powers (United States, Britain, France, Japan) to create by means of the Versailles Treaty a permanent basis for their world domination, the economic potential of the various capitalist countries was considerably modified and a new relation-

ship of forces appeared which found its most finished expression in an armed struggle.

While British and French imperialisms, weakened, shaken up and already undermined by the first imperialist war, slowly declined in power, US imperialism, because of the natural wealth of the country, the extent of its internal market, its superior technical equipment and the colossal hoard accumulated during the war of 1914-18, obtained a preponderant position within world imperialism as a whole.

The center of gravity of the world economy was transferred from Europe to America.

On the other hand, the US made possible the rapid recovery of Germany, by contributing generously to the reconstruction of her industries on a broader scale. Thus the antagonisms of the European states were rekindled and aggravated all the more because the rations for which the European imperialisms combated each other became ever more meager, decreasing constantly precisely because of the pressure exerted by the US upon European economy.

In the Far East Japanese imperialism, profiting from the extremely low standard of living of its native labor and from the virgin Asiatic market nearby, underwent a new upswing and clashed ever more violently with the other imperialist powers which challenged it for domination of this same economic sphere.

Finally, the October Revolution withdrew from the confines of the world market one-sixth of the globe's surface and one of the principal raw material producing countries.

Within the framework of this development of the main economic powers of the world, analogous processes, albeit of a secondary order, also took place: in Europe, a number of countries, among them Italy, the Balkans, Poland, became more and more industrialized. A similar development took shape in South America, Australia, Egypt, North Africa; Turkey, India and China.

As a general result, the situation of the capitalist countries as a whole was aggravated, and these countries strove desperately to harmonize the development of their productive forces with a world market divided up among opposing groups, each protected against the other by insurmountable tariff barriers.

3. Each imperialism is impelled by the internal logic of its development to undertake the struggle for world domination.

Three great imperialist powers sought to revise the economic map of the world for their exclusive profit: the US, Germany and Japan. Two other imperialist powers fought to preserve the status quo, which was particularly beneficial to them: Britain and France. The other capitalist countries aligned themselves with the five principal masters of the world, in accordance with their economic interests or dependence.

The USSR, left without imperialist attachments with the rest of the capitalist world, vacillated between the two opposing camps and sought to prevent a general coalition against itself as well as to profit from their mutual enfeeblement in the course of the war in order to pursue its work of economic reconstruction.

4. The second imperialist war for a new redivision of the world broke out at a moment when, on the one hand, the whole of the capitalist world was once again menaced by an economic crisis and when increased military preparations constituted the only artificial market capable of replacing the non-existing real market and when on the other hand, the revolutionary upsurge in France and in Spain had already been crushed, thus removing the most powerful obstacle to the outbreak of the imperialist slaughter.

The second world war undertook, on the basis of a new relation of forces, the redivision of the world, including the isolated market of the USSR, for the benefit of finance capital. The existence of the USSR, despite the bureaucratic degeneration of its regime, superimposed upon the main design of the struggle occupied by the imperialist antagonisms, a background design of common opposition on the part of world imperialism against the workers' state.

5. As in the first imperialist war, the bourgeoisie, aided by the mendacious propaganda of the degenerated workers parties of the Second and ex-Third Internationals, sought from the beginning of the present conflict to camouflage its imperialist character by means of abstract political principles, such as the irreconcilable opposition between the "democracies" and "Fascism." In reality these two political forms correspond to the different economic levels of the privileged imperialist blocs (Britain, France, the US) and the less privileged imperialist blocs (Germany, Italy, Japan) and constitute merely two phases of the general political reaction which is inherent in capitalism as a whole during its imperialist stage.

6. The cohesion of the two imperialist gangs confronting each other in the war represents simply an unstable conjuncture of contradictory interests. The "Anglo-Saxon" facade conceals the contradiction between British and American imperialism, which will take on ever more violent forms as the war comes to a close. The Axis bloc, which has already broken down at its weakest link (Italy), is only a sum of imperialist powers which in reality have divergent policies and aims.

Respective War Aims

In the light of a critical examination of the development of the war, the aims pursued by each of the protagonists appear to be the following:

German imperialism plunged into the war hoping to get a decisive result in Europe quickly, before British imperialism could concentrate its forces and before the US could intervene actively. Having premeditated the attack against the USSR, the German imperialists believed a compromise could be reached on this basis, leaving them the preponderant place in Europe and a share of the colonies.

Italian imperialism, lacking the necessary economic base for a self-confident, audacious and determined policy of its own, was at first forced to adopt a blackmailing attitude, and only intervened actively in the conflict when the collapse of French imperialism made a swift German victory appear probable. Caught in the terrible tentacles of the war, they had only one constant concern: to seek the first favorable opportunity to get out of the war with the minimum damage.

Japanese imperialism, threatened by the immense power of its principal enemy, the United States, adopted a policy of conciliation toward the USSR, in order to guard its flanks and to concentrate all its efforts against the growing strength of British and American imperialism.

Due to the prodigious productivity of its industry, even more concentrated and perfected in the course of the war, due to the colossal accumulation of inactive capital, itself due to the influx of gold and securities, and to the excessive debts heaped up by the other "Allied" countries, North American imperialism stood in danger of being asphyxiated unless it opportunely expanded all over the globe, an expansion that would surpass by far all the imperialist conquests of the past. That is why American imperialism plays the most intransigent role in the conduct of the war; that is why it is a "bitter-ender" par excellence, why it will prolong the conflict, if it can, until the total extermination of all its adversaries, including the USSR.

British imperialism, while collaborating as an auxiliary force in the game played by the United States, attempts to pursue a policy of its own which would preserve it from total submission to the plans of its formidable partner and permit it to continue in considerable measure to dominate international trade, in spite of the inferiority of its industrial and financial potential to that of the US. It seeks, moreover, to retard the rhythm of its decadence in the face of the alarming expansion of American imperialism through the acquisition of a share of the colonies and other economic vantage points of French, Italian, German and Japanese imperialisms. But the maritime and commercial superiority which it was able to maintain until after the war of 1914-18, is today definitely lost. In this domain, too, the United States has acquired in the course of the war an incontestable supremacy which restricts even more the economic base of British imperialism and accelerates its decline.

French imperialism, knocked out of the struggle in the very first round, in this way paid for the disproportion between its meager economic and military potential at home and the enormous dimensions of its colonial empire. Its defeat by German imperialism during the phase of the war in which the arena of the struggle was occupied almost exclusively by these two imperialist rivals simply served to establish the right of the stronger of the two.

The prolongation and extension of the conflict has enabled the defeated French imperialism to regain its feet to a certain degree and has thrown it once more into the cycle of the struggle, thanks to the interplay of imperialist antagonisms, and thanks to the current necessities of the war and the political exigencies of an eventual capitalist peace. But capitalist France has definitely lost her place among the great imperialist powers. She can survive only as a secondary imperialist power, fated to facilitate a new European equilibrium dictated by the conquering imperialism.

Finally, the USSR, dragged into the conflict, as was inevitable, and at the moment chosen by the imperialists (despite

the maneuver of the Soviet bureaucracy in its pact with Hitler, which was designed to precipitate the war while leaving the USSR out of it), is being opposed, although with varying methods, by the capitalist world as a whole. Thus, while German imperialism deals the direct blow, Anglo-Saxon imperialism is letting her exhaust herself in the gigantic effort in order the better to exercise pressure on her, to wrest more easily political and economic concessions of increasing importance, and even to crush her completely.

7. The German imperialist attempt to unify Europe on the basis of capitalism, to smash the USSR and benefit thereby, and then to turn against American imperialism, is about to collapse under the weight of its own contradictions.

The most telling blows have been dealt German imperialism by the European proletariat (Italian revolution) and by the Red Army. The German imperialist attempt is one of the convulsive forms of the crisis of world imperialism, and proves the impossibility of unifying Europe on a capitalist basis. This attempt will be repeated tomorrow under the auspices of another imperialism unless the proletarian revolution establishes the victory of the workers and succeeds in creating the Soviet Socialist United States of Europe as the first stage in the socialist unification of the planet.

The imperialist conflict is being prolonged, not because of the effective resistance which German imperialism is capable of offering to the onset of the rival imperialists, but because the war has entered into its final stage, in which the problem of its liquidation is posed and in which considerations of a social character determine more than ever the military activity of British and American imperialism. It is being oriented in accord with their imperialist interests and in accord with the supreme interest of world imperialism.

Meanwhile, the profundity and the multiplicity of the imperialist contradictions, the absolute inability of the bourgeoisie to genuinely overcome them, the decomposition and the rotting away of ruling capitalist circles on the one hand, and the revolt which is rising irresistibly amid all layers of the toiling population on the other hand, constitute the prologue to the tremendous revolutionary crisis which will rock the entire sys-

tem of world imperialism. At an accelerated pace the pre-revolutionary period of today is preparing the social explosions of tomorrow. With an inexorable necessity, the imperialist war is developing toward its inevitable transformation into civil war. Consciousness of these facts weighs heavily on the minds of the world bourgeoisie and inspires attempts at inter-imperialist compromises as well as efforts at a "cold" settlement of the war.

The agreement with Badoglio, following upon the agreement with Darlan, shows clearly the essential path which the "Allied" powers wish to take. To speed up by means of blackmail the disintegration of the opponent coalition, to bring its members one after another into the "Allied" camp, thus preserving the existing order while tightening the noose around Germany, Hungary, Rumania, Finland—these are at present the main objectives of the diplomatic offensive which is being backed up by powerful concentrations of troops. All the reactionary forces of the neutral countries, from the Church to the Social Democratic bureaucrats, from Franco and Salazar to Ismet Inonu are being mobilized in a systematic offensive directed by the bourgeois circles of the occupied countries, including Vichy. The fundamental objective is to avoid any break in the continuity of bourgeois rule, any disruption of the state apparatus, any fissure through which the proletarian revolution could break through and cut a path of itself.

But such a perspective can be realized definitively only on the basis of an accelerated process of internal decomposition in the various countries. It requires necessarily delays in the conclusive maturing of the internal crisis in each of them. For these two reasons, while desiring to prevent the revolution, they are only speeding up the revolutionary crisis, as the example of Italy has shown. The advance of the Red Army can only increase this danger. That is why it is necessary for the "Allies" to be prepared for a powerful, lightning-swift intervention capable at the same time of irresistibly crushing the enemy and of sweeping along in its wave of military enthusiasm the first revolutionary stirrings. Successive or simultaneous recourse to these two methods is the foremost, the essential characteristic of the present phase.

The Advance of the Red Army And the Question of the Soviet Union

11. The uninterrupted offensive of the USSR since the winter of 1942-43 has demonstrated once again the tremendous possibilities of military and economic mobilization offered by a system of planned economy.

In the field of heavy industry, the Soviet Union possesses at present, in all likelihood, an economic potential considerably superior to the one she had at the beginning of the war, even after the devastation of part of its industrial regions, due to the intensified industrialization of the interior of the country. This fact alone suffices to demonstrate without any possible refutation the superiority of planned socialist methods in the economic realm. In fifteen years the USSR has achieved a place among the great industrial powers. But by that fact alone world capitalism tends more and more to lose hope in the possibility of regaining outlets on the Russian market.

12. In spite of the bureaucratic degeneration of its political leadership, in spite of the narrow nationalist policy of

the latter, its contempt for the world proletariat and its countless betrayals of the proletarian revolution, the USSR remains, in the minds of the broad working masses as well as in those of the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie, the main bastion of the international proletariat. The liquidation of the property forms and the mode of production existing in the USSR remains, in the mind of the bourgeoisie, the basic task within the general framework of the struggle against the revolution.

Contrariwise, the defense of the workers' state against the attacks of the bourgeoisie, constitutes now as before one of the most imperious tasks of the world proletariat.

Within the labor movement, a struggle must be led against the agents of every brand of imperialism who are pitted in a merciless struggle against the partisans of the defense of the workers' state.

13. Impelled by the necessities of the war and aided by the system of planned economy, the USSR has achieved tre-

mendous successes in the sphere of heavy industry. On the other hand, consumers' industries and agriculture itself have largely been sacrificed. The masses have paid with millions of souls dead from hunger, cold, pain and misery for the inability of the bureaucracy to achieve a harmonious development of production.

The war, sharpening intolerably the contradictions of Russian economy, has sounded the knell of the inevitable liquidation of the Bonapartist Stalinist bureaucracy. The latter is destined to perish without fail, either under the blows of world imperialism or under those of the proletarian world revolution.

In the midst of the difficulties created by the war, contradictory processes are taking place. In industry, the disproportion between heavy and light industry has increased. In agriculture, as well as among the ruling stratum, the tendencies toward the personal acquisition of wealth have become more accentuated. Speculation and primitive accumulation have grown considerably, particularly among the peasantry. The bureaucracy systematically encourages the well-to-do layers of the kolkhozes and, ominously enough, openly favors the black market, under the pretext of "developing personal initiative."

On the other hand, among the layers of the bureaucracy which are most closely linked to the masses, those whom the exigencies of war have thrown together with them into combat units and who are forced to share the horrible fate of the population deprived of medical care, and bread and shelter, who are integrated in the partisan groups or in the workers formations hastily thrown from the factories on to battlefields—among these a growing hostility will develop against the privileges of the big racketeers, against American imperialism.

The bureaucracy, caught between imperialism and the revolutionary upsurge, will tend to become ever more torn apart under the pressure of its internal contradictions. Then will come the hour when the Soviet proletariat, with the help of the international working class, will once again seize in its own hands the direction of the first workers state.

14. American imperialism represents the most formidable force of world imperialism. As such it is the main adversary of the workers' state. All the phrases about American friendship for the Soviet Union are merely vulgar deception designed to enlist the American working masses under the banner of Yankee imperialism. America's real policy is one of reintegrating the USSR in capitalist world economy.

At the present stage, the United States disposes of two basic means of pressure. After yielding up to the US the major part of her gold reserves, the Soviet Union has contracted a substantial foreign debt in exchange for deliveries of food, machinery and material. Thereby Wall Street has come into possession of financial means of pressure against the Russian state and the bureaucracy. On the other hand, the condition of the consumer's goods industries and of agriculture itself has created urgent import needs. Behind these two means of blackmail looms, in the most cynical fashion, the very threat of military intervention.

Between economic blackmail on one side and military intervention at the other, runs the gamut of a thousand different methods of direct and indirect intervention in the USSR: Demands for military bases in the Far East, demands for concessions in certain industries; the installation and control of factories with foreign capital; the utilization of the democratic and national aspirations of the masses; compromises with certain military or religious circles; the utilization of the emigrant governments of the border countries. The antagonisms which become manifest through the channels of these governments

and in their own internal life are above all expressions of this fundamental antagonism between the USSR and the capitalist countries.

The question as to which method world imperialism will resort in the last analysis, in the struggle for the liquidation of the workers' state, will depend upon the actual economic and military relation of forces, above all, upon the perspectives of revolution and counter-revolution. Most probably we shall witness a political offensive which will combine economic and political blackmail with military threats, internal maneuvers with an international offensive against the revolution.

15. The successive defeats of the world revolution, the exhaustion of the Russian proletariat after the years of the first world war, famine and civil war; the exigencies of state organization of production in a backward and devastated country, in which the standard of living of the masses—and consequently, their capacity of continual participation (in political life)—remained very low; all this brought the Stalinist bureaucracy to power.

In the course of the contradictory development of Russian economy, the bureaucracy has tended more and more to become a socially independent body, appropriating an ever greater share of the surplus value and conducting a balance of power policy between the Russian proletariat and the peasantry on the one hand, and the world working class and capitalism on the other. Impelled above all by the desire to defend its own privileges, it feels itself hemmed in between the menace of world imperialism and that of the international revolution which would politically and economically put an end to its rule. Its policy is therefore aimed at forestalling both dangers at the same time.

However, if the bureaucracy as a social layer can entertain no hopes of surviving, even in the case of an imperialist seizure of the USSR, the most privileged elements of it can indeed hope to have individually their privileged positions within the framework of capitalist restoration. That is why, in the last analysis, the most furious blows of the bureaucracy are directed against the revolution.

16. To the degree to which it renounces the methods of working class action in defence of the USSR, the bureaucracy cannot avoid resorting to the methods of imperialism itself (in the struggle) against imperialism. It must assure itself strategic frontiers. It must create spheres of influence. It must seek to seize such economic points of support as would allow it to reconstruct and stabilize its economy. Therein lies the reason for the appearance of the Panslav Congresses, the Union of Polish Patriots, the Free Germany Committee. Therein also, the utilization in the Balkans of religious propaganda and the "People's Front" partisans of Tito.

These are not simply means of blackmail, but a full-fledged plan of the Stalinist bureaucracy, paralleling in every respect the one put into effect in the Baltic countries and in Rumania at the time of the Russo-German alliance. In effect, this means utilizing the uprisings of the masses of people in order to make them serve the interests of the bureaucratic caste, by means of an alliance with a section of the bourgeoisie and the petty bourgeoisie. This maneuver is carried out under the banner of private property and of bourgeois democracy.

In reality, by its very nature, the bureaucracy is incapable of upholding either one of these two. The economy of the border countries cannot be aligned with that of Soviet economy except by utilizing the same methods; that is, the nationalization of industry, collectivization of agriculture and planning. Moreover, the bureaucracy cannot tolerate the slightest democracy.

On the contrary, the higher the level of the productive forces raises the specific weight of the proletariat and makes possible a genuine organization of proletarian democracy on the political as well as on the economic plane, all along the scale, all the more is the bureaucracy constrained to crush the self-movement of the proletariat in order to defend its own privileges. The fate of the Vilna Soviet in 1939 epitomizes what the bureaucracy has in store for the proletariat of the neighboring countries.

17. The flood tide of revolution will have a contradictory character insofar as Stalinism is concerned. Although it will undoubtedly sound the death-knell of the Soviet bureaucracy and of the Stalinist parties, it will begin by placing these very parties at the head of the masses. Although, as all indications seem to point, only Stalinism will be able to play the role of Super-Noske and Super-Negrin on a European scale, the rapid development of revolutionary events and the situation in the USSR will nevertheless create all the conditions for a break between the masses and the Stalinist leaders.

The front rank counter-revolutionary role which the Stalinist parties will be forced to play is only a partial and national reflection of the world-wide counter-revolutionary role of the Soviet bureaucracy. The latter considers the world revolution no less deadly a threat to its privileges than the armed intervention of imperialism.

The revolutionary upsurge in Europe will have profound echoes in the "democratic" countries which are now on the threshold of a revolutionary period and whose millions of soldiers will be stationed on the European continent, the crucible of the world revolution. Hemmed in between the danger of a revolutionary victory in Europe and its possible merger with the USSR, and paralyzed by the proletarian offensives in its own countries, imperialism will be forced to utilize the Soviet bureaucracy for the purpose of crushing the proletarian revolution.

However, the latter cannot fail to awaken the consciousness of the Russian workers. A series of swift victories of the working class would paralyze Stalin. On the other hand, it is possible that Stalin may have, for a certain time, greater freedom

of action in case the revolutionary movement suffers repeated and sanguinary defeats.

But, no matter what "favorable" conditions may face it, the Stalinist counter-revolutionary action cannot take on the character of Red Army occupations except on a very small scale (in the neighboring countries).

On the one hand, the bureaucracy is in too great a fear of the contact between the Soviet masses and the insurgent proletarian masses of the other countries and feels itself incapable of preventing their eventual fraternization. It is well aware, moreover, of its inability to control the revolutionary movements which the occupation and even the approach of the Red Army will unfurl in the countries of Central and Western Europe.

On the other hand, American imperialism, remaining fundamentally hostile to the USSR even in its bureaucratic form, can accept the counter-revolutionary action of the bureaucracy only on condition that it respects private property. But, if the tragic example of the Vilna Soviet reveals the counter-revolutionary intentions of the bureaucracy in the annexed regions, the examples of the Baltic countries, of Eastern Poland and of Bessarabia show at the same time that annexation is impossible except on condition of structural assimilation. Moreover, these annexations are open preparations for the eventual conflict with American imperialism.

Although, for all of these reasons, the large-scale use of the Red Army as a counter-revolutionary force is excluded, on the other hand, the GPU, the "military missions" and the backward contingents of the Red Army can very well play, in some cases, the deadly role assigned to them in Spain and, already in a certain measure, in China.

The limits of this action will be determined by the development of the proletarian revolution and will depend, in the last analysis, on the strength and influence of the Fourth International. But while we cannot determine in advance the extent, the intensity or the forms of this counter-revolutionary intervention of the bureaucracy, one thing is certain: the services which Stalin will render imperialism will serve to hurl him to his own grave.

From the Arsenal of Marxism

Disarmament and the United States of Europe

By LEON TROTSKY

Among the most significant writings of Leon Trotsky are those of his articles which deal with the burning problem of Europe's economic unification and the utter impotence of the bourgeoisie in coping with this problem. The entire course of Europe's development necessitates its unification. The sole progressive solution is the unification of the continent through a system of federated Socialist republics, operating their nationalized economies under a unified plan.

Previous failure to resolve this task by the only progressive class in Europe—its working class—has not removed the economic unification of

Europe from the agenda of history. As a matter of fact, in the space of a little more than three decades (1914-1945) we have witnessed several attempts by various reactionary capitalist forces to solve precisely this task. Thus the bourgeoisie of Germany has twice tried to unify Europe by force: the first time under the scepter of the Hohenzollerns in the world war of 1914-1918, and the second, under the aegis of Nazism in the present imperialist slaughter. The second attempt proved even more abortive than the first.

In the interval between these wars, a section of the French bourgeoisie

likewise made an attempt—through a series of diplomatic maneuvers under the direction of Premier Briand. This almost forgotten episode occurred in 1929 and, needless to say, it was equally fruitless. On that occasion Trotsky wrote the important article which we reprint in this issue.

Trotsky's approach to the "United States of Europe" is all the more instructive in view of the fact that in the period ahead, with the termination of the war in Europe, the task of the continent's unification is once again imperiously posed, and the road is once again opening up for a progressive solution through the proletarian revolution.

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1. How Can Europe Be United?

Briand senses the need of improving the historical lot of 350 million Europeans who are the bearers of highest civilization but who find it impossible to live through a single century without a dozen wars and revolutions. For the sake of pacifying our planet, MacDonald has crossed the Atlantic. On the agenda are the United States of Europe, disarmament, freedom of trade, peace. Capitalist diplomacy everywhere is cooking up a pacifist stew. Peoples of Europe, peoples of the world get out big spoons to swallow it with.

Why all this pother? After all, aren't the Socialists in power in the most important countries in Europe, or else preparing to assume power? Yes, that is just why! It is already apparent that Briand's plan and MacDonald's plan pursue the "pacification" of mankind from diametrically opposite directions. Briand wants to unify Europe as a defensive measure against America. MacDonald wants to earn the gratitude of America by helping her oppress Europe. Two trains are rushing to meet one another in order to save the passengers from—trainwreck.

A frown by the United States sufficed to cancel the Anglo-French naval agreement of July 28. This fact amply demonstrates just what the relationship of forces is in the world today. "Are you by any chance entertaining notions," America intimated, "that I propose to adjust myself to any negotiations you may conduct on either side of the Channel? If you want to discuss *seriously* then take the trouble to cross the Atlantic." And MacDonald promptly reserved a stateroom. This proved to be the most realizable part of the pacifist program.

At Geneva the would-be "unifiers" of the European continent felt scarcely more at ease than the bootleggers on the other side of the ocean. They kept their eyes warily cocked on the American police. Briand began and ended his speeches by vowing that the unification of Europe must in no case and under no circumstances be directed against America. God forbid. In reading these avowals the American politicians must have derived a twofold satisfaction: "Briand is rather scared of us. . . . But he won't put anything over on us, just the same."

While repeating Briand's words with respect to America, Streseman at the same time launched into a veiled polemic against him. Henderson polemicized against both of them, especially against the French Prime Minister. By and large the discussion at Geneva fell into the following pattern:

BRIAND: "In no case against the United States of America."

STRESEMAN: "Absolutely so. But some people have hidden plans—America can rely only on Germany."

MACDONALD: "I take my oath on the Bible that loyalty in friendship is exclusively the endowment of Britons, especially the Scotch."

That is how the "new international atmosphere" was created at Geneva.

The weakness of present-day Europe flows first and foremost from its economic dismemberment. The strength of the United States, on the contrary, is derived from its economic unity. The question is: How to arrange matters so that the unification of Europe is not directed against America, *i.e.* without changing the relationship of forces to America's disadvantage?

The *Daily Herald*, MacDonald's semi-official organ, September 10, 1929, characterized the idea of the United States of Europe as "grotesque" and even as a provocation. Should, however, this fantasy be realized, then the United States of Europe would erect a monstrous tariff wall against the USA, so argued MacDonald's semi-official organ, and as a result Great Britain would be caught between two continents as in a vise. And the *Daily Herald* then went on to add: How could one expect aid from America by steering a course toward the unification of Europe? "To act in this way would be insanity or worse." One could not speak more plainly.

No one knows just what the United States of Europe is supposed to signify in practice. Streseman reduced the whole question to a common monetary unit and—postage stamps. That's a bit thin. Briand proposes to "study" the problem whose content nobody knows.

The basic task of unification must be economic in character, not only in the commercial but also productive sense. It is necessary to have a regime that would eliminate the artificial barriers between European coal and European iron. It is necessary to enable the system of electrification to expand in consonance with natural and economic conditions, and not in accordance with the frontiers of Versailles. It is necessary to unite Europe's railways into a single system, and so on and so forth *ad infinitum*. All this, in its turn, is inconceivable without the destruction of the ancient Chinese system of custom borders within Europe. This would, in its turn, mean a single, All-European customs union—against America.

2. Disarmament a la Americaine

There can be no doubt whatever that if the internal tariff barriers were swept away, capitalist Europe, after a certain period of crises of regroupment and readjustment, would attain a high level on the basis of the new distribution of productive forces. This is just as incontestable as the fact that, given the necessary economic conditions, large-scale enterprises are decisively superior to small ones. But we have yet to hear of small entrepreneurs voluntarily renouncing their businesses for this reason. To conquer the outlets the big capitalist must first ruin the small one. The situation with states is similar. Tariff barriers are erected precisely because they are profitable and indispensable to one national bourgeoisie to the detriment of another, regardless of the fact that they act to retard the development of economy as a whole.

Following the economic conference convened by the League of Nations in order to restore the reign of free trade in Europe, there has been an uninterrupted increase of tariffs. The English government has just proposed a two year "tariff vacation," *i.e.* no increases in tariffs for the next two years. Such is the modest contribution toward the United States of Europe. But even that still remains on paper.

To defend the tariff walls, which have grown uninterruptedly since the (first world) war, there stand the national armies

which have likewise increased above the prewar level.* This adequately shows how precious its own national tariff wall is to each national bourgeoisie of the thirty European countries. If a big capitalist must ruin a small capitalist, then a strong state must conquer weaker ones in order to batter down their tariff walls.

Comparing present-day Europe with old Germany where dozens of little German fatherlands had their own customs borders, Streseman tried to find in the economic unification of Germany the precursor of the economic federation of Europe and the world. The analogy is not a bad one. But Streseman omitted to point out that to achieve her unification—solely on a *national* basis—Germany had to pass through one revolution (1848) and three wars (1864, 1866 and 1870)—not to mention the wars of Reformation. Meanwhile to this very day, after the “republican” revolution (1918), German Austria still remains outside Germany. Under the existing conditions it is hard to believe that a few diplomatic luncheons will suffice for the economic unification of all European nations.

But after all isn't the question of the reduction of Europe's armaments placed on the agenda side by side with the problem of unifying Europe? MacDonald has declared that the road of gradual disarmament is the surest way of guaranteeing peace forevermore. A pacifist may raise this as an objection. Of course, if all the countries disarmed, it would constitute a serious guarantee of peace. But self-disarmament is just as excluded as the voluntary demolition of tariff walls. In Europe today there is only one major country which is seriously disarmed, to wit, Germany. But her disarmament was accomplished, as everybody knows, by crushing her in a war, in which Germany herself had sought to “unite Europe” under her domination.

In general it is not hard to show that the problem of “gradual disarmament,” if examined closely, assumes the aspect of a tragic farce. The question of *disarmament* has been replaced by the question of *reducing* armaments. And finally the latter problem has been reduced to establishing *naval parity* between the United States and Britain. Today this “achievement” is being acclaimed in advance as the greatest guarantee of peace. This amounts to saying that the surest way of suppressing duels is by regulating the size of pistols to be used by the duellists. Common sense would indicate that the situation itself points to just the contrary. If two of the strongest naval powers haggle so furiously over a few thousand tons, then this only goes to show that each of them is simply jockeying, through diplomacy, for the most advantageous position in the coming military conflict.

However, what does the establishment of “parity” between American and English navies signify from the standpoint of the international situation? It signifies the establishment of a colossal *disparity* between them—in favor of America. And this is of course perfectly understood by all the serious participants in this game, above all by the Admiralties of London and Wash-

ington. If they keep quiet about it, it is solely out of considerations of diplomatic shyness. We have no reasons for emulating them.

After the experience of the last war there is no one who does not understand that the next war between the world titans will not be brief but protracted. The issue will be determined by the relative productive power of the two camps. This means among other things that the combat fleets of the sea powers will be not only supplemented and renovated but also expanded and newly created in the very course of the war.

We have seen what an exceptional role the German submarines played in the military operations in the third year of the slaughter. We have seen how England and the United States created in the very course of the war powerful armies, better armed and equipped than the old armies on the European continent. This means that soldiers, sailors, ships, guns, tanks and planes available at the outbreak of war represent only the initial stake. The issue will be decided in dependence upon the extent to which a given country is able, while under fire, to produce ships, guns, soldiers and sailors. Even the Czarist government proved capable of preparing certain reserves for the outbreak of war. But what was beyond its strength was to renew and supplement these reserves under fire. In the event of war with America the one theoretically conceivable condition of success for England is to assure herself, before the outbreak of war, a very great military-technical preponderance which would in some measure compensate for the incomparable technical and economic preponderance of the United States. But the equalization of the two fleets prior to the war means that in the very first months of war America will possess an incontestable preponderance. Not for nothing did the Americans threaten several years ago to turn out cruisers in an emergency like so many pancakes.

In the negotiations between Hoover and MacDonald it is not a question of disarmament or even of limiting naval armaments, but solely that of *rationalizing war preparations*. Types of ships are rendered quickly obsolete. Today when the colossal experience of the war and the resulting flood of inventions and discoveries are just being elaborated for military needs, any and all instruments of military technology are rendered obsolete in a far briefer space of time than was the case before the war. This means that the main section of the fleet may prove outdated even before it has been placed in action. Under such conditions, what sense is there in accumulating ships in advance? A rational approach to the problem demands that the fleet be just large enough for the initial period of the war and of sufficient size in peacetime to serve as an adequate laboratory for testing and checking new inventions and discoveries with a view to placing them in standardized mass production in the course of the war. All the great powers are more or less interested in the “regulation” of armaments, especially such costly ones as naval armaments. But inexorably this regulation becomes transformed into the greatest advantage for the economically strongest country.

In recent years the US war and navy departments have applied themselves systematically to prepare the entire American industry for the needs of the next war. Schwab, one of the magnates of maritime-war industry, recently concluded his speech to the War College with the following words: “It must be made clear to you that war in the present period must be compared with a great big industrial enterprise.”

The French imperialist press has naturally done everything in its power to incite America against England. In an article

*Before the war (of 1914-1918) Great Britain spent \$237 million on her navy; today, she spends \$270 million annually. The US fleet cost \$130 million in 1913. The cost for the current year (1929) is \$364 million. Finally, Japan's naval expenditures have increased in the same period from \$48 million to \$127 million, i.e. have almost trebled. It is hardly surprising that the Ministers of Finance are beginning to suffer from attacks of seasickness.

The combined expenditures for militarism (land, sea, air) by the five greatest capitalist powers have grown in the last three years alone from \$2,170,000,000 to \$2,292,000,000.—L. T.

devoted to the question of the naval agreement, *le Temps* writes that naval parity by no means signifies the equalization of sea power, inasmuch as America cannot even dream of securing such naval bases as England has acquired in the course of centuries. The superiorities of British naval bases are absolutely incontestable. But after all, the accord on naval parity, if it is concluded, will not represent America's last word on the subject. Its slogan is "Freedom of the Seas," that is a regime that must first of all place restrictions on Great Britain's use of her naval bases. No less significant is another slogan of the United States: "The Open Door." Under this banner America will act to counterpose not only China but also India and Egypt to Great Britain's naval domination. America will conduct her offensive against British naval bases and points of support not by sea but by land, *i.e.* through the colonies and dominions of Britain. America will put her war fleet in action when the situation is ripe for it. Of course all this is the music of the future. But this future is not separated from us by centuries nor even decades. *Le Temps* need not worry. The US will take piecemeal everything that can be taken piecemeal, altering the relationship of forces in all fields—technical, commercial, financial, military—to the disadvantage of its chief rival, without for a moment losing sight of England's naval bases.

The American press has referred with a contemptuous smile to England's acclaim of Snowden when the latter gained at the Hague conference, with the aid of terrifying gestures, twenty million dollars to England's profit, *i.e.* a sum of money that American tourists perhaps spend on cigars. Is Snowden the victor? asked the *New York Times*. No! The real victor is the Young Plan, *i.e.* American finance capital. Through the Bank of International Settlements, America is enabled by the Young Plan to keep her hand firmly on the golden pulse of Europe. From the financial shackles on Germany's feet, there extend solid chains which encumber the hands of France, the feet of Italy and the neck of Britain. MacDonald, who nowadays fulfills the duties of keeper to the British lion, points with pride to this dog collar, calling it the best instrument of peace. And mind you, to attain such results all America had to do was exhibit her magnanimity by "aiding" Europe to liquidate the war and "agreeing" to naval parity with a weaker Great Britain.

3. The Imperialist Dictatorship of America

Since 1923 we have had to conduct a struggle to have the leadership of the Communist International deign, finally, to take notice of the United States, and to understand that the Anglo-American antagonism constitutes the fundamental line along which world groupings and world conflicts occur. This was considered a heresy as far back as the era of the Fifth World Congress (middle of 1924). We were accused of "overestimating" the role of America. A special legend was invented to the effect that we had proclaimed an epoch of the disappearance of European capitalist contradictions in the face of the American peril. Ossinsky, Larin and others spoiled not a little paper in order to "dethrone" the might of America. Radek, in the wake of bourgeois journalists, demonstrated that ahead lies an epoch of Anglo-American collaboration. Temporary, conjunctural, episodic forms assumed by the reciprocal relations have been confused with the essence of the world process.

Gradually, however, America came to be "recognized" by the official leadership of the Comintern which began to repeat our formulas of yesterday, without forgetting, naturally, to add each time that the Left Opposition overestimates the role of America. The correct appraisal of America was at that time,

as everybody knows, the exclusive prerogative of Pepper and Lovestone.

However, no sooner was the course "to the left" inaugurated, than all reservations were cast aside. Today the official theoreticians are obliged to proclaim that England and America are heading directly to war. In this connection I wrote in February last year to friends exiled in Siberia:

The antagonism between England and America has finally broken to the surface in a serious form. It seems that now even Stalin and Bukharin are beginning to understand what it is all about. But our newspapers oversimplify the problem by depicting matters as if the antagonism between England and America is being steadily aggravated and must lead directly to war. Undoubtedly several more breaking points will occur in this process. War would prove too dangerous an enterprise for both sides. They will still make more than one attempt to come to an agreement and to reach a peaceable solution. But on the whole the development is proceeding with giant strides toward a bloody culmination.

The present stage has once again assumed the form of military-naval "collaboration" between America and England, and some French newspapers have even expressed fears of an Anglo-Saxon world dictatorship. The United States of course can and probably will utilize the "collaboration" with England to tighten the reins on Japan and France. But all this will represent phases not toward Anglo-Saxon but American domination of the world, including Great Britain.

In connection with this perspective, the leaders of the Comintern may once again repeat that we are unable to see anything ahead except the triumph of American capitalism. In much the same way, the petty bourgeois theoreticians of *Narodnikism* (Russian Populism) used to accuse the pioneer Russian Marxists of failing to see anything ahead except the victory of capitalism. These two accusations are on a par. When we say that America is moving toward world domination, it does not at all mean that this domination will be completely realized, nor, all the less so, that after it is realized to one degree or another, it will endure for centuries or even decades. We are discussing a historical tendency which, in actuality, will be criss-crossed and modified by other historical tendencies. If the capitalist world were able to endure several more decades without revolutionary paroxysms, then these decades would unquestionably witness the uninterrupted growth of American world dictatorship. But the whole point is that this process will inevitably develop its own contradictions which will become coupled with all the other contradictions of the capitalist system. America will force Europe to strive for an ever increasing rationalization and at the same time will leave Europe an ever decreasing share of the world market. This will entail a steady aggravation of the difficulties in Europe. The competition among European states for a share of the world market will inevitably become aggravated. At the same time under the pressure of America, the European states will endeavor to coordinate their forces. This is the main source of Briand's program of the United States of Europe. But whatever the various stages of the development may be, one thing is clear: *The constant disruption of the world equilibrium in America's favor will become the main source of crises and revolutionary convulsions in Europe throughout the entire coming period.* Those who hold that European stabilization is assured for decades understand nothing at all of the world situation and will inevitably sink head first in the swamp of reformism.

If this process is approached from across the Atlantic Ocean, *i.e.* from the standpoint of the fate of USA, then here too the perspectives opened up resemble least of all a blissful capitalist

idyl. The prewar power of the United States grew on the basis of its internal market, *i.e.* the dynamic equilibrium between industry and agriculture. In this development the war has produced a sharp break. The United States exports capital and manufactured goods in ever greater volume. The growth of America's world power means that the entire system of American industry and banking—that towering capitalist skyscraper—is resting to an ever increasing measure on the foundations of *world* economy. But this foundation is mined, and the United States itself continues to add more mines to it day by day. By exporting commodities and capital, by building up its navy, by elbowing England aside, by buying up the key enterprises in Europe, by forcing its way into China, etc., American finance capital is digging with its own hands powder and dynamite cellars beneath its own foundation. Where will the fuse be lit? Whether it will be in Asia, Europe or Latin America—or what is most likely in various places at one and the same time—that is a second-rate question.

The whole misfortune is that the incumbent leadership of the Comintern is totally incapable of following all the stages of this gigantic process. It shies away from facts by means of platitudes. Even the pacifist agitation in favor of the United States of Europe has taken it by surprise.

4. Soviet United States of Europe

The question of the United States of Europe regarded from the proletarian standpoint was raised by me in September 1914, *i.e.* at the very beginning of the (last) imperialist war. In the pamphlet, "The War and the International," the author of these lines sought to demonstrate that the unification of Europe was irrefutably advanced to the forefront by Europe's entire economic development, but that the United States of Europe was conceivable only as the political form of the dictatorship of the European proletariat.

In 1923 when the occupation of the Ruhr once again posed acutely the fundamental problems of European economy (primarily coal and iron ore) and coincident with them also the problems of the revolution, we succeeded in having the slogan of the United States of Europe officially adopted by the leadership of the Comintern. But the attitude toward this slogan remained hostile. Not being in a position to reject it, the Comintern leaders regarded it as an abandoned child of "Trotskyism." After the collapse of the 1923 German revolution, Europe lived the life of stabilization. The basic revolutionary questions disappeared from the agenda. The slogan of the United States of Europe was forgotten. It was not included in the program of the Comintern. Stalin explained this new zigzag with remarkable profundity: Since we cannot tell the order in which the various countries will accomplish their revolutions, it follows that it is impossible to predict whether the United States of Europe will be necessary. In other words, this means that it is easier to make a prognosis after the event than before it. As a matter of fact, it is not at all a question of the order in which revolutions will be accomplished. On this score one can only speculate. But this does not relieve the European workers, nor the International as a whole from the necessity of giving a clear answer to the question: How can European economy be snatched from its present state of dispersion and how can the popular masses of Europe be saved from decay and enslavement?

The trouble, however, is that the economic ground for the slogan of the United States of Europe overthrows one of the

basic ideas of the present Comintern program, namely: the idea of building socialism in one country.

The essence of our epoch lies in this, that the productive forces have definitely outgrown the framework of the national state and have assumed primarily in America and Europe partly continental, partly world proportions. The imperialist war grew out of the contradiction between the productive forces and national boundaries. And the Versailles peace which terminated the war has aggravated this contradiction still further. In other words: thanks to the development of the productive forces capitalism has long ago been unable to exist in a single country. Meanwhile, socialism can and will base itself on far more developed productive forces, otherwise socialism would represent not progress but regression with respect to capitalism. In 1914 I wrote: "If the problem of socialism were compatible with the framework of a national state, it would thereby become compatible with national defense." The formula Soviet United States of Europe is precisely the political expression of the idea that socialism is impossible in one country. Socialism cannot of course attain its *full* development even in the limits of a single continent. The Socialist United States of Europe represents the historical slogan which is a stage on the road to the world socialist federation.

It has happened more than once in history that when the revolution is not strong enough to solve in time a task that is mature historically, its solution is undertaken by reaction. Thus Bismarck unified Germany in his own manner after the failure of the 1848 revolution. Thus Stolypin tried to solve the agrarian question after the defeat of the 1905 revolution. Thus the Versailles victors solved the national question in their own way, which all the previous bourgeois revolutions in Europe proved impotent to solve. The Germany of the Hohenzollerns tried to organize Europe in its own way, *i.e.* by uniting it under its helmet. It was then that victorious Clemenceau decided to utilize the victory in order to slice up Europe into the greatest possible number of pieces. Today Briand, armed with needle and thread, is preparing to sew these pieces together again, even if he doesn't know where to begin.

The leadership of the Comintern, and particularly the leadership of the French Communist Party are exposing the hypocrisy of official pacifism. But this is not enough. To explain away the course toward the unification of Europe solely as a means of preparing war against the USSR is, to put it mildly, puerile and only compromises the task of defending the Soviet Republic. The slogan of the United States of Europe is not a cunning invention of diplomacy. It springs from the immutable economic needs of Europe which emerge all the more painfully and acutely the greater is the pressure of the USA. It is especially now that the Communist parties must counterpose the slogan of the Soviet United States of Europe to the pacifist concoctions of the European imperialists.

But the Communist parties have their hands tied. The living slogan, with a profound historical content, has been expunged from the program of the Comintern solely in the interests of the struggle against the Opposition. All the more decisively must the Opposition raise this slogan. In the person of the Opposition the vanguard of the European proletariat tells its present rulers: In order to unify Europe it is first of all necessary to wrest power out of your hands. We will do it. We will unite Europe. We will unite it against the hostile capitalist world. We will turn it into a mighty drillground of militant socialism. We will make it the cornerstone of the World Socialist Federation.

October 4, 1929.

International Notes

Spain

A conference of the Spanish party of the POUM took place in Toulouse, France, on Nov. 11 and 12, 1944. Delegates were mostly Spanish refugees in France.

According to reports we have just received, the conference made a very important decision for the future of the party. The POUM had been formed some ten years ago by a fusion of the Catalonian Party of Maurin, the Bloque Obrero y Campesino, and the Spanish Group of the Left Opposition, led by Andres Nin, subsequently killed by the GPU.

While Nin made unwarranted concessions to Maurin's party, and had to break with our international organization, the fusion represented a step forward, however, for Maurin's party; namely, the emergence from the purely Catalonian political life, and the entering of the national political scene of Spain.

Now the last conference of the POUM has taken the reverse step. It has decided to become again a purely Catalonian party, and to abandon organized activity on a national scale. This organizational step is naturally the product of incorrect political conceptions. The party is impregnated with petty Catalonian national arrogance. It considers that Catalonia has the "peninsular mission" of saving Spain. That the Catalonian workers and peasants have a decisive role to play in the future Spanish revolution, there is no doubt. However, that role can be fulfilled only if their vanguard is organized in the same party with the advanced workers of all of Spain, in a party emancipated from all petty nationalist prejudices about some predestined role it has to play as a savior of the workers of other nationalities.

The opportunist nature of the POUM's recent decision is quite obvious. One of the reasons given for limiting itself to the Catalonian scale was that, in attempting to be a national Spanish party, the POUM would inevitably come into conflict with the opportunist Socialist Party. According to the reports, the leadership declared at Toulouse: "To attempt to permeate the whole peninsula would, therefore, be a grave error. It could only be done at the expense of the Spanish Socialist Party, and would thus create violent hostility and opposition."

The recent nationalist turn of the POUM could not fail to lead it into compromising combinations with all kinds of petty bourgeois nationalist Catalonian politicians. The Toulouse conference decided that "the Party will embark upon the constitution of a Catalonian Bloc uniting all the working class and democratic forces in Catalonia." The party is calling for the formation of a United Resistance Movement, supported by that Catalonian Bloc, which "must have an institutional character, placing itself under the orders of the first legal authority who, at the moment, is the president of Catalonia, M. Irla."

However, there is something to rejoice about

in the reports of the Toulouse conference. The opportunist turn of the leadership was not accepted unanimously. A minority arose. We hope that this minority will disentangle itself from the opportunist and nationalist line of the party, and orient itself toward a consistent revolutionary policy. On that road the minority will find the friendly advice and support of our comrades, the Spanish members of the Fourth International.

Italy

The century old land-hunger of the Italian peasantry is one of the burning questions that confronts this country. After making demagogic promises to solve the agrarian problem by means of the so-called "appoderamento" (division of land into small estates), the Fascist regime throughout its reign of more than twenty years acted only brutally to suppress every attempt of the peasants to gain the land. Coming to the end of its tether, Fascism in Italy sought to gain the support of the peasants by passing a law in December 1938 expropriating the large estates. This law has remained on paper so far as the peasants are concerned.

Among the materials we have recently received from Italy there are several documents pertaining to the land question and emanating from the ranks of organized labor in Northern Italy. Of particular interest is a report delivered in January 1944 at Bari before the Foggia Labor Council by Romeo Mangano, a prominent member of this Council. In his report Mangano analyzes the situation in the Tavoliere region of the province of Foggia, one of the largest agricultural areas in Italy. Tavoliere is primarily devoted to grain growing and livestock breeding.

It comprises, according to Mangano, of "54,959 agricultural estates; covering an area of 626,562 hectares, of which 300,930 hectares were under direct management; 174,761 were rented; 12,958 were under absentee ownership and 137,913 under a mixed management. . . . Large scale property prevails, comprising 63 percent, with every large estate exceeding 200 hectares."

The "small estates" (*poderi*) created by the Fascists in Tavoliere number 2,500, covering some 80,000 hectares, with a body of approximately 12,000 agricultural workers. These "poderi" run in size from 14 to 30 hectares, depending on the type of cultivation.

Pointing out that the whole "colonization" project of the Fascists was a fraud from beginning to end, Mangano cites in his report the fact that the new settlers were not at all bona-fide tillers of the soil. "Because in the choice of colonists political favoritism has prevailed, and I may say without fear of contradiction, that at least 30 percent of the settlers have been replaced by families which have had only one connection with the land—that of having walked upon it."

The program of colonization remained throughout—and still is—under the direction of Fascist-created bodies, the Opera Nazionali Combattenti, Cenzorio Generale di Bonifaca, and the private landowners. It was a source of large-scale graft.

More than 250 million had been expended in Tavoliere alone, with little or nothing to show for the money.

Virtually the same conditions, declares Mangano, prevail in Sicily and other agricultural areas. "Insofar as I have been able to learn from Sicilian comrades the situation there is no different from Tavoliere also with regard to the attitude of the 'latifondists' (large scale landowners)."

He then adds:

"The landowners, you will recall, contributed generously first in creating and then in supporting Fascism from 1922 to 1938; but when by the law of 1938 they found their lands expropriated, they became anti-fascists for their own class interests, and now many of these people are participating in the parties adhering to the 'committees of liberation.' . . . It is the hope of the landowners to regain the expropriated lands, and steps are already being taken in that direction by the government." Let us add that the Stalinists have assumed upon themselves the treacherous task of aiding and covering up the maneuvers of the landowners—by accepting the post of the minister of agriculture in the government.

The conclusion drawn by Mangano is that the workers' organizations in collaboration with the Tavoliere peasant leagues must "replace immediately" the landlords and the bodies set up by the Fascists—Opera Nazionali Combattenti (ONC) and Cenzorio Generale di Bonifaca (CG di B)—"both in the prosecution of the work of 'appoderamento' already in progress or projected, as well as in the management of the 'poderi' already existing."

Upon hearing Mangano's report and the demand that labor not only oppose the maneuvers of the landlords but act immediately to gain the transfer of "all land to the peasants in the interest of the whole proletariat," the Foggia Labor Council passed the following resolution:

The General Federation of Labor, meeting in its first Convention to discuss the urgent problems of the colonization of Tavoliere

having heard

the report of Comrade Mangano, delegate from the Labor Council of Foggia;

having considered

that it is in the interest of the workers of the soil to continue the work of colonization undertaken by fascism solely with demagogic aims;

having considered

that only these same workers of the soil can and must concern themselves with the problem; therefore

resolves

to demand of the Government that the Federation of Peasant Leagues of Tavoliere take the place of the ONC, the CG di B, and the private owners in the management of the farms already functioning and in the prosecution of the works already in progress and projected, with all the prerogatives given until now to the ONC.

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