

**WORKERS OF THE WORLD
UNITE!**



the new International

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etc., etc.

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A MONTHLY ORGAN OF REVOLUTIONARY MARXISM

THE NEW INTERNATIONAL

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"United Front Wanes in France"

UNDER THE above somewhat misleading headline, the New York *Sun* publishes (July 1, 1935) a highly interesting story from its Paris correspondent, Mr. William Bird, from which the following excerpts are taken:

"Disarray has been thrown into the recently united Socialist-Communist front by the statement which Foreign Minister Laval succeeded in wringing from Dictator Stalin in Moscow. Stalin declared that he 'understood and fully approved' France's need for strengthening her armaments.

"The French Communist party, which has rallied for years to the cry of 'Down with war!' and has stubbornly fought military appropriations and the prolongation of the conscription period, thus receives a staggering repudiation from Moscow. . . .

"While M. Laval was negotiating his alliance with Soviet Ambassador Potemkin in Paris, the French communists, directed by the Comintern, were not only campaigning against the new French two-year service decree, but were bitterly opposing the reelection of M. Laval as Mayor of Aubervilliers, a suburb of Paris. M. Laval was reelected, but the communists made tremendous gains in Paris and suburbs generally, thanks to their anti-militaristic doctrine.

Of course, the world has known well

enough that both the Soviet Government and the Comintern are directed from the same source, namely the Central Executive Committee of the Communist party, of which Joseph Stalin is secretary and acting chairman. But the fiction that the two were distinct has been maintained, with the consequence that Stalin's right hand, the Soviet Government, has pursued one policy—that of alliance with France against Germany—while the left hand, the Comintern, has been 'boring from within' in the countries with which the Soviet was allied. Meanwhile, though his hands were thus diversely occupied, Stalin as the central brain has affected to hold aloof.

"His sudden decision to repudiate the anti-militarist campaign in France has completely disconcerted the communists here. They are obliged to seek a new rallying cry, and it is no easy matter. Moreover they are in a most embarrassing vis-a-vis the socialist party, their new found allies. The communists have always taunted the socialists with being pale pink traitors to the Red cause, but now the rôles are reversed. The socialists are continuing their assaults on the army appropriations and the conscription decree, while the communists, on orders from Stalin, are compelled to back water.

"That there will now be many desertions from the communist ranks is cer-

tain. Orthodox communists cannot understand how Stalin can so far disregard the teachings of Marx as to make a distinction between one capitalist country and another. From their point of view the French Government is their enemy No. 1, and they cannot comprehend how Stalin dares order them to ease up on their opposition.

"Probably many communists will go over to the socialist party, but many others are talking already of the need for forming a new party and possibly a new International. The Third International, they hold, by its pact with Laval, has ceased to be Marxist.

"If this new party is formed, it will be in line with the history of internationalism. Since Marx himself founded the First International in 1864, the tendency of the internationalists has been to split as soon as they reached a position of influence, the main body of them drifting toward liberalism. The orthodox theorists have thereupon in each case founded a new revolutionary party.

"This, it is felt, is now happening again. The Third International as Marxists see it, has now abandoned the revolutionary ideal and embraced the 'balance of power' principle, hardly distinguishable from the policy of the prewar Tsarist government. The time is ripe, therefore, for the 'pures' to start a new movement."

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The Bands Are Playing

INSURRECTION and war are, in the end, the ordeals by fire that test beyond appeal the integrity of working class parties. When faced with war or insurrection, no further equivocation is possible, no fine phrases can any longer hide inner decay, no abstractly noble slogans can serve to check the impact of the mailed fist of history. All veils are torn aside; and the working class is given its clearest chance to see and to judge.

These tests are infallible, and the parties that fail to meet them are thereby forever condemned. It was the Bolshevik party alone—even more narrowly, the Leninist wing of the Bolshevik party—that stood unshaken before the October insurrection. Before the insurrection, however, the leaders of the Bolshevik party, by their position during the imperialist war, had already demonstrated that they would not fail.

Conversely, it was the outbreak of the war which proved conclusively that social democracy could not lead the revolutionary movement of the working class. All the municipal housing and “honest government” and social insurance in the world could not weigh a feather against the lead weight of the handing over of the workers to the war machines of the imperialist powers. This verdict needed no confirmation. History, however, generously provided her second great test to remove any trace of doubt: and once more, in the German revolution, she exposed the corrupted sinews of social democracy.

Now it must be clearly understood that failure or success in these two final tests—war and insurrection—is not at all an accident of the moment. Rather is one or the other prepared for slowly, in cumulative fashion, over a long period of years. Corruption does not set in in an instant. It is the result of a developing decay, manifested first in little things, in isolated spots and tissues, and finally, unchecked, taking possession of the entire body. So, likewise, is strength built up—by a long process of vigorous exercise, healthy diet, discipline and control. Thus, it was the generation-long fight of Lenin against the incursions of opportunism, reformism, sectarianism, that brought the Bolsheviks intact and ready through to 1918. And it was a generation of too much ease, too much minor success, and above all a subtly increasing confusion, both in theory and in actions, on the question of the nature of the state, that brought social democracy to the betrayal of 1914. Since, in 1914, the social democracy no longer saw the bourgeois state as its irreconcilable enemy, it was thus ready, under the “exceptional circumstances”, to support the bourgeois state.

It is the duty of Marxists to foresee and to prepare. Although Lenin and the other genuine Marxists, before the war of 1914-18, had been aware of the growing corruption of social democracy; although they had analyzed it and fought against it; yet even they had not clearly enough warned the working class against betrayal. Consequently, the blow to the working class was even greater than it need have been. “If these, our leaders, who have so long propagandized against imperialist war,” reasoned the workers, “now support *this* war, then this war must be just, it must be *our* war.” The workers had not been told often and forcibly enough that the whole development of their leaders’ policies was carrying them to support of the oncoming war and the sell-out of their class.

Once again, the prospect of imperialist war, a war far greater and more deadly than the last, confronts us. The day and the hour when it will break out openly cannot, of course, be predicted. It will not be next month, nor in all probability during the next twelve months. Certain necessary factors are not yet in line. However, the material presuppositions for war are now present. The imperialist tensions are more taut even than in 1914. Armaments are not merely at their highest point in history, but are being increased more rapidly than ever before. Inescapable inner forces are driving Japan and Germany to expansion. The hegemony of France over Continental Europe, temporarily secured by the Versailles Treaty, is threatened by the treaty revisionists; and France must steadily slip back unless she reasserts herself, and resolutely goes forward—that is, unless she is victor in a new war. Italy’s Ethiopian campaign brings her directly and indirectly into potential conflict with Japan, France, and England, all three of whom have greedy eyes fixed on the Empire of Haile Selassie. The imperialist interests of the United States are daily more threatened by, on the one hand, Japan, and on the other England.

The chief factor now delaying the outbreak of war is the lack of sufficiently secure “national unity” in certain of the imperialist nations, notably France and England. To wage external war successfully, the bourgeois state must be reasonably certain of no major disturbances within. Above all in France this certainty does not at present hold. This situation, however, cannot long endure; and whichever way the internal issue is decided in France will complete the preparation for war: Fascism will consolidate the nation through the totalitarian state, and make France ready for external war; whereas a workers’ insurrection would itself be the signal for an immediate continental outbreak.

This, then, is what confronts us. We must therefore ask: What will be the position of the working class parties in the face of war? Will it be the Marxian position, the position of intransigent struggle against the enemy at home, the fight to turn the imperialist war into civil war and to utilize the war crisis to achieve the victory of the workers’ state? Or will it be again a “truce with the bourgeoisie”—that is, capitulation and betrayal?

No future event is inevitable, and it is therefore impossible to predict with certainty the answer to this question. Nevertheless it is clear that all of the evidence of every kind, in the case of the parties of the Second and the Third Internationals, points to: betrayal. No charge can be more serious than this one, and it is with a full sense of responsibility that it is made. Silence, in this case, would mean to share in the betrayal.

We are concerned here primarily with the socialist and Stalinist parties in France, Great Britain, and the United States, and with the respective Internationals in relation to these. In Germany and Italy, the parties are not at present important forces. The three former are the decisive countries.

A betrayal, naturally, is not a successful betrayal if it is an open and straightforward repudiation. That is not the danger. The danger is that slogans which may be—abstractly and formally considered—correct and unassailable, are manipulated in the concrete to serve the betrayal. Slogans are always historically mean-

ingless when taken in the abstract; it is not until we examine their specific content in particular policies and actions that we can estimate their role. In the present article it is chiefly by the examination of two such formally correct slogans, together with their specific content, that I shall present some of the evidence substantiating the prediction that the Second and Third Internationals will capitulate at the outbreak of the next war.

These slogans are: (1) "Against War and Fascism"; (2) "Defend the Soviet Union".

As to the social democracy, however, one point, in itself sufficiently conclusive, must be made to begin with: Lack of clarity on the question of the state was the central issue that led to the capitulation of social democracy in 1914. Since 1914, however, in spite of the hammering of history, social democracy has not in any respect clarified this question, either in theory or in practise. Indeed, the opposite is the case. Today, among the social democratic leadership, there is more confusion on this question than in 1914. We do not need to look far for proof. For example: the British Labor party's declaration "against dictatorship whether of the Right or the Left"; the behavior of the social democrats in office in the Scandinavian countries; voting for Hindenburg in Germany; the attitude toward the N.R.A. at the beginning of Roosevelt's administration; above all, among recent events, the entry of Vandervelde—the leader of the Second International—into the Belgian Government. Like results, fortunately or unfortunately, follow from like causes. And the like result in this case will be the new betrayal.

2.

"Against War and Fascism!" How persuasive and unimpeachable a slogan this seems to be! Is there any Marxist who is not against these two primary scourges of the working class? It is easy to be carried along by the appealing surface. Yes, Marxists are against war and against Fascism, but their opposition is a revolutionary opposition, and to understand this we must go beneath the surface.

There are two cardinal errors in the use made by the socialists and Stalinists (in this respect they are scarcely distinguishable, though their positions spring from different roots) of the slogan, "Against War and Fascism!"

The first is old and familiar. The slogan, negative in form, is used as a cover for purely "defensive" and pacifist agitation against war. This has always been true of social democratic opposition to war. In the case of the Stalinists it has become most striking during the past two years. The pacifist peace policy of the Soviet Union is only the home counterpart of the building of pacifist "Leagues Against War and Fascism" throughout the world. In Moscow, Radek, writing officially for *Pravda*, praises Barthou, after the Marseilles assassination, as one whose whole life had been devoted to the cause of peace. Barthou, world agent of French imperialism! And in this country the communist party unites in the League, *in program* as well as in activities, with the worst liberal, ministerial, and women's club riff-raff. The League of Nations has suddenly become the great defender of world peace—so outstanding a defender that Litvinov, a few weeks ago, no longer finds it necessary on the floor of the Council to object to Mussolini's Ethiopian outrage. As usual, pacifism turns out to be not merely ineffectual against war, but in practise part of the ideological preparation for war. Litvinov has become more eloquent than the Pope in calling for "disarmament"—and rather less effective.

Naturally, the socialists are not disturbed at the pacifist charms of their bureaucratic rivals. They are old hands at the pacifist game.

The only fight against war is the revolutionary struggle for

socialism. This shameful, weak-kneed, blear-eyed, sentimental pacifism of the two parties is, precisely, a major method of blunting the revolutionary struggle, deceiving the working class, and ultimately of handing them over helpless to the bourgeois state when war does actually come. A pacifist position, however disguised, when encountered in a working class party is invariably a symbol of wholesale political degeneration. It was so in the case of social democracy, which was so enlightenedly pacifist before 1914. It is so now. Pacifism is the hypocritical face of social-patriotism. And, as before, it will prove the bridge to capitulation.

The second error in the use of the slogan, "Against War and Fascism!" is even more deadly; and in its case we have a new development, the development that will distinguish the capitulation of working class officialdom in the next war from its capitulation in 1914. The same tricks will not work twice in exactly the same manner. There must be at least a change of costume.

The reason goes as follows: Fascism, especially Hitlerism, means war. Therefore, the fight against war is the fight against Fascism, and especially against Hitlerism, the worst form of Fascism. The success of Fascism means the destruction of all democratic rights. The destruction of democratic rights means the crushing of the organizations of the working class, and thus defeat for the revolutionary movement. But Fascism, especially Hitlerism, can succeed only by war, and, since Fascism means war, will inevitably undertake war.

What then follows? What follows is the betrayal of the working class of France, England, and the United States. For, on the basis of the above chain of reasoning, to support the democratic nations in a war against Hitler is to defend democratic rights against Fascism; thus to defend the organizations of the working class; and thereby the revolution. The wheel completes its circle. Defense of the national state—that is, defense of the interests of the imperialist bourgeoisie of England, France, and the United States—becomes, through the position of the socialists and the Stalinists, a revolutionary duty!

Let no one imagine that this analysis is a mere fantasy. This is the necessary and inescapable consequence of the cumulative corruption of Marxian principle in the hands of the leaders of the Second and Third Internationals. Once more we shall find that the working class officials make the most effective recruiting sergeants for the bourgeoisie.

The moral fallacy in this position is easy enough to understand when once examined from the point of view of Marxism. The statement, "Fascism means war" is incomplete. It is not fascism that means war. *Rather is it the continued existence of capitalism that means both Fascism and war...* Fascism means war only in the sense that it marks outwardly a great intensification of the inner conflicts of capitalism, and is thus an indication of the more rapid drive of the whole capitalist system toward the highest expression of these conflicts—imperialist war. But in the linked chain of causes that make war an inevitable concomitant of the continued existence of capitalism, the democratic nations have as integral a part as the Fascist nations. From the point of view of the working class, there can be no "friendly", no "peace-loving" capitalist states. Every capitalist state, democratic as well as Fascist, represents one or another form of the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie over the working class, and is thus the implacable enemy of the working class. To defend the democratic rights of the working class is one thing. But this has nothing in common with the defense of the "democratic" capitalist state. The former is a primary duty of every working class party; the latter is the occupation of traitors. The latter will be put forward as the only way to protect the working class against war and Fascism; in practice, it will give the working class both war and Fascism, for the bourg-

bourgeoisie of the democratic countries will not overcome the necessity for a resort to Fascism in the decline of capitalism merely by success in the next war.

The business of the working class within any country is never under any circumstances to defend "the government"—that is, the political executive of the class enemy—but always to fight for its overthrow. This holds *above all* in the case of war, for war undertaken by the capitalist government is at once both the most frightful blow that can be directed by the bourgeoisie against the working class, and likewise one of the signal opportunities for doing away with the bourgeois state. The duty of the French (or British or American) Marxist in the case of war is not to suspend the struggle against the class enemy, but to redouble its vigor and intransigence. It is a fine revolutionary policy that goes actively along in "normal" times and is abandoned in the "exceptional" instances of war and insurrection. These "exceptions" are exactly what the whole revolutionary policy should be designed to prepare for. As I stated at the beginning of this article, these are the supreme tests of revolutionary integrity. Failure to meet these tests is the proof not merely of a "deviation" on particular points, but of the complete degeneration of the entire policy.

Under the slogan, "Against War and Fascism!" along the lines I have traced, social democracy and Stalinism have *already* completed the full ideological preparation for the sell-out to the next war. The speeches of Leon Blum are only the complements of the statements of Stalin, Radek and Litvinov. Every Moscow broadside about the "peace-loving nations", the "sincere friends of peace" (Laval, Flandin, Simon, Benes, Roosevelt...!) in contrast to the "Fascist war-mongers" only serves to cement the structure more firmly.

3.

The second formally "correct" slogan which is being manipulated to prepare for capitulation to the next war is the familiar "*Defend the Soviet Union!*" Here we are at the very heart of Stalinism.

Defend the Soviet Union? Naturally. An elementary duty of every worker? Of course. A first principle of any revolutionary program since 1918? What pretender, even, to Marxism would deny it? And it is just because this slogan, in the abstract, is so unquestionable, so entirely correct, that its misuse by Stalinism is so completely deceptive and disastrous.

What does the slogan, "Defend the Soviet Union!" mean to a Marxist? The essence can be summed up quickly. It means: "Extend the October revolution." It means to strengthen the economic and political organizations of the world proletariat, to carry the class struggle on a world basis to ever higher levels, to drive toward workers' power. It means to put all faith in the working class. It means to achieve working class victory in the capitalist nations. And it means these things quite openly and realistically. For these are the only possible defense of the Soviet Union.

To Stalinism, however, the slogan means: support the program of national Bolshevism; no word of criticism of Stalin and his bureaucratic associates; put all faith in diplomatic deals with bourgeois powers; adopt an attitude of philistine cynicism toward the world proletariat; reduce the working class parties to branches of the foreign office of the Soviet state. And it means: do not carry on genuinely revolutionary activities within your own country, because this would upset "peace"; permit the working class of Germany and Austria to be crushed under Fascism rather than risk one ounce of cement at Dneprostroy or one tractor at Stalingrad. And, lastly, it means: support the war policy of your democratic government, and offer the working class to the coming imperialist war in all nations where the bourgeois finds its imperialist aims best served by a temporary alliance with the Soviet

bureaucracy.

Yes, we shall see the workers of France, England, and the United States rallied to the flag by the Stalinist officials. "Defend the Soviet Union! Enlist in the army, and—fight against war and Hitlerism! Defend the Soviet Union!" And the workers will sign up while the band, no doubt, plays "The Internationale". Finance capital will smile grimly to itself; it has a long training in cynicism. And finance capital will be willing to accept the services of Stalinism and Stalinist-deceived workers, and of the Red Army, as well as of any others, to use as levers for the re-allotment of colonies, oil wells, copper mines, and spheres of influence. Bullets have a way of piercing through ideologies without making fine distinctions.

This infamous development under the veil of the slogan, "Defend the Soviet Union!" has been going on steadily for many years, since approximately the time of the Anglo-Russian Committee. It reaches maturity in the Franco-Soviet military pact, and the statements that accompanied the initialling of the pact and the collateral memoranda. Here, displayed before the world, is the full blown flower of Stalinism. And, alas, it is only the working class—the class that is too trustful, too straightforward—that is any longer deceived. The bourgeoisie knows clearly enough the significance of the pact, and its correspondents and editorial writers have gloated over it with appropriate enthusiasm. Stalin here has announced openly what was actually accomplished some time ago: the liquidation of the last vestiges of international revolutionary policy by the Communist International and its sections. To the French bourgeoisie he promises protection from revolution within, in return for a crumb or two of paper protection of his own bureaucratic régime from external aggression by Germany. To the French bourgeoisie he declares: build your military machine as strongly as you wish; and if you use it to suppress the rights of the French working class, to maintain the power of the bourgeois state, to further your imperialist ambitions, if, even, you find it necessary to impose Fascism in order to carry on, I will keep the communist party from unduly interfering, I will see that its leaders while away their time in dickers with the socialist officials and harmless patter about democratic rights and immediate demands, I will guarantee that they do not undertake the struggle for power; only, in return, let me remain safe in the Kremlin.

A specious argument in excuse of the present foreign policy of Stalinism has lately been growing in popularity among certain "friends" of the Soviet Union who, in spite of chronic political blindness, are a trifle disturbed over such open and extravagant excesses as entry into the League of Nations and the Franco-Soviet pact. This argument runs somewhat as follows: We will grant that, formally considered, Stalin has departed from true Marxism. However, this was partly forced on him by the historical contradictions involved by the existence of the Soviet Union in an otherwise bourgeois world. Partly, it is true, the Soviet difficulties result from Stalin's errors. Nevertheless, we are faced with a situation, not a theory, and we must be realistic. The Soviet Union is the greatest achievement of the working class, and the major bulwark of the revolution. Its immediate difficulties compel Stalin to make such moves as entering the League and signing the French pact. We will have to swallow our principles for the time being, and digest it. When the situation improves, we will make the necessary corrections.

This argument is false to the core.

In the first place, the situation is not going to improve. Day by day it sharpens, and every additional hour on the false path, every new step away from principled policy, makes correction that much more difficult.

In the second place, even if this reasoning were true, it would

in no way provide an "excuse" for Stalinism. If a pilot, by one false calculation after another, brings the ship into dangerous shoals and heads square for the reefs, the intelligent conclusion is scarcely, "Well, he has made mistakes, but here we are and we will have to let him go to the end." Rather is it, "This man has gone far enough, and has proved his incompetence. We need a new pilot, and a revised plan of action not merely to go forward, but even to escape complete disaster on the rocks." If a stockbroker has lost nine-tenths of a man's fortune, a reasonable man, rather than turning over the remainder to follow that has gone before, finds a new broker. Perhaps the new broker will have to depart from the rules of "sound finance" because of the débâcle caused by his predecessor. But at least the investor will have some chance of a new direction. No. We condemn Stalinism for what it has done, for where it has led the Soviet Union. But this is not merely a matter of raking up dead ashes. What Stalinism has done is the evidence that demonstrates beyond any possible doubt what it will do—proves that Stalinism, which has brought the Soviet Union to the edge of the abyss, will end by plunging it into the abyss itself.

But, finally and conclusively, it is not merely the past policies of Stalinism that are disastrous. It is the present policies. And they are disastrous not merely for the working class of bourgeois nations, but for the Soviet Union itself. Granted that heroic measures are needed to save the Soviet Union in the present historical situation, the policies of Stalin are the guarantors of its defeat. To state that the strengthening of the world proletariat and the extension of the October revolution are the only means of defending the Soviet Union is to do more than repeat high-sounding phrases. For any other method of defending the Soviet Union means in the end its overthrow.

It should be remembered that the overthrow of the Soviet Union, from the point of view of the working class, does not necessarily mean the dismembering of the Soviet Republics and their conquest by imperialist nations. This is what Stalin would have us believe to be the sole meaning. This does indeed threaten in part—as for example in Hitler's plans for a Nazi-dominated Ukraine. But there is a deeper meaning: not conquest of the Soviet Union by

foreign powers, but the revival of class rule within the Soviet republics, that is, the definitive overthrow of the working class régime. This is the most fundamental danger to the Soviet Union. And not only does Stalinism take no steps against this danger; it is Stalinism itself and its policies which are directly leading to the overthrow of the working class régime within the Soviet Union. Indeed, the present stage in the development of Stalinism is transitional in this process. The present bureaucratic, nationalistic officialdom, resting primarily on the apparatus and the army, is already an immense distance from the dictatorship of the proletariat as Lenin understood it. And this internal development is only the correlative of the external policy that attempts to defend the Soviet borders by alliance with finance capital. The betrayal of the workers in France, England and the United States to their governments during the next war will be merely the reverse side of the betrayal of the workers of the Soviet Union, in the suppression of the Russian revolution itself by the completion of the process of undermining the workers' régime.

* * *

In brief summary, let it be asked: "What is the answer? What is the conclusion to be drawn?" The conclusion is inescapable. Foreshadowed by the events in the British general strike, the events of the Chinese revolution, the policy of the "Third Period," demonstrated by the triumph of Hitler in Germany and the defeat of the workers in Austria, it is now exposed by the approach of the war crisis in letters too gigantic for any Marxist to avoid: The Third International, as thoroughly as the Second International, is rotten through and through, decayed and irrecoverable, preparing systematically for the new August 4, the new bloody sacrifice of the working class. The only possible answer is the rallying of all revolutionists under the banners of the world revolution, in the struggle for workers' power, in the rejection of all truce with the class enemy under whatever disguise, and the concentration of attack on the enemy at home. But this means and can only mean decisive and final break with social democracy and with Stalinism. The only road is the road of the Fourth International.

John WEST

The Soviet Union Today

The Workers' State and the Question of Thermidor and Bonapartism

THE FOREIGN policies of the Stalinist bureaucracy—within both its channels, the primary one of diplomacy, and the subsidiary channel of the Comintern—have taken a sharp turn toward the League of Nations, toward the preservation of the *status quo*, and alliances with reformists and bourgeois democracy. At the same time, the domestic policies have turned toward the market and the "well-to-do collective farmer". The latest drive against oppositionist and semi-oppositionist groups, as well as against isolated elements who are in the least critical, and the new mass cleansing of the party have for their object to give Stalin a free hand for the course to the Right. Involved here is essentially the return to the old organic course (staking all on the kulak, alliance with the Kuo Min Tang, the Anglo-Russian Committee, etc.), but on a much larger scale and under immeasurably more onerous conditions. Where does this course lead? The word "Thermidor" is heard again on many lips. Unfortunately, this word has become worn from use, it has lost its concrete content and is obviously inadequate for the task of characterizing either that stage through which the Stalinist bureaucracy is passing, or the catastrophe which it is preparing. We must, first of all, estab-

lish our terminology.

Controversies Over "Thermidor" in the Past. The question of "Thermidor" is bound up closely with the history of the Left Opposition in the U.S.S.R. It would be no easy task today to establish who resorted first to the historical analogy of Thermidor. In any case the positions on this issue in 1926 were approximately as follows: the group of "Democratic Centralism" (V. M. Smirnov, Sapronov, and others who were hounded to death in exile by Stalin) declared, "Thermidor is an accomplished fact!" The adherents to the platform of the Left Opposition, the Bolshevik-Leninists, categorically denied this assertion. And it was over this issue that a split occurred. Who has proved to be correct? To answer this question we must establish precisely what each group itself understood "Thermidor" to mean: historical analogies allow of various interpretations, and may therefore be easily abused.

The late V. M. Smirnov—one of the finest representatives of the old Bolshevik school—held that the lag in industrialization, the growth of the kulak and of the Nepman (the new bourgeois), the liaison between the latter and the bureaucracy, and finally, the degeneration of the party had progressed so far as to render im-

possible a return to the socialist road without a new revolution. The proletariat had already lost power. With the crushing of the Left Opposition, the bureaucracy began to express the interests of a regenerating bourgeois régime. The fundamental conquests of the October revolution had been liquidated. Such was in its essentials the position of the group of "Democratic Centralists".

The Left Opposition argued that although the elements of dual power had indubitably begun to sprout within the country, the transition from these elements to the hegemony of the bourgeoisie could not occur otherwise than by means of a counter-revolutionary overturn. The bureaucracy was already linked to the Nepman and the kulak, but its main roots still extended into the working class. In its struggle against the Left Opposition, the bureaucracy undoubtedly was dragging behind it a heavy tail in the shape of Nepmen and kulaks. But on the morrow this tail would strike a blow at the head, that is, at the ruling bureaucracy. New splits within the bureaucratic ranks were inevitable. Face to face with the direct danger of a counter-revolutionary overturn, the basic core of the Centrist bureaucracy would lean upon the workers for support against the growing rural bourgeoisie. The outcome of the conflict was still far from having been decided. The burial of the October revolution was premature. The crushing of the Left Opposition facilitated the work of Thermidor. But Thermidor had not yet occurred.

We need only review accurately the *gist* of the controversies of 1926-1927 for the correctness of the position of the Bolshevik-Leninists to emerge in all its obviousness, in the light of subsequent developments. As early as 1927 the kulaks struck a blow at the bureaucracy, by refusing to supply it with bread which they had managed to concentrate in their own hands. In 1928, an open split took place in the bureaucracy. The Right was for further concessions to the kulak. The Centrists, arming themselves with the ideas of the Left Opposition whom they had smashed conjointly with the Rights, found their support among the workers, routed the Rights, and took to the road of industrialization and, subsequently, collectivization. The basic social conquests of the October revolution were saved in the end at the cost of countless unnecessary sacrifices.

The prognosis of the Bolshevik-Leninists (more correctly, the "optimum variant" of their prognosis) was confirmed completely. Today there can be no controversy on this point. Development of the productive forces proceeded not by way of restoration of private property but on the basis of socialization, by way of planned management. The world historical significance of this fact can remain hidden only to the politically blind.

The Real Meaning of Thermidor. Nevertheless, today, we can and must admit that the analogy of Thermidor served to becloud rather than to clarify the question. Thermidor in 1794 produced a shift of power from certain groups in the Convention to other groups, from one section of the victorious "people" to other strata. Was Thermidor counter-revolution? The answer to this question depends upon how wide a significance we attach, in a given case, to the concept of "counter-revolution". The social overturn of 1789 to 1793 was bourgeois in character. In essence it reduced itself to the replacement of fixed feudal property by "free" bourgeois property. The counter-revolution, corresponding to this revolution, would have had to attain the reestablishment of feudal property. But Thermidor did not even make an attempt in this direction. Robespierre sought his support among the artisans—the Directorate, among the middle bourgeoisie. Bonaparte allied himself with the banks. All these shifts—which had, of course, not only a political but a social significance—occurred, however, on the basis of the new bourgeois society and state.

Thermidor was reaction in operation on the social foundation of the revolution. Of the very same import was the Eighteenth

Brumaire of Bonaparte, the next important stage on the road of reaction. In both instances it was a question not of restoring either the old forms of property, or the power of former ruling estates; but of dividing the gains of the new social régime among the different sections of the victorious "Third Estate". The bourgeoisie appropriated more and more property and power (either directly and immediately, or through special agents like Bonaparte), but made no attempt whatever against the social conquests of the revolution; on the contrary, it solicitously sought to strengthen, organize and stabilize them. Napoleon guarded bourgeois property, including that of the peasant, against both the "rabble" and the claims of the expropriated proprietors. Feudal Europe hated Napoleon as the living embodiment of the revolution, and it was correct, according to its lights.

The Marxian Evaluation of the U.S.S.R. There is no doubt the U.S.S.R. today bears very little resemblance to that type of the Soviet republic which Lenin depicted in 1917 (no permanent bureaucracy or permanent army; the right of recalling all elected officials at any time and the active control over them by the masses "regardless who the individual may be"; etc.). The domination of the bureaucracy over the country, as well as Stalin's domination over the bureaucracy have well-nigh attained their absolute consummation. But what conclusions would follow from this? There are some who say that since the actual state which has emerged from the proletarian revolution does not correspond to ideal *a priori* norms, therefore they turn their backs on it. That is political snobbery, common to pacifist-democratic, libertarian, anarcho-syndicalist, and generally ultra-Left circles of petty bourgeois intelligentsia. There are others who say that since this state has emerged from the proletarian revolution therefore every criticism of it is sacrilege and counter-revolution. That is the voice of hypocrisy behind which lurk most often the immediate material interests of certain groups among this very same petty bourgeois intelligentsia, or among the workers' bureaucracy. These two types—the political snob and the political hypocrite—are readily interchangeable, depending upon personal circumstances. Let us pass them both by.

A Marxist would say that the present-day U.S.S.R. obviously does not approximate to the *a priori* norms of a Soviet state; let us discover, however, what we failed to foresee when working out the programmatic norms; let us furthermore analyze what social factors have distorted the workers' state; let us check once again if these distortions have extended to the economic foundations of the state, that is to say, if the basic social conquests of the proletarian revolution have been preserved; if these have been preserved, then in what direction are they changing; and if there obtain in the U.S.S.R. and on the world arena such factors as may facilitate and hasten the preponderance of progressive trends of development over those of reaction. Such an approach is complex. It brings with it no ready-made key for lazy minds which the latter love so much. In return, however, not only does it preserve one from the two plagues, snobbery and hypocrisy, but it also presents the possibility for exerting an active influence upon the fate of the U.S.S.R.

When the group of "Democratic Centralism" declared in 1926 that the workers' state was liquidated, it was obviously burying the revolution while it was still alive. In contradistinction to this, the Left Opposition worked out a program of reforms for the Soviet régime. The Stalinist bureaucracy smashed the Left Opposition in order to safeguard and entrench itself as a privileged caste. But in the struggle for its own positions it found itself compelled to take from the program of the Left Opposition all those measures which alone made it possible to save the social basis of the Soviet state. That is a priceless political lesson! It shows how specific historical conditions, the backwardness of the

peasantry, the weariness of the proletariat, the lack of decisive support from the West, prepare for a "second chapter" in the revolution, which is characterized by the suppression of the proletarian vanguard and the smashing of revolutionary internationalists by the conservative national bureaucracy. But this very same example shows how a correct political line enables a Marxian grouping to fructify developments even when the victors of the "second chapter" run rough-shod over the revolutionists of the "first chapter".

A superficial idealistic mode of thinking which operates with ready-made norms, mechanically fitting living processes of development to them, easily leads one from enthusiasm to prostration. Only dialectic materialism, which teaches us to view all existence in its process of development and in the conflict of internal forces, can impart the necessary stability to thought and action.

The Dictatorship of the Proletariat and the Dictatorship of the Bureaucracy. In a number of previous writings, we established the fact that despite its economic successes, which were determined by the nationalization of the means of production, *Soviet society* completely preserves a contradictory transition character, and measured by the position of the toilers, the inequality of living conditions, and the privileges of the bureaucracy, it still stands much closer to the régime of capitalism than to future communism.

At the same time, we established the fact that despite monstrous bureaucratic degeneration, the *Soviet state* still remains the historical instrument of the working class, in so far as it assures the development of economy and culture on the basis of nationalized means of production, and by virtue of this prepares the conditions for a genuine emancipation of the toilers through the liquidation of the bureaucracy and of social inequality.

Whoever has not seriously pondered and accepted these two fundamental propositions; whoever, in general, has not studied the literature of the Bolshevik-Leninists on the question of the U.S.S.R., from 1923 on, runs the risk of losing the leading thread with every new event, and of forsaking Marxist analysis for abject lamentations.

The Soviet (it would be more correct to say, the anti-Soviet) bureaucratism is the product of social contradictions between the city and the village; between the proletariat and the peasantry (these two kinds of contradictions are not identical); between the national republics and districts; between the different groups of peasantry; between the different layers of the working class; between the different groups of consumers; and, finally, between the Soviet state as a whole and its capitalist environment. Today, when all relationships are being translated into the language of monetary calculation, the economic contradictions come to the forefront with exceptional sharpness.

Raising itself above the toiling masses, the bureaucracy regulates these contradictions. It uses this function in order to strengthen its own domination. By its uncontrolled and self-willed rule, subject to no appeal, the bureaucracy accumulates new contradictions. Exploiting the latter, it creates the régime of bureaucratic absolutism.

The contradictions within the bureaucracy itself have led to a system of hand-picking the main commanding staff; the need for discipline within the select order has led to the rule of a single person, and to the cult of the infallible leader. One and the same system prevails in factory, *kolkhoz* [collective farm], university, and the government: a leader stands at the head of his faithful troop; the rest follow the leader. Stalin never was and, by his nature, could never be a leader of masses: he is the leader of bureaucratic "leaders", their consummation, their personification.

The more complex the economic tasks become, the greater the demands and the interests of the population become, all the more sharp becomes the contradiction between the bureaucratic régime

and the demands of socialist development; all the more coarsely does the bureaucracy struggle to preserve its positions; all the more cynically does it resort to violence, fraud and bribery.

The constant worsening of the political régime in face of the growth of economy and culture—this crying fact finds its explanation in this, and this alone: that oppression, persecution, and suppression serve today in a large measure not for the defense of the state, but for the defense of the rule and privileges of the bureaucracy. This is also the source of the ever increasing need to mask repressions by means of frauds and amalgams.

"But can such a state be called a *workers' state*?"—thus speak the indignant voices of moralists, idealists, and "revolutionary" snobs. Others a bit more cautious express themselves as follows, "Perhaps this is a workers' state, in the last analysis, but there has not been left in it a vestige of the dictatorship of the proletariat. We have here a degenerated workers' state under the dictatorship of the bureaucracy."

We see no reason whatever to resume this argumentation as a whole. All that has to be said on this score has been said in the literature and in the official documents of our tendency. No one has attempted to refute, correct, or supplement the position of the Bolshevik-Leninists on this most important question.

We shall here limit ourselves solely to the question whether the factual dictatorship of the bureaucracy may be called the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The terminological difficulty here arises from the fact that the term *dictatorship* is now used in a restricted political sense and, again, in a more profound, sociological sense. We speak of the "dictatorship of Mussolini" and at the same time declare that Fascism is only the instrument of finance capital. Which is correct? Both are correct, but on different planes. It is incontestable that the entire executive power is concentrated in Mussolini's hands. But it is no less true that the entire actual content of the state activity is dictated by the interests of finance capital. The *social* domination of a class (its "dictatorship") may find extremely diverse *political* forms. This is attested by the entire history of the bourgeoisie, from the Middle Ages to the present day.

The experience of the Soviet Union is already adequate for the extension of this very same sociological law—with all the *necessary changes*—to the dictatorship of the proletariat as well. In the interim between the conquest of power and the dissolution of the workers' state within the socialist society, the forms and methods of proletarian rule may change sharply, depending upon the course of the class struggle, internally and externally.

Thus, the present-day domination of Stalin in no way resembles the Soviet rule during the initial years of the revolution. The substitution of one régime for the other did not occur at a single stroke, but through a series of measures, by means of a number of minor civil wars waged by the bureaucracy against the proletarian vanguard. In the last historical analysis, the Soviet democracy was blown up by the pressure of social contradictions. Exploiting the latter, the bureaucracy wrested the power from the hands of mass organizations. In this sense we may speak about the dictatorship of the bureaucracy and even about the personal dictatorship of Stalin. But this usurpation was made possible and can maintain itself only because the *social content of the dictatorship of the bureaucracy is determined by those productive relations which were created by the proletarian revolution.* In this sense we may say with complete justification that the dictatorship of the proletariat found its distorted but indubitable expression in the dictatorship of the bureaucracy.

The Historical Analogy Must be Revised and Corrected. In the internal controversies of the Russian and the international Opposition we conditionally understood by Thermidor, the first stage of bourgeois counter-revolution, aimed against the social basis of the

workers' state.* Although the substance of the controversy, as we have seen, did not suffer by it in the past, nevertheless, the historical analogy became invested with a purely conditional, and not a realistic character, and this conditional character comes into ever increasing contradiction with the demands for an analysis of the most recent evolution of the Soviet state. Enough to mention the fact that we ourselves often speak—and with ample cause—of the plebiscitary or Bonapartist régime of Stalin. But Bonapartism, in France, came after Thermidor? If we are to remain within the framework of the historical analogy, we must necessarily ask the question: Since there has been no Soviet "Thermidor" as yet, whence could Bonapartism have arisen? Without making any changes *in essence* in our former evaluations—there is no reason whatever to do so—we must radically revise the historical analogy. This will enable us to gain a closer view of certain old facts, and better to understand certain new manifestations.

The overturn of the Ninth Thermidor did not liquidate the basic conquests of the bourgeois revolution; but it did transfer the power into the hands of the more moderate and conservative Jacobins, the better-to-do elements of bourgeois society. Today, it is impossible to overlook that in the Soviet revolution also a shift to the Right took place a long time ago, a shift entirely analogous to Thermidor, although much slower in tempo, and more masked in forms. The conspiracy of the Soviet bureaucracy against the Left wing could preserve its comparatively "dry" character during the initial stages only because the conspiracy itself was executed much more systematically and thoroughly than the improvisation of the Ninth Thermidor.

Socially the proletariat is more homogeneous than the bourgeoisie, but it contains within itself an entire series of strata which become manifest with exceptional clarity following the conquest of power, during the period when the bureaucracy and a workers' aristocracy connected with it, begin to take form. The smashing of the Left Opposition implied in the most direct and immediate sense the transfer of power from the hands of the revolutionary vanguard into the hands of the more conservative elements among the bureaucracy and the upper crust of the working class. The year 1924—that was the beginning of the Soviet Thermidor.

Involved here, of course, is not the question of historical identity but of historical analogy which always has as its limits the different social structures and epochs. But the given analogy is neither superficial nor accidental: it is determined by the extreme tension in the class struggle which prevails during the period of revolution and counter-revolution. In both cases the bureaucracy raised itself upon the backs of plebeian democracy which had assured the victory for the new régime. The Jacobin clubs were strangled gradually. The revolutionists of 1793 died on the battlefields; they became diplomats and generals, they fell under the blows of repression . . . or went underground. Subsequently, other Jacobins successfully transformed themselves into Napoleon's prefects. Their ranks were swelled in ever increasing numbers by turncoats from old parties, by former aristocrats, and crass careerists. And in Russia? The very same picture of degeneration, but on a much more gigantic arena and a much more mature background, is reproduced, some 130-140 years later by the gradual transition from Soviets and party clubs seething with life to the command-

ering of secretaries who depend solely upon the "passionately beloved leader".

In France, the prolonged stabilization of the Thermidorian-Bonapartist régime was made possible only thanks to the development of the productive forces which had been freed from the fetters of feudalism. The lucky ones, the plunderers, the relatives, and the allies of the bureaucracy enriched themselves. The disillusioned masses fell into prostration.

The upsurge of the nationalized productive forces, which began in 1923, and which came unexpectedly to the Soviet bureaucracy itself, created the necessary economic prerequisites for the stabilization of the latter. The upbuilding of the economic life provided an outlet for the energies of active and capable organizers, administrators, and technicians. Their material and moral position improved rapidly. A broad, privileged stratum was created, closely linked to the ruling upper crust. The toiling masses lived on hopes or fell into apathy.

It would be banal pedantry to attempt to fit the different stages of the Russian revolution to analogous events in France that occurred toward the close of the eighteenth century. But one is literally hit between the eyes by the resemblance between the present Soviet political régime and the régime of the First Consul, particularly at the end of the Consulate when the period of the Empire was nigh. While Stalin lacks the luster of victories, at any rate, he surpasses Bonaparte the First in the régime of organized cringing. Such power could be attained only by strangling the party, the Soviets, the working class as a whole. The bureaucracy upon which Stalin leans is materially bound up with the results of the consummated national revolution, but it has no point of contact with the developing international revolution. In their manner of living, their interests and psychology, the present-day Soviet functionaries differ no less from the revolutionary Bolsheviks than the generals and prefects of Napoleon differed from the revolutionary Jacobins.

Thermidorians and Bonapartists. The Soviet ambassador to London, Maisky, recently explained to a delegation of British trade unionists how necessary and justifiable was the Stalinist trial of the "counter-revolutionary" Zinovievists. This striking episode—one from among a thousand—immediately brings us to the heart of the question. We know who the Zinovievists are. Whatever their mistakes and vacillations, one thing is certain: they are representatives of the "professional revolutionist" type. The questions of the world workers' movement—these have entered into their blood. Who is Maisky? A Right wing Menshevik who broke with his own party in 1918, going to the Right in order to avail himself of the opportunity to enter as a Minister into the Trans-Ural White Government, under the protection of Kolchak. Only after Kolchak was annihilated did Maisky consider the time ripe for turning his face toward the Soviets. Lenin—and I along with him—had the greatest distrust, to say nothing of contempt, for such types. Today, Maisky, in the rank of ambassador, accuses "Zinovievists" and "Trotskyists" of striving to provoke military intervention in order to restore capitalism—the very same capitalism which Maisky had defended against us by means of civil war.

The present ambassador to the United States, A. Troyanovsky, joined the Bolsheviks in his youth; shortly afterward he left the party; during the war he was a patriot; in 1917, a Menshevik. The October revolution found him a member of the Menshevik Central Committee, in addition to which, during the next few years, Troyanovsky carried on an illegal struggle against the dictatorship of the proletariat; he entered the Stalinist party, more correctly, the diplomatic service, after the Left Opposition was crushed.

The ambassador to Paris, Potemkin, was a bourgeois professor of history during the period of the October revolution; he joined

*The Mensheviks also speak about Thermidorian degeneration. It is impossible to understand what they mean by this. The Mensheviks were opposed to the seizure of power by the proletariat. Even today, the Soviet state is non-proletarian, in their opinion (what it really is—remains a mystery). In the

past they demanded the return to capitalism, today they demand the return to "democracy". If they themselves are not representatives of Thermidorian tendencies, then what does "Thermidor" mean at all? Self-evidently, it is merely a current literary expression.

the Bolsheviks after the victory. The former ambassador to Berlin, Khinchuk, participated, as a Menshevik, during the days of the October overturn, in the counter-revolutionary Moscow Committee for the Salvation of the Fatherland and the Revolution, together with Grinko, a Right wing Social Revolutionary, the present People's Commissar of Finance. Suritz, who replaced Khinchuk in Berlin, was the political secretary of the Menshevik Chkheidze, the first chairman of the Soviets; he joined the Bolsheviks after the victory. Almost all other diplomats are—of the same type; and in the meantime there are being appointed abroad—especially after the experience with Bessedovsky, Dimitrievsky, Agabekov and others—only the most dependable people.

Not so long ago dispatches appeared in the world press relating to the major successes of the Soviet gold mining industry, with comments concerning its organizer, the engineer Serebrovsky. The Moscow correspondent of the *Temps*, who is today successfully competing with Duranty and Louis Fischer as the official spokesman for the bureaucratic uppercrust, took particular pains to stress the fact that Serebrovsky is a Bolshevik from 1903, a member of the "Old Guard". That is what Serebrovsky's party card actually states. As a matter of fact, he participated in the 1905 revolution as a young student and Menshevik in order to then go over to the camp of the bourgeoisie for many long years. The February revolution found him holding the post of government director of two munitions plants, a member of the Board of Trade, and an active participant in the struggle against the metal workers' union. In May 1917, Serebrovsky declared that Lenin was a "German spy"! After the victory of the Bolsheviks, Serebrovsky along with other "spetzes" was drawn into technical work by myself. Lenin did not trust him at all; I had hardly any faith in him myself. Today, Serebrovsky is a member of the Central Committee of the party!

The theoretical journal of the Central Committee, *Bolshevik*, (Dec. 31, 1934) carries an article by Serebrovsky, "On the Gold Mining Industry of the U.S.S.R." We turn to the first page: ". . . under the leadership of the beloved leader of the party and the working class, comrade Stalin . . ."; three lines down: ". . . comrade Stalin in a conversation with the American correspondent, Mr. Duranty . . ."; five lines further down: ". . . the concise and precise reply of comrade Stalin . . ."; at the bottom of the page: ". . . that's what it means to fight for gold in the Stalinist way". Page two: ". . . as our great leader, comrade Stalin teaches us . . ."; four lines down: ". . . replying to their [the Bolsheviks'] report comrade Stalin wrote: Congratulations on your success . . ."; further down on the same page: ". . . inspired by the guidance of comrade Stalin . . ."; one line below: ". . . the party with comrade Stalin at the head . . ."; two lines following: ". . . the guidance of our party and [!] comrade Stalin". Let us now turn to the conclusion of the article. In the course of a half a page we read: ". . . the guidance of the genial leader of the party and the working class, comrade Stalin . . ."; and three lines later: ". . . the words of our beloved leader, comrade Stalin . . ."

Satire itself stands disarmed in the face of such a flood of sycophancy! "Beloved leaders", one should imagine, are never in need of having declarations of love made to them five times on each page, and, besides, in an article devoted not to the leader's anniversary but to . . . the mining of gold. On the other hand, the author of an article, with a capacity for such fawning, obviously cannot have anything in him of a revolutionist. Of such a caliber is this former czarist director of large factories, bourgeois and patriot, who waged a struggle against the workers, and who is today a bulwark of the régime, member of the Central Committee, and 100% Stalinist!

Another specimen. One of the pillars of the present-day *Pravda*, Zaslavsky, propounded in January of this year that it was just as

impermissible to publish the reactionary novels of Dostoevsky as the "counter-revolutionary works of Trotsky, Zinoviev and Kamenev". Who is this Zaslavsky? In the dim past—a Right wing Bundist (Menshevik of the Jewish Bund), later a bourgeois journalist who carried on a most contemptible campaign in 1917 against Lenin and Trotsky as agents of Germany. In Lenin's articles for 1917 there is to be found, as a refrain, the phrase, "Zaslavsky and other scoundrels like him". Thus has Zaslavsky entered into the literature of the party, as the consummate type of a venal bourgeois calumniator. During the civil war period, he was in hiding in Kiev, a journalist for White Guard publications. Only in 1923 did he go over to the side of the Soviet power. Today he defends Stalinism from the counter-revolutionists Trotsky, Zinoviev and Kamenev! In the U.S.S.R. as well as abroad, Stalin's press is crammed with such individuals.

The old cadres of Bolshevism have been smashed. Revolutionists have been supplanted by functionaries with supple spines. Marxian thinking has been driven out by fear, flattery, and intrigue. Of Lenin's Political Bureau, only Stalin has remained: two members of the Political Bureau are broken politically and grovel in the dust (Rykov and Tomsky); two members are in prison (Zinoviev and Kamenev); and one is exiled abroad and deprived of his citizenship (Trotsky). Lenin, as Krupskaya herself expressed it, was spared only by death from the repressions of the bureaucracy: failing the opportunity to put him in prison, the epigones shut him up in a mausoleum. The entire warp of the ruling layer has degenerated. The Jacobins have been pushed out by the Thermidorians and Bonapartists; Bolsheviks have been supplanted by Stalinists.

To the broad stratum of the conservative and nowise disinterested Maiskys, Serebrovskys, and Zaslavskys, large, medium, and petty, Stalin is the judge-arbiter, the fountain of all boons, and the defender from all possible oppositions. In return for this, the bureaucracy, from time to time, presents Stalin with the sanction of a national plebiscite. Party congresses, like Soviet congresses are organized upon a sole criterion: *for* or *against* Stalin? Only "counter-revolutionists" can be *against*, and they are dealt with as they deserve. Such is the present-day mechanism of rule. This is a *Bonapartist* mechanism. No other definition for it can be found as yet in a political dictionary.

The Difference between the Roles of a Bourgeois and a Workers' State. Without historical analogies we cannot learn from history. But the analogy must be concrete: behind the traits of resemblance we must not overlook the traits of dissimilarity. Both revolutions put an end to feudalism and serfdom. But one of them, in the shape of its extreme wing, could only strive in vain to pass beyond the limits of bourgeois society; the other actually overthrew the bourgeoisie and created the workers' state. This fundamental class distinction which introduces the necessary material limits to the analogy bears a decisive significance for the prognosis.

After the profound democratic revolution, which liberates the peasants from serfdom and gives them land, the feudal counter-revolution is generally impossible. The overthrown monarchy may reestablish itself in power, and surround itself with mediæval phantoms. But it is already powerless to reestablish the economy of feudalism. Once liberated from the fetters of feudalism, bourgeois relations develop automatically. They can be checked by no external force: they must themselves dig their own grave, having previously created their own gravedigger.

It is altogether otherwise with the development of socialist relations. The proletarian revolution not only frees the productive forces from the fetters of private ownership but it transfers them to the direct disposal of the state it itself creates. While the bourgeois state, after the revolution, confines itself to a police rôle, leaving the market to its own laws, the workers' state assumes the

direct rôle of economist and organizer. The replacement of one political régime by another exerts only an indirect and superficial influence upon market economy. On the contrary, the replacement of a workers' government by a bourgeois or petty bourgeois government would inevitably lead to the liquidation of the planned beginnings and, subsequently, to the restoration of private property. *In contradistinction to capitalism, socialism is built not automatically but consciously.* Progress toward socialism is inseparable from that state power which is desirous of socialism, or which is constrained to desire it. Socialism can acquire an immutable character only at a very high stage of development, when its productive forces have far transcended those of capitalism, when the human wants of each and all can obtain bounteous satisfaction, and when the state will have completely withered away, dissolving in society. But all this is still in the distant future. At the given stage of development, the socialist construction stands and falls with the workers' state. Only after thoroughly pondering the difference between the laws of the formation of bourgeois ("anarchistic") and socialist ("planned") economy, is it possible to understand those limits beyond which the analogy with the Great French Revolution cannot pass.

October 1917 completed the democratic revolution and initiated the socialist revolution. No force in the world can turn back the agrarian-democratic overturn in Russia: in this we have a complete analogy with the Jacobin revolution. But a *kolkhoz* overturn is a threat that retains its full force, and with it is threatened the nationalization of the means of production. Political counter-revolution, even were it to recede back to the Romanov dynasty, could not reestablish feudal ownership of land. But the restoration to power of a Menshevik and Social Revolutionary bloc would suffice to obliterate the socialist construction.

The Hypertrophy of Bureaucratic Centrism into Bonapartism. The fundamental difference between the two revolutions and consequently between the counter-revolutions "corresponding" to them is of utmost importance for understanding the significance of those *reactionary political shifts which compose the essence of Stalin's régime.* The peasant revolution, as well as the bourgeoisie that leaned upon it, was very well able to make its peace with the régime of Napoleon, and it was even able to maintain itself under Louis XVIII. The proletarian revolution is already exposed to mortal danger under the present régime of Stalin: it will be unable to withstand a further shift to the Right.

The Soviet bureaucracy—"Bolshevist" in its traditions but in reality having long since renounced its traditions, petty bourgeois in its composition and spirit—was summoned to regulate the antagonism between the proletariat and the peasantry, between the workers' state and world imperialism: such is the social base of *bureaucratic Centrism*, of its zigzags, its power, its weakness, and its influence on the world proletarian movement which has been so fatal*. As the bureaucracy becomes more independent, as more and more power is concentrated in the hands of a single person, the more does *bureaucratic Centrism* turn into *Bonapartism*.

The concept of Bonapartism, being too broad, demands concretization. During the last few years we have applied this term

*The Brandlerites, including the leaders of the S.A.P., remaining even today the theoretical pupils of Thalheimer, saw only "ultra-Leftism" in the policies of the Comintern, and denied (and continue to deny) the very meaning of bureaucratic centrism. The present "Fourth Period" when Stalin is pulling the European workers' movement on the hook of the Comintern to the Right of official

reformism demonstrates how shallow and opportunistic is the political philosophy of Thalheimer-Walcher and Co. These people are incapable of thinking a single question out to its conclusion. Precisely for this reason have they such a revulsion for the principle of *saying what is*, i.e., the highest principle of every scientific analysis and every revolutionary policy.

to those capitalist governments which, by exploiting the antagonisms between the proletarian and Fascist camps and by leaning directly upon the military-police apparatus, raise themselves above parliament and democracy, as the saviors of "national unity". We always strictly differentiated between this Bonapartism of decay and the young, advancing Bonapartism which was not only the gravedigger of the political principles of the bourgeois revolution, but also the defender of its social conquests. We apply a common name to these two manifestations because they have common traits; it is always possible to discern the youth in the octogenarian despite the merciless ravages of time.

The present-day Kremlin Bonapartism we juxtapose, of course, to the Bonapartism of bourgeois rise and not decay: with the Consulate and the First Empire and not with Napoleon III and, all the more so, not with Schleicher or Doumergue. For the purposes of such an analogy there is no need to ascribe to Stalin the traits of Napoleon I: whenever the social conditions demand it, Bonapartism can consolidate itself around axes of the most diverse caliber.

From the standpoint that interests us, the difference in the social basis of the two Bonapartisms, of Jacobin and of Soviet origin, is much more important. In the former case, the question involved was the consolidation of the bourgeois revolution through the liquidation of its principles and political institutions. In the latter case the question involved is the consolidation of the worker-peasant revolution through the smashing of its international program, its leading party, its Soviets. Developing the policies of Thermidor, Napoleon waged a struggle not only against the feudal world, but also against the "rabble" and the democratic circles of the petty and middle bourgeoisie; in this way he concentrated the fruits of the régime born out of the revolution in the hands of the new bourgeois aristocracy. Stalin guards the conquests of the October revolution not only against the feudal-bourgeois counter-revolution, but also against the claims of the toilers, their impatience, and their dissatisfaction; he crushes the Left wing which expresses the ordered historical and progressive tendencies of the unprivileged working masses; he creates a new aristocracy, by means of an extreme differentiation in wages, privileges, ranks, etc. Leaning for support upon the topmost layer of the new social hierarchy against the lowest—sometimes *vice-versa*—Stalin has attained the complete concentration of power in his own hands. What else should this régime be called, if not Soviet Bonapartism?

Bonapartism, by its very essence, cannot long maintain itself: a sphere balanced on the point of a pyramid must invariably roll down on one side or the other. But it is precisely at this point, as we have already seen, that the historical analogy runs up against its limits. Napoleon's downfall did not, of course, leave untouched the relations between classes; but in its essence, the social pyramid of France retained its bourgeois character. The inevitable collapse of Stalinist Bonapartism would immediately call into question the character of the U.S.S.R. as a workers' state. Socialist economy cannot be constructed without a socialist power. The fate of the U.S.S.R. as a *socialist* state depends upon that *political* régime which will arise to replace Stalinist Bonapartism. Only the revolutionary vanguard of the proletariat can regenerate the Soviet system, if it is again able to mobilize around itself the toilers of the city and the village.

Conclusion. From our analysis there follows a number of conclusions which we set down briefly below:

1. The Thermidor of the Great Russian Revolution is not before us but already far behind. The Thermidorians can celebrate,

In the next issue of THE NEW INTERNATIONAL we will print an important article by Max Eastman, entitled "Is Marxism Philosophy or Science?" A reply setting forth our own view, will be forthcoming in a later issue of the review.

approximately, the tenth anniversary of their victory.

2. The present political régime in the U.S.S.R. is the régime of "Soviet" (or anti-Soviet) Bonapartism, closer in type to the Empire than the Consulate.

3. In its social foundation and economic tendencies, the U.S.S.R. still remains a workers' state.

4. The contradiction between the political régime of Bonapartism and the demands of socialist development represents the most important source of the internal crises and is a direct danger to the very existence of the U.S.S.R. as a workers' state.

5. Due to the still low level of productive forces and to the capitalist environment, classes and class contradictions, now weakening, now sharpening, will still continue to exist within the U.S.S.R. for an indeterminately long period of time, in any case, up to the complete victory of the proletariat in the important capitalist nations of the world.

6. The existence of the proletarian dictatorship also remains for the future the necessary condition for the development of economy and culture in the U.S.S.R. Therefore the Bonapartist degeneration of the dictatorship represents the direct and immediate threat to all the social conquests of the proletariat.

7. The terrorist tendencies within the ranks of the communist youth are one of the most virulent symptoms of the fact that Bonapartism has exhausted its political possibilities and has entered the period of the most ruthless struggle for its existence.

8. The inevitable collapse of the Stalinist political régime will lead to the establishment of Soviet democracy only in the event that the removal of Bonapartism comes as the conscious act of the proletarian vanguard. In all other cases, in place of Stalinism there could only come the Fascist-capitalist counter-revolution.

9. The tactic of individual terrorism, no matter under what banner it proceeds, can, under the given conditions, play only into the hands of the worst enemies of the proletariat.

10. The political and moral responsibility for the very inception of terrorism within the ranks of the communist youth falls upon the gravedigger of the party—Stalin.

11. The chief cause, which weakens the proletarian vanguard of the U.S.S.R. in the struggle against Bonapartism, is the uninterrupted defeats of the world proletariat.

12. The chief cause for the defeats of the world proletariat is the criminal policies of the Comintern, the blind servant of Stalinist Bonapartism and, at the same time, the best ally and defender of the reformist bureaucracy.

13. The first condition for successes upon the international

arena is the liberation of the international proletarian vanguard from the demoralizing influence of Soviet Bonapartism, i. e., from the venal bureaucracy of the so-called Comintern.

14. The struggle for the salvation of the U.S.S.R. as a socialist state, coincides completely with the struggle for the Fourth International.

Postscript. Our opponents—and they are welcome—will seize upon our "self-criticism". So! they will shriek, you have changed your position on the fundamental question of Thermidor: hitherto you spoke only about the danger of Thermidor; now you suddenly declare that Thermidor already lies behind. This will probably be said by Stalinists, who will add for good measure that we have changed our position in order the more easily to provoke military intervention. The Brandlerites and the Lovestonites on the one hand and, on the other hand, certain "ultra-Left" wiseacres, may express themselves in the self-same key. These people were never able to point out to us what was erroneous in the analogy with Thermidor; they will shriek all the louder now that we have disclosed the error ourselves.

We have indicated above the position of this error in our general appraisal of the U.S.S.R. In no case is it a question of *changing* our principled position as it has been formulated in a number of official documents, but only a question of rendering it more *precise*. Our "self-criticism" extends not to the analysis of the class character of the U.S.S.R. or to the causes and conditions for its degeneration but only to the historical clarification of these processes by means of establishing analogies with well-known stages of the Great French Revolution. The correction of a partial, even though an important error, not only leaves unshaken the basic position of the Bolshevik-Leninists, but, on the contrary, enables us to establish it more precisely and concretely by means of more correct and more realistic analogies. It should also be added that the disclosure of the error was greatly facilitated by the fact that the very processes of the political degeneration, which are under discussion, have in the meantime assumed much more distinct shape.

Our tendency never laid claim to infallibility. We do not receive ready-made truths as a revelation, like the high-priests of Stalinism. We study, we discuss, we check our conclusions in the light of existence, we openly correct the admitted mistakes, and—we proceed forward. Scientific conscientiousness and personal strictness are the best traditions of Marxism and Leninism. We wish to remain true to our teachers in this respect as well.

February 1, 1935

L. TROTSKY

The Passing of the N.R.A.

IN THE NAME OF the ancient slogan of "states' rights" the U. S. Supreme Court by unanimous decision in the Schechter Poultry Case declared the N.R.A. unconstitutional. The reasons set forth in the ruling are not of great significance. The Supreme Court said that "the attempt through the provisions of the code to fix hours and wages of employees of defendants in their intrastate business was not a valid exercise of federal power". This is merely the legal way of justifying a decision to suit the requirements of the dominant sector of monopoly capital. It screened the judicial execution of a much ballyhooed measure of governmental regulation and restraint once accepted even by the large corporations as a necessary evil but now considered obnoxious by them. The general effect of this ruling, however, is bound to have far-reaching consequences. It is not at all unlikely that the collapse of the N.R.A. will open the gates to much more terrific class con-

licts over a vast area and thus help to speed the American workers in a revolutionary direction.

In essence the N.R.A. functioned as a bridge from the lowest point of the crisis toward the upturn of the economic cycle. As the cornerstone of the New Deal structure, it represented an unusual and a daring form of interrelation between the political state and the economic organs of capitalism. A system of legislation that went beyond the traditional concepts of free and untrammelled competition existing from the time of unprecedented expansion of productive forces and accumulation of capital, it also departed widely from the traditional constitutional forms. At its inception the N.R.A. found a general popular acclaim from the broad layers of the American population. But, once the lowest point of the crisis had been safely passed, it was subjected to an intense controversy. Hard-boiled employers and financiers denounced what

they looked upon as its socialistic features which stifled free initiative. Among its most ardent champions were the leaders of the American Federation of Labor who, because of their own reactionary political concepts and their impotence in face of the task of labor organization, leaned upon the N.R.A. as their only reed of salvation. While the Socialists were more moderate in their praise and very gentle in their criticism, the Stalinist leaders, on the other hand, incapable of a revolutionary and realistic estimate of the forces at work within class society, simply denounced it as the "Roosevelt Slave Act". From the outset it became synonymous with the Roosevelt administration and was considered the greatest achievement of the New Deal policies. Today, its collapse is hailed by Wall Street, it is bewailed by the A. F. of L. hierarchy and it has left the petty bourgeois liberals dazed.

An understanding of these manifestations of contrary views in the face of such recent acclaim is necessary in order to comprehend the significance of the Supreme Court action. A series of other questions arise out of the obituary. Firstly, it would seem reasonable to expect that the collapse of the N.R.A., which had become synonymous with the Roosevelt régime, would also indicate that the latter has passed its peak of popular acclaim and is on the way to final eclipse. In any event, whatever measures are proposed still to maintain some of the Blue Eagle principle even if only in skeleton form, cannot have very great significance. But inherent in this whole situation is also an element of crisis in the capitalist régime, of conflicts and clashes within its dominant strata. Serious political regroupments of forces can be looked for as well as new attempts to create a third party. At this particular moment the question may not yet arise as to whether the third party attempts will follow the plane of previous populist attempts or whether the entrenched oligarchy in heavy industry and in the large financial institutions will find it necessary to seek new and stronger political weapons in the creation of a militant Fascist party. To a large extent that depends upon the development of the working class forces and the maturing of their revolutionary consciousness. The crisis has left its serious impact on these developments. But the first steps toward the revolutionary radicalization of the American workers, who were stunned by the catastrophic force of the widespread unemployment during its downward curve, could be expected to reveal itself only in the turn toward revival and upswing.

In the United States the tremendous economic crisis struck with a terrific force and with all the characteristics of a social crisis. Due to the high development of its national economy, the contradictions involved in the accumulation of capital and the falling rate of profit had reached ever more acute forms. Out of the total capital which was set into motion in the process of capitalist production there was a relatively much more rapid growth of the proportion of constant capital when compared to variable capital. In other language, with the increased mechanization of industry the relative proportion of labor employed diminished. And since labor power is the source of all surplus value it follows that with its relative decrease there was a fall in the rate of profit on the total capital invested. At the moment when the overproduction of capital in the means of production—to the extent that it served as capital, or served for the exploitation of labor—and when the rate of profit fell below the point at which accumulation of capital was advantageous to the capitalist class as a whole, the crisis occurred. This presented the problem for American capitalism of finding compensation for the falling rate of profit by increasing the total mass of capital upon which profit is made. It had to be accomplished at the expense of the workers' wages since that was the only way in which profits could be restored. Concretely it was carried out by the so-called measures of crisis readjustment. They proceeded from the already drastically reduced general wage level to a raising of the intensity of exploitation of labor. Then fol-

lowed the measures to expand credits and to provide liquid capital by heavy governmental expenditures together with efforts to raise the commodity price level. Inflation resulted. Primarily these measures served the purpose of restoring confidence within capitalism in the continuity of the process of reproduction. On the whole, however, the N.R.A. scheme fitted admirably into this process of capitalist restoration. It became a strong-arm method to save the tottering banking system, forestall bankruptcies of the large corporations and to set capitalism going once more on the road forward to new profits. Roosevelt asserted very clearly from the outset that his aim was to restore the profitability of industry. This sums up the significance of the N.R.A. in its general economic aspect.

But the political implications of the N.R.A. were no less important. Essentially it consisted of two distinct parts: Firstly, its code regulation features to secure what was called "fair competition", by the elimination of "destructive price cutting", the regulation of trade practises, etc. Secondly, its social relations feature of labor provisions with its regulation of minimum wages and maximum hours, and above all the famous Section 7a covering the "rights of collective bargaining". Each of these parts operated under close governmental supervision. While both were economic in their nature they had far-reaching political implications. In every respect the code regulations favored the larger corporations which were also the dominant force in the code authority bodies. They operated in the direction of a greater concentration of industry, a greater centralization of finance together with a strengthening of monopoly capital against the weaker competitors. In its real essence this served as a preparation of the internal market to stand the strain of new imperialist expansion. The N.R.A. social relations feature, however, was yet more fundamental in character. For the authors of the New Deal policies it meant the establishment of a new social equation in which capital and labor were to cooperate under governmental regulation and supervision. The reasons for this conception were obvious and clear. Capitalism had plunged into its crises. A large unemployed army had shown its temper in restlessness, creating possibilities of greater convulsions ensuing from its desperate position. A resurgence of labor militancy could certainly be expected with a turn in the business cycle. The conservative unions had disintegrated and had become reduced to a narrow shell. Would they be sufficient in that form for capitalism to rely upon to stem a possible tide toward more militant organization and action? This was the crucial problem and the aim of this social relations feature was therefore pictured as an aid to labor organization. Recognition of the "right to collective bargaining" held the center of the stage in all the general ballyhoo for the "forgotten man". In reality it meant very little, except in the sense that it did become a stimulus to the powerful stream of proletarians, which at the turn of the business cycle, gravitated to the trade unions. Workers joined the conservative unions in large numbers. The A. F. of L. experienced a revival and growth fully in accord with the N.R.A. scheme of preventing more militant organization and action. The A. F. of L. officials in turn accepted the mission laid out for them as salesmen of the New Deal, encouraging labor to look to Roosevelt to usher in the new age of "fullness of life" for all, and to enable the salesmen to call upon him or the established labor boards to put the governmental stamp of approval alongside of the union label of their betrayals in strike settlements.

Thus the actual chief purposes of the N.R.A. labor provisions were clearly established. The recovery efforts in their early stages needed the unified support of all classes of the population. In harmony therewith, the labor provisions were designed to prevent independent class activities, to prevent militant action by the workers and to turn their struggles away from the basic reliance on their

own organized power and into governmental channels where they could be tied up in the complicated system of labor boards. But the large masses, who began action on their own account, streamed into the conservative trade unions for entirely different purposes. They proceeded in efforts to turn these unions into weapons of battle against the employers for the right of organization, to make collective bargaining real and in order to regain a higher standard of living. Militant struggle by the workers could not be prevented altogether—far from it—as the history of this period shows.

The most powerful corporations which, pressed by necessity at the time and due to their fear of independent class activity by the workers, had accepted the N.R.A., once its machinery was in operation, drove headlong for company unionism and resisted actual union organization with the most violent means. Aided by the otherwise incompetent trade union bureaucrats, whom they themselves held in contempt, and aided by the cunning devices of the labor provisions, further by the sheer force of the political state, they managed to check two strike waves and to keep these developing struggles from reaching maturity. Whatever concessions were gained by the workers in these strikes, accrued to them, with but few exceptions, by virtue of their militancy in organization and militant fighting for their demands. With particular clarity this period demonstrated the contrast of gains made by turning the unions into actual instruments of struggle and the futility or defeat in relying solely on the governmental agencies of the N.R.A. The latter course, if not enforcing an outright sell-out, usually wound up in the courts to meet defeat for the workers or to remain on the calendar indefinitely. Not less than 411 such labor cases were pending in the courts when the code regulations were found to be unconstitutional. This lesson will not have been in vain so far as the workers are concerned. They learn essentially by their own experiences. And no doubt, these bitter experiences did more than any other factor to discredit the N.R.A. in their estimation even before it actually went out of existence.

Aided by a partial "natural" upswing, the N.R.A. had done its work, and a division of opinion regarding its future set in among the various sections of the ruling class. In the upper circles of the trade union bureaucracy this has been interpreted as a division between the exploiters who were motivated by particular greed and avarice and those harboring views friendly to labor. That is not at all the case. The real situation stands quite differently. Capitalism had been relieved, during the course of the N.R.A., of its main worry in two directions. Profits began to return and the initiative for independent class activity was checked for the time being. These tasks accomplished, the big bankers and the owners of the large industrial corporations became more violently articulate in their protests against "governmental interference in business". Some of the employers, notably the retail traders, favored the continuation of the code regulations, but their opinions weighed less in the scale. The N.R.A. was no longer necessary to the real plutocrats. Their smaller competitors had been weakened and they felt confident again of their power to deal new and smashing blows to the workers in the field of the class struggle. American capitalism does not yet need the regimentation or the governmental supervision typified by the N.R.A. as a "permanent" system. It has obtained the breathing space that it sought and which Roosevelt so accommodatingly helped to provide. Hence, there should be no illusions of any serious differentiation between Roosevelt and the dominant capitalist forces. It is true that he had to speak harsh words to them and chide them as money-changers motivated by selfish interests at the time when they were stranded on the dangerous reefs of the crisis; but that was done essentially in order to lend to it the coloring of an all-American team pulling together for the N.R.A. Now its mission has been performed and some of the vital pillars supporting the capitalist economic structure that

were at the point of crumbling have been reinforced. The structure emerges stronger than before. The rule of the entrenched oligarchy continues through the traditional, even if stiffened forms of bourgeois democracy. In the breathing space it has obtained it can be counted upon to proceed with absolute unrestraint, wielding fire and sword against the working class. But in this breathing space the historical contradictions will ripen further.

Has the profitability of industry been restored? Here are some indications. As a matter of fact, profits have boomed amazingly. For instance, a report of the National Emergency Council, which was the coordinating body of all the administration's recovery agencies, cites figures of the Federal Reserve Bank of New York to show that 290 companies which made a profit of \$100,000 during the first nine months of 1932 increased this to \$430,500,000 during the same period in 1934. And what happened to wages during that period is shown by figures from the U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. The average per capita weekly wage in all manufacturing industries was \$18.50 during the first nine months of 1932. It was \$19.11 during the same period in 1934. In other words, while the firms listed above boosted their profits more than 4,300%, labor's wage was raised 61 cents a week. In view of the rise in the commodity price level, this latter figure tells its own authentic story from real life in contrast to the pretended aim of the N.R.A. of restoring the purchasing power to the masses of the people. A similar story can be related by facts and figures also from real life, concerning its second pretended aim of spreading employment through the limitation of working hours. In most cases, the code regulations provided for a maximum work week of 40 hours, though in some cases a much higher maximum was permitted. If compared to the 1929 average work week of 48 hours these regulations would be of some significance; but when compared to the crisis period, very little indeed. Thus during the first five months of 1933, just prior to the time the code regulations went into effect, the average work week in manufacturing industry for full time and part time workers put together were 34.7 hours.

However, with the upward change of the business cycle the accumulation of capital proceeds apace. Its organic composition has risen to higher levels. The relative growth of the proportion of constant capital as compared to variable capital continues to increase. A concrete example in this respect also will prove illuminating. This is taken from the steel industry, the giant amongst the basic industries. The several large corporations have recently installed in several of the important plants high speed modern steel mills costing upward of twelve million dollars and capable, through continuous operation, of producing 2,240 tons of 75-inch sheet steel in 24 hours, or 680,000 tons a year. What an industrial advance is here presented over the ordinary hot sheet mills of eight plants rated at 60,000 tons a year capacity! In effect this means greater mechanization of industry with a diminishing proportion of labor employed. Surplus capital will again exist in greater abundance alongside of a surplus population, and the existence of the one will be the condition of the other. The very same law which drove the fall of the rate of profit down to the point of crisis, operates again, laying the basis for new and enlarged contradictions in American national economy and heralding deeper plunges into more turbulent crises. In the light of the experience of the N.R.A. what will then follow? Certainly then, if not sooner, we will be face to face with a capitalist régime seeking a stronger political weapon and carrying the coat of arms of Fascism.

The business cycles which in former decades reflected the fluctuations of a process of capitalist growth have now become a mechanism of its general decay. As the United States in the post-war period firmly established its dominant position in world economy, the changes in the cycle began to have a much more profound effect on the consciousness of its working masses. The

misery and destitution of the crisis engendered a seething discontent; but it was held in check largely by the frightful scourge of unemployment or the fear of unemployment. However, with the first signs of an upswing the enormous mass vitality, formerly held back, found an outlet in powerful strikes, practically engulfing the whole country during the life of the N.R.A. The economic changes gave this vitality redoubled force. Union consciousness was displayed in instance after instance, in general strikes or threats of general strikes in protest against police or military intervention. Because of the general situation of American capitalism it is not now in a position to give the concessions it could give during past decades. Even the concessions implied in the N.R.A. were considered too great. In the course of further developments the violent resistance to the most elementary rights of working class organization and to its most elementary demands is due to reach monstrous proportions. But this will find its counterpart in a stormy revival penetrating much deeper into every fibre of the trade union movement. No doubt the despicable bureaucracy of Green and Co. will endeavor to tighten its claws but only to find itself confronted with a greater explosive force. This does not mean that these struggles can be confined within the framework of the trade unions. On the contrary, they will be only the beginnings of the political conscious-

ness of the working class.

Alongside of these developments, American capitalism is driven inexorably to greater world conquests. A real economic upswing cannot be based merely on the internal market. It will have for its objective the most aggressive intervention in the present chaos of world economy. Uninterrupted growth of armaments and military conflicts stand already on the agenda, to be followed by the final capitalist "solution"—Fascism. It knows no other solution and it will in the final analysis stop at nothing short of that if it has its way. Such are the perspectives after the end of the N.R.A.

Henceforth all depends on the conscious rôle that the working class will play. Its crucial force was held in check during the crisis. It is now entering upon a new road. Released from the entanglements of the complicated N.R.A. provisions, its own independent class activity becomes so much more decisive. That alone will avail. Defense of its rights in militant struggles is now imperative. The change in the business cycle affords grandiose possibilities. But the fundamental lesson to be learned from the events so far is: Against the proposed capitalist solution it is necessary to develop these struggles toward the working class solution—socialism.

Arne SWABECK

Coming Struggles on the Railroads

THE LABOR movement is anxiously expecting struggles in rubber, steel, autos, textiles and other key industries but apparently little attention is being paid to the railroads, employer of about forty percent of the organized workers in this country and in many respects the most important basic industry. Indications are, however, that in the not too distant future the latter will be the scene of gigantic class battles.

The situation in this branch of transportation is catastrophic—a classic example of what the general decay of capitalism carries in its wake. Last year about 42,000 miles of class I carriers, approximately one-sixth of the total, were in the hands of receivers or had applied for reorganization under the Federal bankruptcy act, and hardly a week has passed since without adding to this total.

Signs of decline were evident long before the crash of '29. As carriers of passengers the roads reached their peak in 1920, about 1,270,000,000 persons travelling over them during that year, bringing in a revenue of about \$1,305,000,000. By 1929 the number of passengers had continuously fallen to 786,000,000 and income from this source to \$876,000,000; by 1933 the number of travellers had been further reduced to 435,000,000 and passenger income to \$330,000,000. The peak year for freight carried was 1926, the downward trend being shown by the following figures: 1926: 2,627,000,000 tons, income \$4,906,000,000; 1929: 2,584,000,000 tons, income \$4,899,000,000; 1933: 1,322,000,000 tons, income \$2,529,000,000.* The reason for the decline, which is all the more significant in that it occurred during the greatest industrial boom in the nation's history, is to be found chiefly in the competition of buses, trucks, oil pipe lines, and in the substitution of hydro-electric power for coal.

Control, of course, is in the hands of finance capital, so that the general chaos is accentuated by "high-finance" swindlings. Listen for a moment to the testimony, backed by sources, given by the liberal historian, Dr. Charles A. Beard, to the Senate Interstate Commerce Committee: ". . . the depression tightened the grip of

the bankers on the railroads of the country" . . . "the bankers are deep in every big railroad receivership and bankruptcy of the present day"; on the protective committees which have seized the reigns of power "you will find the names of partners, close friends and financial allies of J. P. Morgan & Company, Kuhn, Loeb & Company, J. & W. Seligman & Company, Dillon, Read & Company, National City Bank, Bankers Trust Company, Chase National Bank, and the Guaranty Trust Company" . . . "when they needed every dollar of their money to get through the storm of the depression, when they could not afford a cent for speculation, for high finance, for stock market juggling or operations, or for anything connected with Wall Street", the carriers were engaged in "high finance", and while "the Van Sweringens occupy a chair at the railway poker table, playing with the biggest chips in the game, behind them stands the Morgan Banking Syndicate with the power at any time to deprive the Van Sweringens of their seat at the table and to send them to the breadline". (*New York Times*, March 21, 1935.)

In probably no individual industry is the non-social character of capitalist appropriation so vividly demonstrated. Despite the fall in earnings, interest on bonds was maintained, and according to A. F. Whitney, President of the Brotherhood of Railway Trainmen, who disclosed these figures under pressure of the discontent of the railroad workers, they were as follows: 1929, \$511,000,000; 1930, \$510,000,000; 1931, \$518,000,000; 1932, \$525,000,000; and in 1933, \$533,000,000. (*New York Times*, March 18, 1934.)

These payments were maintained by borrowing from the Reconstruction Finance Corporation (for the years 1932 and 1933 deficits of \$139,000,000 and \$5,800,000, respectively, were incurred), by cutting wages (a 10% cut in hourly rates of pay went into effect in February 1932), and by eating into the basic capital of the industry.

Yearly annual capital expenditures, which ranged from \$676,000,000 to \$1,000,000,000 for the years 1923 to 1929, inclusive, dropped to \$167,000,000 for 1932 and \$104,000,000 for 1933. According to a statement of the Association of American Railroads on February 28 of this year 285,256 freight cars, 15.2% of the number on line, are in "disrepair", and 10,419 locomotives, 22.3%

*Unless otherwise stated, all figures are from official publications of the Federal Interstate Commerce Commission.

of the number on line are "in need of classified repairs (*New York Times*, February 28, 1935). The Federal coordinator, J. B. Eastman, being a little more blunt, estimated a short time ago that about 11,000 locomotives are fit only for the scrap heap. The Interstate Commerce Commission commented on March 30 as follows: "The railroads today have available a considerably smaller supply of serviceable freight-carrying equipment and of motive power than they had in 1922 when the situation was notoriously bad. The continuing undermaintenance of equipment is so serious that its early correction will probably be necessary even under the present volume of traffic. The record is less definite as to the extent of undermaintenance of way and structures, but undoubtedly it, too, is considerable." (*New York Times*, March 31, 1935.)

It would indeed be surprising if, in face of these conditions, a series of major railroad accidents did not occur, and it is difficult to avoid the suspicion that news of many accidents is being suppressed. The callous disregard of the money bags for anything but their own profits is vividly illustrated by the further report of Dr. Beard's testimony: ". . . Mr. Beard said that evidence in a St. Louis court two weeks ago disclosed that the St. Louis-San Francisco began to close down its repair shops and lay off men on instructions from the bankers in New York that expenses must be cut to the bone so that the stock would show a profit, while at the same time the president of the road sent pleading letters to New York protesting that reduction in operating expense was not consistent with safety. . . . Matters finally got to a point where as many as twenty-five broken rails in a day were found on the road." (*New York Times*, March 21, 1935.)

If the bankers, throwing the bulk of the losses on to the smaller investors, were able to maintain their share of the profits by sucking the juice out of the roads, the workers bore the full brunt of the catastrophic conditions. The total number of employees, which had declined from 1,821,804 in 1926 to 1,694,042 in 1929, further declined to 990,839 in 1933, i.e., over 41% of those working in 1929 were unemployed. The average annual income of employees dropped from \$1,744 in 1929 to \$1,445 in 1933, a cut of about 17%. For wage workers the reduction was 21%, the average of \$1,646 in 1929 falling to \$1,300 in 1932. According to the president of the Brotherhood of Trainmen, A. F. Whitney, ". . . railway employees of long service have been turned out to accept charity or starve; hundreds of thousands have gone on part time . . . track and roadway section men received as little as 25c an hour and worked only three days in February. From this weekly wage of six dollars the management deducted 60c under the 10% arrangement. . . . On the Atlantic Coastline section men are paid \$1.70 a day. . . . On the New York Central section men receive a basic wage of 43c an hour and are working as little as ten days a month. . . . This gives them \$8.60 a week from which 10% is deducted, leaving \$7.74 a week in a territory where the P.W.A. minimum is \$15. . . . The Florida East Coast pays a basic wage of 20c an hour to section men. . . . The Illinois Central pays section men as little as 25c an hour, works them as little as two days a week, enabling them to make \$4.00 a week. . . . For the year 1932 there were 140,000 railway employees whose earnings were approximately \$50 a month or less. . . . This number embraces about 13% of all railway employees. Approximately 266,000 railway employees, over 25% of the total number, earned \$75 a month or less. There were over 434,000 employees, 42% of the total, who earned less than \$100 a month. The railway employees who earned \$125 a month or less numbered 749,000, and this group embraced about 72% of all railway employees." (*N. Y. Times*, March 18, 1934.)

Capitalism can maintain itself only by unloading the burdens of the crisis on to the backs of the workers. This, the general law of capitalist decay, applies with a vengeance to the railroads.

The influx of new capital is an absolute and immediate necessity.

The limits which can be bled from the fixed capital have been reached, the equipment of the roads must be restored, and, to meet competition, radical changes must be made in the design of passenger and freight equipment and new types of motive power must be developed. Debts must be paid. According to the Interstate Commerce Commission the roads ". . . will be faced with maturing funded debts aggregating \$380,760,000 in 1935 and \$434,975,000 in 1936, including \$204,307,000 in loans from the Reconstruction Finance Corporation which will become due in 1935 and 1936". (*New York Times*, March 31, 1935.) Based on the 1931 earnings the commission had estimated previously that ". . . maturities of funds and equipment obligations in the years 1932-35 inclusive . . . would average about \$263,540,000 annually", so that from some source or other the roads must raise about \$150,000,000 more per year for the next two years than was earned in 1931.

However, no one has yet discovered a method for enticing capital into an enterprise unless the basis for a profit exists or appears to exist. Somewhere, somehow, an increase in income to justify the investment of new capital must be found.

As a palliative, a partial increase in rates was recently permitted but, due to competition, it was felt that this might even lower the roads' total income, or, as expressed by one of the Interstate Commerce Commissioners, Porter, "If the struggle between the railroads and other forms of transportation is to become more intense . . . then the railroads had better fortify themselves by a reduction in freight rates instead of an increase." (*New York Times*, March 31, 1935.) Overhead expenses have already been cut to the bone so that practically no saving is possible from such items as fuel, depreciation, taxes, insurance, etc.

There still remains a source: the wages of the workers. Taking 1933 as a basis, and all indications are that 1935 will not find the roads in a better condition, the railroad income was distributed as follows: wages and salaries, \$1,424,000,000 or 43.2%; fuel, taxes, insurance, depreciation, etc., \$1,237,000,000 or 41.5%; and "net operating income" (available for interest, dividends and maturing debts), \$477,000,000 or 15.3%. The net operating income for that year was based, among other things, on a 10% cut in the 1929 hourly rates of pay. To raise the additionally required \$150,000,000 it will be necessary to effect another cut of over 10% and, since the number of employees has decreased since 1933, 15% additional would be close to the correct figure. Since, on April 1 of this year, the 1929 base pay was restored, but with the agreement that by May 1 a reduction could again be "negotiated" for, all indications are that the bookkeeping of the capitalists will dictate to them the necessity, this time, of reducing the base pay of 1929 not only by 10% but by not less than 25%.

This approximate calculation was recently confirmed by P. H. Joyce, president of the Chicago Great Western Railroad: ". . . if railway labor would take a 25% reduction in wages, 15% of the saving would be used to employ more men and the remaining 10% retained by the management." (*New York Times*, March 19, 1935.) (How much Joyce's promises are worth can be seen by the fact that when the 10% cut of January 1932 was introduced, it was also promised that more men would be put to work whereas actually the number declined from 1,282,825 in 1931 to 1,052,285 in 1932 and 990,839 in 1933.)

It should therefore be made clear to the railroad workers that the 10% cut which will be asked for after May 1 is only a beginning; the capitalists cannot and will not stop at this.

That the whole logic of the situation must evoke large class battles can hardly be doubted. It was due mainly to the unrest in the workers' ranks last year (strikes occurred on several roads) that the conservative leadership of the railroad Brotherhoods was forced to insist on the restoration of the cut which was so recently completed.

Unfortunately the condition of the workers' organizations is not

the best that could be desired. The Brotherhoods and other railroad unions are divided into 21 separate craft organizations, controlled by as corrupt and conservative a bureaucracy as is to be found anywhere; a group which feels itself so far removed from the control of the ranks that it, literally speaking, dared to applaud when the wage cut of 1932 went into effect. The unions have been decimated by unemployment, by the corruption of the bureaucracy which swindled or lost the savings of the membership in the building of "labor banks", and by the fact that not all the Brotherhoods insist on closed shops. To this must be added the seniority rulings which have tended to conservatize the older men, who have lost comparatively less time and pay, whereas the younger ones, finding themselves almost totally unemployed, fall out of the unions and are unable to exert what might otherwise be a radicalizing influence.

These obstacles are by no means insurmountable, except that an organized Left wing, the weapon with which to overcome them,

does not exist in the Brotherhoods. It must be built. The coming situation offers the opportunity to rally the progressives, and it is precisely at this time, before any major engagements occur, that they must entrench themselves. Two problems must be immediately tackled: the consolidation of all the craft unions into one union in the industry, and the organization of the unorganized; propaganda and agitation in this direction should be immediately begun.

Because of the social character of the industry, a class battle on the roads, particularly during this epoch, is a political struggle of high order. Moreover, a special significance must be attached to it. The employed railroaders constitute the last important mass basis of craft and conservative unionism, so that the assault on their living standards, by ending this conservatism, will profoundly affect the entire labor movement, giving it new color and tone, and, at the same time that it undermines another of the mass bases for reformism, will open up deeper reservoirs for the revolutionary movement in this country.

A. WEAVER

Some Lessons of the Toledo Strike

IN OUR DISCUSSION in the last issue of trade union developments in the United States we drew the following conclusions. The trend of the workers is still, with rare exceptions, into the American Federation of Labor. In the main, therefore, militants and revolutionists must work in the A. F. of L. unions or simply be isolated from the masses. The A. F. of L. leadership will not, however, carry organizing campaigns in the basic industries to effective conclusions. Still less can it be counted on to carry out effectively the large-scale militant strike actions without which no union which is more than a puppet in government hands will be established. Every organizing campaign and strike becomes therefore a battle ground, not merely between the workers and the employers, but heads up in an ever sharpening struggle between the present union leadership and the rising progressive trade union forces.

All of these contentions were illustrated and borne out in a very clearcut, and often dramatic fashion, in the recent Chevrolet General Motors strike in Toledo and other automobile towns. It will be useful to dwell upon certain features of this strike because of the lessons for the future which they present.

In the first place, the strikers were members of an A. F. of L. federal automobile workers' union. The whole movement was one of A. F. of L. workers. The independent Mechanics Educational Society of America might have become involved if the strike had spread. It is to the credit of the Detroit district organization of the M.E.S.A. that it announced its readiness to strike with A. F. of L. members if the struggle spread to Detroit and Flint. Despite the fact that the A. F. of L. leadership, as will be brought out presently, played the rôle of sabotage and betrayal more flagrantly and openly, if that is possible, than in the past, and that the strikers are well aware of this fact, no movement out of the A. F. of L. and for independent unionism has developed. Especially at the focal point in Toledo the workers are more determined than ever to build their local A. F. of L. union, to carry on the battle against bureaucracy in the A. F. of L., and to press for the early establishment of an international union under an A. F. of L. charter.

Let us note, in the second place, the lengths to which the A. F. of L. leadership went in sabotaging the strike and in betrayal of the workers' interest. President Green had the strike votes of the federal auto unions in his pocket. Nevertheless he did not call any strike or make any strike preparations. This in spite of the fact that the A. F. of L. leaders unquestionably believed that a not too big and carefully controlled disturbance in automobiles was

desirable in order to impress the Roosevelt administration with the necessity of granting legislative concessions to them rather than permitting "wild men" and "reds" from getting control of the workers. These bureaucrats live in deadly fear of any mass movement getting under way. Francis Dillon, chief A. F. of L. representative on the scene, was also the chief agent in preventing the strike from spreading or assuming militant form. He coaxed and bulldozed the Flint union workers into staying at work when they were eager to strike. He did not hesitate to violate the most elementary principle of even conservative unionism by specifically condoning the manufacture of scab transmissions by the Flint workers. He insinuated that the Toledo strikers were yellow and unworthy of support. His henchmen beat up a Toledo union militant in the union hall in Flint where he was present for the purpose of informing Flint workers about developments in Toledo.

In the meeting of strikers at which the compromise settlement offered by the General Motors Corporation was voted on, this representative of the supposedly democratic trade union movement, who had that very morning issued a pompous statement against "dictatorship of all kinds, Fascist or communist," told the strikers, their strike committee and their union executive, before the vote on the company offer was taken, that the A. F. of L. would withdraw their charter unless the vote was for acceptance! Here is the representative of the union clubbing the workers into accepting the proposals, not of the union, but of the employers and the government. Fascist unions in the corporative state will play just that rôle. Many of these A. F. of L. leaders are thus prepared to go much further in subservience to the government than the present stage of development requires of them, so utterly devoid are they of any shred of dignity or sense of shame.

In this connection the rôle of a local official such as Schwake is most significant. Put into office some months ago by progressives in the union in revolt against a reactionary business agent and probably personally honest and well-intentioned, he nevertheless lined up at critical moments with the top officials against the rank and file strike committee and the workers. It was in fact his speech following Dillon's, not Dillon's speech as such, which turned the tide for acceptance of the company proposals. It must be borne in mind that this type, utterly devoid of background and a theoretical position, will always play this rôle, and that militants in strike situations must skillfully but nevertheless steadily undermine the confidence of the rank and file in such elements.

When the obstacles we have just cited are considered, together

with the fact that the strike was against one of the major automobile corporations directly linked to the Dupont and Morgan dynasties, the strike was a remarkable achievement and furnishes new evidence of the energies and the militancy of the present generation of American industrial workers. Typical is the fact that not much more than a year ago the rank and file leader of the strike, Jimmy Roland, was still in a company union and had no knowledge of or experience in the labor movement. Typical also that a couple of weeks before the strike, the union had only a handful of members in the Toledo Chevrolet plant and that still fewer had any previous union experience. But also typical is the swiftness and completeness with which these workers tied up the key transmission plant of a giant corporation; their obvious militancy which prevented the company from making any effort to open the plant, an effort which would unquestionably have meant bloodshed; the extension of the strike to include 30,000 workers in about a week, and so on.

The most impressive features of the strike can, however, be understood only in the light of the contribution made to the labor movement in Toledo during the past year by the revolutionary cadre of Workers Party members and the militant unionists and unemployed leaguers under their influence. The fact that leadership in the automobile workers' struggle since the spring of 1934 has so obviously been in Toledo and not in Detroit, Flint, Cleveland or some other automobile center is to be ascribed chiefly to the presence in Toledo of these elements whose program is the trade union line of the W. P., who have exhibited an unusual combination of sound theory and sound practice, and have carried out the program with singular persistence, ingenuity and a devotion that has stopped at nothing. Wherever party cadres will get into the mass work with the same revolutionary devotion, the same willingness to learn, and the same sticking to the job day in and day out, similar results can be obtained.

The struggle between the trade union bureaucracy and the young rank and file leadership was carried several steps further in the General Motors strike than it has been in rubber, or steel, or elsewhere in automobiles. The strike was called despite the bureaucrats. It was extended in spite of them. It attained a high degree of efficiency. Several attempts to bring it to a premature conclusion were thwarted. The company was forced to negotiate with the rank and file committee. Decided gains for the workers were achieved. Most significant of all, there is no discouragement, no slump in union leadership or spirit, among leaders or rank and file following the acceptance of the compromise settlement and their experience with the sabotage and betrayal of the top union officials. Instead there is a firm determination to organize the militants so that the next time they may carry the struggle still another stage forward and administer a complete defeat to the trade union bureaucracy. This is the most encouraging development which has taken place in the movement for organizing the union progressives, and once again there is no reasonable explanation except that here a revolutionary cadre has been at work more devotedly and for a longer period on the basis of a sounder program.

That the progressives were not yet organized and trained as they should be was of course demonstrated by the fact that in the final analysis Dillon outmaneuvered them. How serious that is becomes clear, for one thing, when we analyze what the position would have been if the compromise offer of the General Motors Company had been rejected by the strikers in defiance of Dillon's "orders".

If President Green had not executed the threat to withdraw the charter of the Toledo local and had continued the policy pursued up to that time, in other words, had not openly disowned the strike and attempted to forbid the unions generally to support it, the progressive forces would have been confronted by a colossal but,

in my opinion, a not impossible task. The ranks in Toledo, Norwood, Cleveland, Atlanta, etc., would probably have been held firm. The conference of strike committees which Roland called and Dillon cancelled, would have been held. The strike would have been spread to Flint and other centers. The progressives would have had a much freer hand and would have enjoyed the confidence of the masses after the defeat of Dillon. Substantial funds could have been raised throughout the country. Unquestionably, on the other hand, General Motors would have put up a terrific fight. Quite likely pitched battles would have occurred in Flint or in Muncie, Ind., if the corporation had made an attempt to open a new transmission plant there. A "red" scare would have been started against the progressives and the Workers Party; the preparations had in fact already been made. The federal government would of course have thrown its forces against the strike. As I have said, there is no denying that for the progressives, whose organization except in Toledo had to be improvised, this would have been a tremendous task. But General Motors was in a tight fix and a victory was possible.

But it is far from certain that Green would have taken this course. Had the strike gone ahead and achieved substantial results, this would have meant building up the prestige of the militants not only in automobiles but in other unions, to such a degree as to shake the present class-collaboration leadership of the A. F. of L. to its foundations. Furthermore, it would have demonstrated to the employers and the Roosevelt administration that this leadership could no longer control the masses and so was of no use to them. It is, therefore, entirely possible that Green would have backed up Dillon.

Then the strike would have become an "outlaw" strike. It would have been much more difficult to get support in the unions generally. The "red" scare" would have known no bounds. The corporation and the government would have treated the strike as a "revolution". Leaders would have been jailed. There is no use pretending that the progressives had adequate numbers or experience or machinery to deal with such a problem. There would have been a thrilling struggle. It is just barely possible that the forces would have grown swiftly under the emergency and so would have hammered out a victory. Quite possibly an orderly retreat would have been the utmost that could have been achieved. A serious defeat might have been the outcome.

It behooves the militants to lose no time in extending and strengthening their organization in all important industries and the revolutionary party swiftly to train its cadres in the unions. One of these days the battle will be carried a step further than it was in Toledo. Some day Dillon will make his threat and this time the militants will be wiser and harder. They will laugh at his threat and vote down his and the employers' proposal. Then the A. F. of L. leadership will have to decide whether it will keep these "wild men" in the A. F. of L. or will drive them out. If it bows to the storm, fails to carry through its bluff, keeps the strikers in the A. F. of L., that will be the end of the old leadership; there will be a vastly changed A. F. of L. under a class struggle leadership. If, on the other hand, in the crisis that we envisage the old leadership decided to stand its ground against well-organized and well-prepared militant forces, decided to kick the latter out of the A. F. of L., that will still mean the end of the old leadership, for they will be left with the name and the shell of the A. F. of L., as Powderly, for example, was left with the name and the shell of the Knights of Labor. But the workers will be elsewhere—in that "independent federation of labor" which will then represent not an incurable Leftists' dream or adventure, but the major forces of the working class, the will of the working class.

The present writer's opinion happens to be that when the decisive moment arrives, it is the latter variant that is likely to occur; but

at this moment speculation on that point is—speculation and no more. The lesson of Toledo, of the sell-out of the Akron rubber workers in April, of the recent flare-up in steel in Canton, is that no time must be lost in welding the militants in the A. F. of L. into a fighting force. And, we may ask, what else is the lesson of the Roosevelt \$19 per month wage for project workers, the Supreme Court decision on the unconstitutionality of the N.R.A., the em-

ployer drive to break down such slight defenses of labor standards as have existed and to intensify the effort to achieve capitalist recovery, i.e., step up profits, at whatever cost to the masses? There will be no unions worth the name unless the militants build and maintain them. Without fighting unions the workers will presently be made the object of an attack which will make 1929-35 seem like "the good old times".

A. J. MUSTE

Centrist Alchemy or Marxism?

On the Question of the Socialist Workers Party (S.A.P.) of Germany

POLITICAL LIFE in Germany is so crushed, and the consequences of the defeat are so acutely felt by the masses that the diverse groupings within the working class are still deprived of the opportunity to develop in scope and in depth, and to disclose the tendencies lodged

Internal Groupings in Germany and International Questions

in them. During such periods, of utmost importance for the training of the advanced workers are: first, the political emigration; secondly, the international problems. What has been said is not intended to minimize the importance of the internal organizations and the internal problems of the German working class movements. The primacy and the continuity of revolutionary thought and revolutionary training during even the very dull periods is a great boon, which subsequently bears its fruits a hundredfold in the periods of the revolutionary upsurge. It is precisely now, in the steel tentacles of the dictatorship of the Nazis, that the cadres of steeled fighters are being trained who will set their seal upon the fate of Germany. I wish only to underscore as sharply as possible the idea that our German comrades must review, today more than ever, their internal relations and groupings—not taken by themselves, but in connection with the life of those countries where the revolutionary problems are posed in a more developed and clearer form. For example, it is quite self-evident that a major success of the Bolshevik-Leninists in one of the non-Fascist countries of Europe would immediately have a very vigorous reaction upon the fate of our section in Germany. Nor should we forget also that the political questions in the non-Fascist countries are for Germany questions not only relating to the past but in large measure also to the future: the German proletariat will have to begin all over again in many things and to repeat others anew, only within incommensurably shorter periods of time.

What has been said applies, with the necessary changes, of course, also to other organizations. With no perspectives, with no clear slogans the Communist party of Germany is nevertheless carrying on considerable illegal work: this fact is evidence of how numerically large is the stratum of revolutionary workers who refuse to capitulate despite everything: knowing no other banner, they group themselves under the banner of the C.P.G. To this we should also add the financial "factor". Money by itself, of course, does not guarantee victory. But it can maintain the existence of an organization for a fairly long period of time, even if the latter is doomed to the junk heap.

On the other hand, the general suppression of political life in Germany and the extremely narrow limits of the working class movement prevent the C.P.G. from revealing and drawing to a conclusion its false tendencies. The organization, the agitation, as well as the mistakes still remain in an undeveloped form. But the C.P.G. does not stand by itself; all the pieces on the European chess-board are now linked together more closely than ever before.

There is much reason to think that the fatal and criminal policy of the French Communist party will deal the C.P.G. a cruel blow even before the latter succeeds in undermining its own illegal organization. Today, there is even less reason to believe in the regeneration of the Comintern than a year or two ago.

It does not follow from all this, however, that it is presumably necessary to turn our backs upon the illegal organizations of the C.P.G. On the contrary, one must rather say that our German friends have devoted much too little attention to this organization, incomparably less, in any case, than they have to the small S.A.P. Were they correct?

An answer to this question is inconceivable without precise criteria. What did our comrades seek from the S.A.P.? Was it an *arena* for their activity? Obviously not: the S.A.P. which numbers a couple of thousand members is much too narrow to serve as an arena. The C.P.G. could sooner serve as an "arena", not to mention the young generation of workers which is stirring for the first time to political life under the lash of Hitler. There remains another possibility: the S.A.P. as an *ally*, as a *co-thinker*. Naturally, the merger of both organizations would result in absolutely self-evident benefits for future revolutionary work. But merger requires agreement—not on partial and second-rate questions, but on the *fundamental ones*. Does it exist?

The leaders of the S.A.P. often say that "in essence" their views are the same as ours but that they are able to defend our views better, more realistically, and more "wisely". If that were the case, then a split would have been sheerest insanity: within the framework of a single organization the leaders of the S.A.P. would have taught us how to develop our common views much more ably and successfully. But unfortunately such is not the case. The leaders of the S.A.P. calumniate themselves. If after long vacillation, they shied away from unity within the national framework; if subsequently they broke off the international connections with us, then there must have been very serious causes for it, and there are such. We are separated not by nuances of tactic but by *fundamental questions*. It would be absurd and unworthy to shut one's eyes to this after the experiences we have passed through. The differences between us and the S.A.P. fall entirely into the framework of the contradictions between *Marxism* and *Centrism*.

In the following lines I do not undertake to say anything new. I wish only to draw the balance sheet of the experience of the entire political period, particularly for the last year and a half. Nothing is more beneficial for political training than to check *principles* in the light of *facts*, which had been evaluated in time, or even forecast beforehand. If I ask the readers of this article to pay strict attention to the detailed analysis of the political nature of the S.A.P., it is not at all for the sake of initiating periods of new negotiations, but rather in order to attempt to bring them to a close. The leaders of the S.A.P. are not our followers nor allies, but our opponents. The attempts to draw closer to them

have been exhausted for the period immediately ahead, at any rate. Naturally, it is impossible, particularly from the outside, to express oneself categorically against this or another joint action in Germany itself. But our German followers, it seems to me, must establish their inter-relationship with the S.A.P. not only with regard to a greater or lesser correspondence of views in the sphere of the undeveloped internal German questions of the Hitler underground (in the twilight of Fascism, all cats appear to be grey), but with regard to the rôle that the S.A.P. plays or attempts to play upon the international arena.

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It might perhaps appear strange that we should devote comparatively so large a labor to such a small organization. But the gist of the matter lies in the fact that *the question revolving around the S.A.P. is much greater than the S.A.P. itself*. Involved here, in the last analysis, is the question of correct policy towards the Centrist tendencies which now play with all the colors of the rainbow within the field of the working class movement. The conservative Centrist apparatuses inherited from the past must be prevented from checking the revolutionary development of the proletarian vanguard: that is the task!

After an interval of a year and a half, a conference of the I.A.G. [*Internationale Arbeitsgemeinschaft*, or International Alliance of revolutionary socialist organizations—the London-Amsterdam

The Balance Sheet of the I.A.G. Conference

Bureau] was held in Paris. What were the results of this conference? Up to this moment, no one has told us anything essential upon the subject. It is true, in the report of the S.A.P. (*Neue Front*, March 1935) there can be found not at all bad sketches of certain participants in the conference; but it is utterly impossible to find there any answer to the question: why was the conference called? and what results did it bring? The *report of the conference* is not presented in a Marxian manner, i.e., not with the aim of disclosing all the existing tendencies and contradictions, but in the Centrist manner, with the aim of glossing over the differences, and presenting a picture that all is well.

The academic theses on the *world situation* were accepted "unanimously". As a matter of fact, what harm is there in repeating once again the general formulæ about the collapse of capitalism and so on? It smacks of radicalism but puts no one under any obligation whatever. Such formulæ have become a very cheap commodity during the years of the world crisis. But did the resolution on "the world situation" attempt to give voice to that tiny truth that the N.A.P. [the Norwegian Labor party], having obtained 45% of the votes, and consequently having behind it the indubitable majority of the population, could, if it so desired, have transformed Norway into a working class stronghold, could have instilled by its example revolutionary courage into the masses of Scandinavia, and could have become an important factor in the development of Europe? For the N.A.P. is still a member of the I.A.G.! Despite this—no, precisely on this account—the conference evaded the issue of the N.A.P. and busied itself with "higher" questions. How could Kilboom, this future "statesman", permit tactless and sectarian criticism of his neighbors? Never! And Schwab, how could he grieve Kilboom? No! Better talk about the collapse of capitalism "in general". Such is the spirit that pervaded this conference. And such is the spirit pervading the S.A.P. report.

The resolution of the conference on *war*, passed after the report by the hoary Centrist, Fenner Brockway, the leader of the I.L.P., rings very radical. But we have known for a long time that on the question of war the most extreme opportunists are inclined to

extreme radicalism, particularly those in small organizations or in "neutral" and small countries which are not involved in the actual struggle. Naturally, there can also be genuine revolutionists in small organizations and in "neutral" countries; but in order to differentiate between them and the opportunists we must take into account their *day to day policies* and not a holiday resolution on (somebody else's) war. Kilboom's vote for the general strike and for an insurrection against war are rendered absolutely worthless by the opportunistic policy of this same Kilboom in Sweden. And were circumstances to draw Sweden into war, then Kilboom would surely draw his practical conclusions not from the academic resolution of the I.A.G. but from his own opportunistic policy. Have we not seen such examples by the hundred! Yet, not a single one of the resolutions, of course, has a word to say about the opportunistic policy of the Swedish party, the largest organization, after the N.A.P., in the I.A.G.

What weight has Doriot's signature to a radical resolution on war, if Doriot, "in the interests of peace" advises the diplomacy of his country to "negotiate with Hitler"! Not an alliance with the U.S.S.R., but an agreement with Hitler—that is Doriot's program. As we shall soon see, when the S.A.P. itself passed from an academic resolution on war "in general" to the question of the "struggle for peace" under the present conditions, all the high-sounding phrases went flying to the devil: the S.A.P. presented to the conference a second, "practical" resolution, which is permeated through and through with the spirit of pacifist philistinism.

For this reason it is impossible to read without revulsion the verbiage in the *Neue Front* about how "Leninist theory and practise [!] on the question of war found its sole [!] and genuine [!] defenders in the parties of the I.A.G." To Lenin the task of a resolution of any kind was to put the opportunists to the test, leaving them no loopholes, bringing them out into the open, and catching them up on the contradictions between their words and their actions. A "revolutionary" resolution for which the opportunists could also vote was deemed by Lenin to be not a success but a fraud and a crime. To him, the task of all conferences consisted not in presenting a "respectable" resolution, but in effecting the selection of militants and organizations that would not betray the proletariat in the hours of stress and storm. *The methods of the S.A.P. leadership are directly opposed to the methods of Lenin.*

The S.A.P. delegation placed before the conference a draft of a *principled resolution*. Like all S.A.P. documents, the draft is a collection of general "radical" postulates, together with a diligent evasion of the most acute questions. Nevertheless, this document impinges much more closely upon the current work of the party than do the academic theses on the world situation.

What fate befell this draft of the S.A.P.? We read: "The draft of the *principled resolution* presented at the conference could not be put to a vote because of lack of time [!] and [?] because some [?] parties did not have the previous opportunity [!] to consider it." To Marxists, this single sentence is worth more than whole volumes. The conference was postponed for month after month; it convened after an interval of one year and a half, during which time events occurred of colossal importance; the disoriented vanguard of the working class demands clear answers. . . . So what? So, the conference was unable to find the time [!] to pass on a principled resolution.

The second argument ("and") is no whit better: some parties (what parties?) did not have the opportunity (why not?) to ponder over those principles which must serve to direct the working class movement in our epoch. Then what, in general, are these "same parties" preoccupied with? The I.A.G. has now existed for three years. On what principled foundation? Nobody knows. "Some" parties do not find it necessary to waste time on principled

questions. The conference also cannot find the time to occupy itself with this. Is it possible to conceive a more crushing, a more deadly and viler pauper's plea?

As a matter of fact, the wretched balance sheet of the conference is to be explained not by lack of time, but the *heterogeneity* of its composition, with its preponderance of Right-Centrist combinationists. The very same heterogeneity distinguishes "some" of the parties that adhere to the I.A.G. Hence flows the internal need for not touching upon the most acute, i.e., the most important and undeferrable questions. *The sole principle of the I.A.G. is to keep mum about principles.*

* * *

Let us recall that the international plenum of the Bolshevik-Leninists in its resolution of September 13, 1933 made the following evaluation of the previous I.A.G. conference, held in August 1933: "There cannot be even talk, of course, that the new International can be built by organizations which proceed from profoundly different and even antagonistic bases. . . . As regards the decisions which were passed by the variegated majority of the conference, and which are utterly pervaded with the seal of this variegated assortment, the plenum of the Bolshevik-Leninists deems it impossible to assume any political responsibility for these decisions." Whoever cherishes no illusions, does not have to lose them subsequently!

The conference rejected the resolution presented by the Dutch delegates, comrades Sneevliet and Schmidt, in favor of the Fourth International. Let us view a little closer the muddled explanations

given by the *Neue Front*.

'The Profound Problem' of Centrism

It appears that the delegates of the S.A.

P. were ready to sign the Dutch resolution, *provided* it was not put to a vote, but would remain only the expressed "desire of the undersigned organizations". But desire presupposes a *will*. Whoever expresses a desire, seeks to realize his will. At a conference, this is achieved by means of a poll. One should imagine that the delegates of the S.A.P. would have welcomed the opportunity to force all those to vote against the resolution who are in essence opposed to the Fourth International. But no. Schwab refuses to vote for the resolution, not because *he*, himself, is against it, but because *others* are against it. Incidentally, the majority does not vote against it either . . . but resorts cravenly to abstention. This does not prevent Doriot, who himself abstained, from writing that the conference "condemned the Trotskyist idea of the Fourth International". Can you make head or tail out of all this? But wait, this is only the beginning.

The Dutch resolution, it seems, is distinguished by a "complete abstraction from the present actual situation" and by a lack of understanding "of the profound problem involved in the task". Granted. Then why did the delegation of the S.A.P. agree to sign so wretched a resolution? Schwab, obviously, does not place a very high value on his signature (incidentally, he had already demonstrated this in 1933!). But still, what is the position of the S.A.P. in substance? "The proclamation of the New International," we read, "despite the need for it objectively, is in the meantime rendered impossible by subjective causes." In the first place, we find here confounded consciously, that is to say, unscrupulously the "proclamation of a New International", and the proclamation of the need to struggle for the Fourth International. We demand the latter, and not the former.

However, wherein does the "profound problem" involved in this question lie? Observe: *objectively* the new International is necessary; but *subjectively* it is impossible. In simpler terms: without the New International the proletariat will be crushed; but the

masses do not understand this as yet. And what else is the task of the Marxists if not to raise the subjective factor to the level of the objective and to bring the consciousness of the masses closer to the understanding of the historical necessity—in simpler terms: to explain to the masses their own interests, which they do not yet understand? The "profound problem" of the Centrists is profound cowardice in the face of a great and undeferrable task. The leaders of the S.A.P. do not understand the importance of *class conscious revolutionary activity in history*.

The *Neue Front* adduces for our edification Doriot's argument: it is impossible "to ignore the present condition of the masses". Then why did Doriot himself break with the communist party, which has behind it, incomparably greater masses than has Doriot, at any rate? The abstract and hollow argument from unknown "masses" is a wretched piece of sophistry, to screen the incapacity of the leaders which lurks behind it. The non-party, i.e., the numerically strongest "masses" stand outside of any International. The party "masses" in their overwhelming majority remain in the Second and Third Internationals, and not at all behind the I.A.G.: it is not without good cause that Zyromski demands that the organizations of the I.A.G. return to their old pastures, to the "masses". Behind the I.A.G. there are no masses whatever. The question lies not in what the masses think *today* but in what spirit and direction the Messrs. Leaders are preparing to educate the masses.

As a matter of fact, in the parties of the I.A.G. not the masses but the leaders are opposed to the Fourth International. Why? For the very same reason that they are opposed to the principled resolution. They don't want anything that would restrict their Centrist liberty to vacillate. They want to be independent from Marxism. For reasons very easily understood they label Marxism as the "Trotskyist idea of the Fourth International".

The S.A.P. leaders were able to find a common language with everybody except the Dutch. In the report, there is to be found a polemic *only* against Sneevliet and Schmidt. Not a word of criticism against the opportunists, who composed the majority at the conference! Is it not evident from this alone that Schwab and Co. are Centrists, who have turned their backs—to the Marxists, and their faces—to the opportunists?

In addition to all its other achievements the conference has inaugurated a "struggle" for peace. By what methods? By old German methods: it created . . . a *Verein* (Union), a *Verein* of the Friends of Peace.

"Disarmament" or . . . Castration?

This "*Verein*" consists as yet of the repre-

sentatives of three (as many as three!) parties, and is cleft the "Initiative Committee".* This Initiative Committee has for its task the creation of a new "*Verein*" which is to be called—mind you!—the International Committee for the Struggle for Peace. Why, the name alone will make the imperialists shiver in their boots. As the *Neue Front* reports, the task of the International Committee for the Struggle for Peace is "the inauguration and the fulfillment of a world-embracing mass movement for a genuine [my! my] disarmament; and for peace". As is its custom, the S.A.P. introduced a special resolution "for spreading the international struggle for peace". As usual, the conference was in no condition to accept this resolution, either (obviously for lack of time). But since a committee of as many as three people had been established, the most important thing has been achieved. Schwab is right: the conference has "achieved all it was possible to achieve in the given situation". We are ready to subscribe to this melancholy remark.

*As usual, we are not told A.P., Doriot, and the Iberian which parties. [They are the S. Federation (Maurin).—ED.]

The S.A.P. resolution "For the Struggle for Peace" which was not adopted by the conference was—to give it its due—the most pathetic piece of opportunistic thinking which we have had occasion to meet during the recent period. For its authors, there exists neither the history of Marxism, nor the age-long struggle of tendencies within the working class, nor the fresh experience of wars and revolutions. These alchemists have newly discovered their philosopher's stone.

As we have already learned from the *Neue Front* the central slogan of the future "world-embracing" struggle is "genuine disarmament". Litvinov's slogan is "correct". The only fault with Litvinov is that he turns with his slogan "only to the governments". Thus, our alchemists, without suspecting it, overthrow in passing all the conquests of revolutionary experience and of Marxian theory. Whoever said that the slogan of disarmament was correct? The Kautsky of the decline, Leon Blum, Litvinov, Otto Bauer, and Bela Kun "himself". But how did Marx, Engels, Lenin and the Third International, in its period of bloom, view this question? We do not hear a single word about this. Yet, Engels counterposed to the program of disarmament the program of a people's militia, and he demanded—horror of horrors!—the military training of the student youth. Lenin irreconcilably branded the slightest concession to the idea of "disarmament". In 1916, in a special article written for the youth, Lenin explained that so long as oppression and exploitation continue to exist, weapons will remain a necessary factor in the relation between classes, as well as between states. Today, the bourgeoisie militarizes the youth. Wrote Lenin: "Tomorrow, it may perhaps resort to the militarization of women; to this, we must say: so much the better . . . so much the nearer to the armed insurrection against capitalism." Are we to curse war and to demand disarmament? The women of the revolutionary class will never reconcile themselves to such an ignoble rôle. They will say to their sons: . . . you will be given weapons. Take your gun and learn well the art of war. This science is necessary for proletarians. . . ." Lenin goes on to explain, "An oppressed class which does not strive to learn how to handle weapons and to possess guns, such an oppressed class would only merit being treated as slaves." (Slaves of the Communist International, take note!). At this same period, Lenin jotted down in his note book, in German: "Disarmament—is castration. Disarmament—is a reactionary Christian jeremiad. Disarmament implies not the struggle *against* imperialist reality but an escape *from* it into the entrancing future, which will follow *after* the victorious socialist revolution."

Consequently, there is no harm in the fact that Soviet diplomacy has proposed disarmament to capitalist governments. The harm and the crime lie in the fact that the Communist International and, today, the S.A.P. have transformed this proposal into a slogan for the proletariat. Indeed, it is necessary to utilize the experiment of Soviet diplomacy in order to expose and explain the unrealness, the falseness and the illusion of both bourgeois and socialist pacifism.

Even if, by dint of a given historical correlation of circumstances, this or another capitalist government were compelled to effect "disarmament" in one shape or another, then this military-diplomatic "reform" would in no measure at all guarantee peace. The theses of the Bolshevik-Leninists, *War and the Fourth International*, state, among other things, the following: "Disarmament is not a measure against war, for as we have seen from the experience of Germany itself, episodic disarmament is only a stage on the road to new armament. The possibility of a new and, moreover, a very rapid arming is lodged in the modern, industrial technology. 'Universal' disarmament, even if it could be realized, would imply only the strengthening of the military preponderance

of the more powerful industrial countries. . . . To advance disarmament as the 'sole real method of preventing war' implies fooling the workers for the sake of achieving a common front with petty bourgeois pacifists". This point is aimed directly at the Stalinists but it applies wholly to the S.A.P. as well.*

Let us allow that Marx, Engels, Lenin and their pupils, the Bolshevik-Leninists, were mistaken. But why didn't the theoreticians of the S.A.P. so much as take the trouble to explain to us precisely where the mistake of our teachers lies? Our innovators, without any commentaries, simply stepped over the revolutionary traditions of Marxism in one of the most important questions. How explain this astonishing fact? Very simply. Our alchemists are interested neither in theory, nor in historical experience, nor in tradition. They operate by making estimates by means of their eyes, their olfactory organs, and their sound horse sense. They wish to discover the philosopher's stone for every particular case.

In addition, it must be said that the demand that the capitalist governments disarm in order to escape war, lies on the same political plane as the demand that the Fascist Leagues be disarmed in order to escape the physical phase of the class struggle. Both these "demands" flow from petty bourgeois cowardice and serve not to disarm the bourgeoisie but to demoralize the proletariat.

Thus, in the very center of the S.A.P. resolution there are lodged, to use Lenin's words, "nice, humane, and almost-Left phrases about peace, disarmament, etc." The very Committee

"The Struggle for Peace"

which will be created by means of the Committee already created at the conference of the I.A.G. will have as its duty to develop "a large scale struggle for peace". *A large scale struggle! . . .*

From the sectarian conception of the class struggle, the resolution passes over to an appeal to "the opponents [!] of war the whole world over". The Marxian vocabulary does not contain, as yet, the political meaning of "the opponents of war". The professional "opponents of war" are the Quakers, the Tolstoians, the Gandhists; and then too, there are the parlor pacifists, the democratic windbags, the acrobats, and the charlatans. The Marxists are the class enemies of the bourgeoisie and of imperialist wars but they are the supporters of national-liberationist and revolutionary wars, both defensive and offensive. Have the leaders of the S.A.P. really heard nothing at all on this score? Or have they succeeded in refuting these antiquated views? If so, in what books, and what articles?

The section of the resolution which is devoted to the description of the future activity of the future "world embracing" Committee is an entirely unsurpassed blob of phrasemongering. To counteract the preparation for war the Committee will have to "draw in specialists [!] and in this [!] sense gather together all of the effective forces for joint and planned labor, who even today remain still [!] outside any organizational ties". The "specialists" and the "forces", which remain anonymous, are to utilize the "yearning for peace which imbues millions and millions of people as a lever to set in motion a world-embracing anti-war movement borne by the national masses of all countries. . . ." And so forth and so on.

*When the Bolshevik-Leninists formulated their position on the war question in their draft theses (*War and the Fourth International*) they submitted, in good time, the manuscript of the draft to the leaders of the S.A.P. and invited them to participate in discussing it. A promise was given, but no reply was forthcoming. The leaders

of the S.A.P. obviously "didn't have time" for problems of the revolution, and besides what would Tranmael say? What would Kilboom say? . . . From this instance, the reader can see for himself that we have passed through a serious experience with the S.A.P.

The governments which would attempt to crush the world-embracing movement for peace will be "morally condemned and branded". An extremely tangible weapon against Hitler, Mussolini and the others. The liberal governments will, in all probability, receive laudatory diplomas. And besides, the S.A.P. has in reserve the "universal economic boycott" to be used against especially vicious governments. In order that the boycott be really "universal", the International Peace Committee will evidently have to enter into an alliance with pacifist banks and trusts and, on the other hand, "condemn" those capitalists who reap profits from war. But even this does not exhaust the entire arsenal of the S.A.P. The resolution recommends, taking the example of "the experiment tried in England by the pacifists", to arrange for demonstrative "national polls". One need only add petitions addressed to the General Staffs. Then peace would really find itself encircled!

The S.A.P. "Committee" will wage a struggle for "international democratic control over war preparations", and to this end—hark! hark!—it will create in every country "special commissions". After

which, there will be nothing left for Hitler to do except drown

"Democratic Control"

himself in the bucket of water which he could easily squeeze out of the S.A.P. resolution.

"Democratic [!] control [!] over war preparations." Even Henderson himself could not have put it more eloquently. This strikes a particularly fine note, coming, at the present time, from the pen of a *German* socialist. Where, oh where, are the beautiful days of Weimar? Their shades have come to life again in the headquarters of the S.A.P.

During the last war, there existed in England the "*Verein of Democratic Control*" (that was actually its name: *The Union of Democratic Control*), under the leadership of the well known left-liberal Morel. In 1916, Lenin wrote upon this occasion: "Only the immaturity of political relations and the absence of political freedom in Germany hinders the formation there as rapidly and as easily as in England of a bourgeois League for Peace and Disarmament, with Kautsky's program." The S.A.P. evidently deems that the political relations in Germany today are sufficiently "mature" for the creation of a democratic *Verein* with the program of Morel-Kautsky-Schwab.

But we are in favor of democratic slogans! the author of the resolution may perhaps attempt to object, who snatched some things from the Bolshevik-Leninists, which he understood badly. Yes, revolutionists defend even the sorriest remnants of democratic liberties, so long as they are unable to pass to the offensive for the seizure of power. But revolutionists never promise to transform these sorry remnants into a world-embracing sovereignty of democratic control by means of "special commissions", consisting of nobody knows whom. It is one thing to defend the *real* democratic trenches of the working class in the revolutionary struggle. It is something entirely different to build democratic castles in Spain after losing all the democratic trenches. It is precisely along this point that there passes the line of demarcation between revolutionary realism and illusory pacifism.

* * *

The S.A.P. resolution is not at all original: as a matter of fact, it is merely a counterfeit of the Communist International. Why create this world-embracing Committee when it has already been created? Its name is the Amsterdam-Pleyel Committee! It unifies all the specialists and all the "forces": Barbusse, the world-embracing Münzenberg, Hindu liberals, petty demagogues, colossal windbags, English lords, and American widows, in short "all the forces" suffering from the disease which is called the "yearning for peace. . ." This Committee manufactures much more beauti-

ful documents than does the S.A.P., because at Münzenberg's disposal there are the very best specialists. . . . The great plan of Schwab and Co. is a provincial hand-made forgery of the bureaucratic adventurism of the Stalinists. Aided by ringing coin, the Stalinists at least arrange pompous parades (they arranged them *yesterday*; they will hardly arrange them *tomorrow*), while the I.A.G. could not even do as much. No new Committee will come out of its present Committee. Peace, perhaps, will not even notice that it has been surrounded on all sides.

* * *

It is no accident that in the policy of the Comintern as well as of the reformists purely negative formulations predominate, like *anti-imperialism*, *anti-Fascism*, *anti-war* struggle, without any class delimitations, and without a revolutionary program of action. Such formulations are absolutely necessary for the policies of masquerade blocs (the Anti-Imperialist League, the Amsterdam-Pleyel Committee Against War and Fascism, and so on). All these blocs and Congresses and Committees have as their task to screen the passivity, the cowardice, and the incapacity to solve those tasks which compose the *very essence of the class struggle of the proletariat*. Following in the footsteps of the Stalinists and the reformists, the I.A.G. has taken to the same road. The very same leaders sit down on different stools in the hope that the masses will fail to recognize them and will come flocking to them. This self-abnegation is a voluntary confession of one's own worthlessness.

Some comrades reason as follows: The leaders of the S.A.P. are of course not Marxists; but the Third International did not spring up spontaneously, either; it was preceded by conferences

in Zimmerwald and Kienthal, in which Lenin participated, side

side with the Centrists. But is the I.A.G.—a new "Zimmerwald"? In this argument, there are no less than four fundamental mistakes.

First, Zimmerwald took place *during the war*. The overwhelming majority of the Centrists who during peacetime spoke about the struggle for peace and disarmament went over to the camp of nationalism, in the very first days of the war. Only an insignificant minority of pre-war Centrists, isolated individuals, evinced their readiness to confer with the "enemies" of their country. Thus the composition of Zimmerwald was subjected to the ruthless selection under war conditions.

In the second place, outside of Russia and partly Germany (R. Luxemburg, K. Liebknecht), in no country were there at that time real revolutionists who understood the tasks of the struggle to their ultimate conclusion. The social democrats, who were drawn into the struggle against war (not a *future* war, not war in *general* but a *given, actual war*) were then passing through the Centrist stage almost is their entirety. There were no other political partners to be found to take the *first* steps.

In the third place, under war conditions when entry into relations with working class organizations of enemy countries was punished as a crime, the very fact of an international conference, convoked illegally, was a political event and a revolutionary signal, independent even of what decisions it reached.

In the fourth place, Lenin participated in the conference not to reach conciliation with the Centrists, not to present hollow "resolutions", but to struggle for the principles of Bolshevism. No sooner did the "Zimmerwald Left" consolidate itself than Lenin, despite its extreme weakness (it was incomparably weaker than the present international organization of the Bolshevik-Leninists) posed the question of a break with Zimmerwald. The break lagged *against* the wish of Lenin who, however, was not mistaken in his estimate: the majority of the participants at Zimmerwald soon

took their place in the ranks of the Second International.

Our present situation is fundamentally different from that of the past. There is no war as yet. 99% of the reformists and Centrists who are now harping on the pacifist phrases ("against war", "for disarmament") will turn out on the side of their governments in the event of a new war. Today, in times of peace, a doubly strict revolutionary selection is necessary. The criteria for this selection are clarity in theory, and a practise corresponding to theory. Leaders, who enroute to an "international" conference, forget to take along their "principles" (these are not cigarette cases or matches!), do not give the slightest guarantees for revolutionary conduct in times of war.

Moreover, the year 1935 is not the year 1915. We have behind us the experience of the last war, and of Zimmerwald. The Schwabs and the Kilbooms, Doriot and the others are no children. They are not even youths. They were the leading participants in the Communist International. If from the experience of the last two decades they have drawn not revolutionary but Centrist and pacifist conclusions, then we must seek for other allies.

Finally, we must not forget also the fact that we have already participated once before in this "Zimmerwald" of peace times: in August 1933, we participated in the Conference of the I.A.G., which refused even to put to a vote our resolution on the Fourth International. The pretext was that "the participants were not sufficiently acquainted with it". A year and a half has elapsed. The attempt of Sneevliet and Schmidt produced the same result. Isn't it at last time to draw the necessary conclusions?

In all countries there now exist genuine revolutionary organizations and groups which took form in the struggle against reformism and Stalinism. Their numbers and strength are growing. The vicious persecution and calumny of the enemies steels them. Their ideological equipment has been tested in colossal historical events. All this was entirely lacking during the last war. The Bolsheviks have no reason for uniting with the Centrist *tops*, ("*unity*" . . . once every year and a half at a conference!). Hollow international parades are of no use to us. Revolutionists do not flirt with Centrists at conferences but carry on tireless day-to-day work against them in their own countries, and they participate at their own revolutionary international conferences, where they do not blow soap bubbles but discuss and decide the questions of the class struggle.

In order to estimate correctly the political physiognomy of a given group we must know its past. The leadership of the S.A.P. emerged from the ranks of the Right opposition of the German

Some Facts from the History of the Formation of the S.A.P. Leadership

In 1923, this group led the communist party and, under the conditions of the greatest revolutionary crisis, connected with the occupation of the Ruhr district, it revealed its utter incapacity. The blame for letting slip the revolutionary situation falls not upon the "masses", as the opportunistic leaders asserted, but upon the Brandler-Walcher faction which vacillated, let time slip during the most critical months, and shifted the revolutionary obligations upon "the historical process". After the revolutionary situation had turned into a counter-revolutionary situation, the leadership, as usual, evinced a false optimism ("the revolution is approaching"!), and by its entire subsequent policies it generally demonstrated that it had completely failed to understand its "mistake" of 1923, which became a colossal signpost in the history of the triumph of German Fascism.

The entire opportunistic policy of the Communist International (the strategy of the Chinese revolution, the "workers and peasants' parties" in the Orient, the Anglo-Russian Committee, the

"Peasants' International", placing all stakes on the kulak in the U.S.S.R., the struggle against Marxism under the guise of a struggle against "Trotskyism") occurred with the participation or with the direct support of the Brandler-Walcher faction. Involved here is not the question of minor tactical episodes but the question of the strategy of the proletariat during events on a colossal historical scale.

We do not at all mean to say that a group carrying upon its shoulders such a heavy burden of opportunistic crimes against the revolution is doomed once and for all: there are not a few instances in history where revolutionists turned opportunists, and opportunists became revolutionists. But in any case the passage to the road of revolutionary policy could have only implied for the representatives of the Brandler-Thalheimer school a profound internal crisis, a revaluation of values and a break with their own past. The split of the Walcher group, in connection with its entry to the S.A.P.*, with the Brandler group, which continued obediently and assiduously to pin hopes upon the mercy of the Stalinist bureaucracy, created the most favorable conditions for the review of their own past by Walcher and the others. The tragic annihilation of the German proletariat made such a review necessary and undeferrable and as a matter of fact the Walcher group which assumed the leading posts in the S.A.P. did sway to the Left on the eve of emigration.

It is precisely to this period that date back the attempts of Bolshevik-Leninists to impel the leadership of the S.A.P. to review in the light of new events the experience of 1923 in Germany, the experience of the Chinese revolution, of the Anglo-Russian Committee, etc. The leaders of the S.A.P. evinced the minimum of interest in all these questions. Our theoretical insistence appeared to them to be sectarian "hair splitting". They indicted the Communist International, at any rate up to its latest ultra-opportunist turn, for one single sin: *ultra-Leftism*. They could not at all digest the definition *bureaucratic Centrism*. Generally speaking the term, *Centrism*, has a bad effect on their nerves. Nevertheless, under the fresh impression of the bankruptcy of the Second and Third Internationals in Germany, the Walcher group went so far as to admit the need for beginning to build *the Fourth International*.

In August 1933, the S.A.P. leadership signed jointly with us the well-known *Pact of Four*. The leaders of the S.A.P. proclaimed, together with us, that "in full realization of the great historical responsibility which devolves upon them, the undersigned . . . obligate themselves to direct all their forces to the formation in the shortest possible time of this [Fourth] International on the firm foundation of the theoretic and strategic principles of Marx and Lenin".

This resolution was the extreme Left point to which the leadership of the S.A.P. was able to oscillate under the blows of events. After this, the pendulum of Centrism began its downward swing to the Right. Without openly removing their signatures from the resolution, the leaders of the S.A.P. opened an undercover, an equivocal and a disloyal struggle against the idea of the Fourth International. On what grounds? On the ground that "the Trotskyists want to proclaim the New International *immediately*". Foreseeing beforehand the possibility of such insinuations on the part of the Centrist slow-pokes, a special declaration of the Bolshevik-Leninists was presented at the Conference of the I.A.G. in August 1933, declaring that: "The course towards the New International is dictated by the entire course of development. This does not mean to say, however, that we propose to *proclaim the New*

*Incidentally, one of the leaders of the group, in his own time, asked me by mail for my opinion on the entry into the S.A.P. My reply was that one could

not say anything *in principle* against such an entry, the whole point in question being under what banner and for what aims the entry was made.

International immediately. . . . The creation of the New International depends not only upon the objective course of events, but also upon *our own efforts.*"

Isn't this, manifestly, clear enough? One should imagine that the precise written declaration would leave no room for stupid insinuations and calumnies. And finally, if someone *else* were proposing an incorrect, hasty and adventurist road, how could that change the content of *my own task*?

As a matter of fact, the leadership of the S.A.P. had the same superficial, trifling, verbal attitude toward the Pact for the Fourth International as Centrists generally have toward theoretical principles. While signing the Pact, they had the following idea in back of their heads: "We shall sign this very unpleasant document, in order to preserve the harmonious cover of our Left wing; but we shall continue to do what Seydewitz and we ourselves have been doing up to now, i.e., seek allies *from the Right.*" It goes without saying that this was a remarkable plan. It fell through because the Leninists refused to play the rôle of an honorary revolutionary guard at opportunist deals. Hence, the split.

The situation received its most brilliant clarification on the question of the N.A.P. [Norwegian Labor party]. Without in any way overestimating the international rôle of the S.A.P., we, however, pointed insistently to the fact that its bloc with the N.A.P.,

The Experience with the N.A.P.

through the medium of the I.A.G., aided the opportunist leadership of the N.A.P. to tame its own Left wing opposition. It is precisely for this, and only for this reason, that the leaders of the N.A.P. kept up their "compromising" connections with the Left. We forecasted that Tranmael would unceremoniously break with the I.A.G. as soon as he has reached the harbor: "*Der Moor hat seine Schuldigkeit getan.* . . ." [The Moor has done his duty.] We advised the leaders of the S.A.P. to ponder over the experience of the Anglo-Russian Committee, which in 1925-1927 literally broke the neck of the very promising opposition movement in the British trade unions (the Minority Movement). How smugly did the leaders of the S.A.P. wave our arguments aside! "Masses . . . masses . . . masses . . . historical process . . ." We were not astonished: if Centrists were able to understand the inter-relationships between the "masses" and the vanguard, between the vanguard and the leadership, between "the historical process" and the initiative of the minority, then they would not be Centrists.

The actual course of events developed even more clearly and convincingly than we had forecasted. Directly and immediately from the ranks of the I.A.G., the leaders of the N.A.P. transplanted themselves to the government benches and, as their first act, they passed the King's civil list. "The historical process" can play dirty tricks! Yet, it is an incontestable fact that the leaders of the S.A.P. broke with the grouping for the Fourth International precisely in order to be able to maintain, without any hindrance, their friendship with the leaders of the N.A.P. and their like.

Observe that we bitter-end "sectarians" did not put any ultimata to Schwab and Company. We said to our temporary Centrist semi-allies: "You say that the experience of the Anglo-Russian Committee is insufficient *for you?* Very well, go on with *your* experience with Tranmael; we will patiently wait for the results, reserving to ourselves only the full freedom to criticize." But it is precisely this that the leaders of the S.A.P. could not tolerate. The policies of Centrist combinationism demand a diplomatic back-stage; to think their own thoughts out to their conclusion and to say openly what is, implies to nip the Centrist delusions in the bud. It is true that in order to "disarm" us they also "criticized" Tranmael; but just enough so as *not* to expose before their readers the rottenness and falseness of their alliance with Tranmael: they

roared angrily like lovesick doves. Much more important is the fact that for the Norwegian workers there existed only the alliance between the N.A.P. and a whole number of "revolutionary" foreign parties standing outside the Second International: under the banner of this alliance the "leaders" of the N.A.P. were able to perform their business excellently. And since it was much too uncomfortable for the leaders of the S.A.P. to admit to their own followers that they broke a semi-alliance with revolutionists for the sake of an alliance with opportunists, they put in circulation a stupid piece of gossip that "the Trotskyists want to proclaim the Fourth International next Thursday"; whereas the S.A.P., as a rational cautious body alien to any kind of adventurism wants to . . . incidentally, what does it want? To marry the "historical process". The address of this famous and rich bridegroom is well known to old and experienced Centrist marriage-brokers.

At the present moment the S.A.P. leaders are most concerned with *getting the workers to forget* the entire story of the affair with the N.A.P. Why bring up old questions? Tranmael is going away from us anyway . . . fortunately without any undue noise. We have on hand many German affairs . . . Hitler . . . the war danger . . . and so forth and so on. No, we *shall not permit* these wiseacres to hide under the table the ignominious collapse of their ignominious policy with the N.A.P. We will compel them to give an accounting to the workers. We will call the advanced workers to study thoroughly the question as to who was correct, we or the S.A.P.?

The Bolshevik-Leninists in Germany are all the more bound to carry on an energetic campaign on this question since this new scandalous experience has taught the smug strategists of the S.A.P. nothing. On the contrary, they have swung still further to the *Right*, into confusion, into the morass. In their innermost thoughts they consider that they repelled Tranmael by their unbridled Leftism (under the insidious influence of the "Trotskyists"). Ah, but now they will deport themselves differently. They will not permit Kilboom to escape from their embraces no matter what he does. But what hinders these people from learning from their own mistakes? Their firmly ossified, their thoroughly conservative Centrist political psychology.

In the sphere of the youth movement, the grouping took shape— at any rate up to the present—somewhat differently, than it did in the I.A.G.; but the policies of the S.A.P. leaders bear here, too, the

The Fatal Role of the S.A.P. in the Stockholm Youth Bureau

very same, that is to say, an unprincipled and horsetrading character, especially harmful in the midst of the revolutionary youth. The Stockholm Bureau in its present composition was created by means of fictitious magnitudes, by means of the great phantom of the N.A.P. and the minute clique of De Kadt which "represented" the O.S.P. (Holland). The S.A.P. united with the shadow of the N.A.P. and with the all too real petty bourgeois philistine De Kadt (against the Bolsheviks all alliances are good!) in order to seize the leadership of the Stockholm Bureau into its hands. It is necessary to state the truth: the young Leninists evinced an impermissible submissiveness at the conference. They were insufficiently imbued with the understanding of the most important trait of Centrism: its eternal readiness to put its foot in the way of revolutionists, or to strike them a blow in the back in order to retain the favor of the opportunists.

At the last conference of the I.A.G., the representative of the Stockholm Youth Bureau accused comrades Sneevliet and Schmidt of sectarianism and, in order to give them a lesson in "realism", this young combinationist voted for two resolutions at once: for the Dutch resolution in favor of the Fourth International—and for

the S.A.P. resolution against the Fourth International. To tolerate such mockery of principles is to trample underfoot the elementary requirements of revolutionary hygiene!

The French *Bulletin* issued by the Stockholm Bureau (No. 1, April 1935) represents a new political scandal. The editorial article seems to have been specially written with a view to confuse, to mislead and fool the readers. The summary of the participating organizations in the article is based upon equivocations and fictions: the opportunist wing is monstrously exaggerated, while all the organizations of the Bolshevik-Leninist Youth except for the American Spartacus Youth are consciously skipped over in silence. Messrs. Centrists are always *embarrassed* to appear in "respectable" (i.e. opportunist) society alongside of revolutionary allies!

The task of the Stockholm Bureau is set forth in a purely negative manner: "Its task does not lie in preparing a new split." To this Zyromski correctly replies: but the very fact that the Bureau exists is a split, for the grouping of the youth must henceforth proceed not along two but three axes. One should and one must propose a new "axis" only in case the old axis is worthless, whereas the new is trustworthy, solid, and able to meet its historical purpose. The misfortune lies, however, in the fact that Centrism has and can have no axis of *its own*.

The editorial suddenly states the following: "Together with the socialist youth of Spain, the Stockholm Bureau demands [!] a new International." But don't rush to rejoice. Having blown a kiss to the Spaniards, our diplomatist reminds himself of Doriot, the P.U.P.ists, Zyromski, and all the prophets of "complete unity", and he immediately adds: "its [the Stockholm Bureau's] task is to overcome the split . . . in order to attain the one and only genuine International". Ergo, not a new International, but the merger of the two old Internationals. Ergo, the S.A.P. expresses itself in principle for unity with reformists and patriots, entirely after the manner of its teacher, Miles.

But what about Lenin, to whom the *Neue Front* so inappropriately refers, who taught that "unity with opportunists is the alliance of the workers with 'their' national bourgeoisie and the split of the international working class". What will the leaders of the S.A.P. say on this score? Naturally, a *temporary* organizational tie-up with opportunists, under specific concrete conditions, may be forced by the circumstances*. But to turn it into a principle is a betrayal! It is, first of all, the renunciation of the international unity of the proletariat, for in time of war the opportunists will once again destroy that fiction which they call the International, and which they keep up during peace times to soothe the Centrist boobies. "Universal", "complete" unity implies the worst possible split under the most difficult conditions.

A few lines further down we read: "This International will be the result of the *historic process* and it will be able to take form only through the *actions of the masses*." Very well! But why then do *you* butt into somebody else's business: you haven't been given the power of attorney for this either by the "historic process" or by the "masses", have you? . . . The author of the article is the accomplished pupil of Russian Mensheviks who were in the good old days the virtuosi in the field of correlating "revolutionary" formulæ with the practise of fatalism and prostration.

*Let us recall that after the war, the French adherents of the Third International, during a considerable period of time, participated, together with the S.F.I.O. in the Berne (2½) International. On this score an instructive polemic broke out between Lenin and Martov. Here is what we read in Lenin: "Martov has somewhere writ-

ten, 'You Bolsheviks inveigh against the Berne International, but 'your' own friend Loriot belongs to it.' *This is the argument of a swindler. For as everyone knows, Loriot is fighting for the Third International, openly, honestly and heroically.*" We trust that Lenin's argument requires no commentaries.

But how much crasser, weaker and more impotent indeed is this pupil from the S.A.P. than such classical figures of Left-Centrism as the deceased Martov!

The task of tasks at present is to prepare the cadres of Leninist youth, to raise them to the level of the tasks of our epoch. In this sphere special theoretical clarity is required, ideological honesty, and an irreconcilability to opportunism and to diplomacy. The policies of the S.A.P. in the Stockholm Bureau are a downright mockery of the fundamental demands of the revolutionary education of our successors! This cannot be tolerated.

Those optimists who pin hopes upon the "evolution of the I.A.G.", must answer for themselves the following question: how and why must this evolution proceed to the Left and not to the Right?

The 2½ International?

The initial positions of the participants in the I.A.G. are far removed from Marxism. Kilboom, Doriot, the P.U.P.ists, Maurin (a petty bourgeois Catalan nationalist) are the *open* enemies of Leninism. In their current work these parties do not exert the least influence upon one another. Once every year and a half their delegates come together in order to reveal "the lack of time" for discussing principled questions. How then, ultimately, is the "regeneration of the working class movement" to take place and first of all the regeneration of the members of the I.A.G. itself? The only answer reads: by dint of the "historical process".

But the historical process "engenders" everything: Bolshevism as well as Centrism as well as reformism as well as Fascism. "Mass actions" are also of diverse kinds: there are the pilgrimages to Lourdes, the Nazi plebiscites, the reformist polls, the patriotic demonstrations, the strikes under the leadership of traitors, and finally the revolutionary battles doomed to defeat because of Centrist leadership (Austria, Spain). And, in the interim, an entirely different question is posed before us, namely: *what content does the small propagandist organization, called the S.A.P., prepare to bring into the "historical process" and into the future "activities of the masses"?* How absurd to pin behind oneself a pompous peacock's tail of *future* (!) mass activities in order to distract attention from the absence of clear ideas in one's head. The past of the leading group of the S.A.P. (1923!) is not at all of such a kind as to enable us to *take its word for it* that it is capable of leading the revolutionary masses. In any case, at the given preparatory stage, the leaders of the S.A.P. must prove their right to leadership by a correct theoretical position, by the clarity and consistency of their revolutionary line. Alas, there is not even a sign of such qualities among them!

Having no axis of their own, they attempt to "combine" somebody else's axes, which extend in different, and even in opposite directions. The N.A.P. is in essence a party of the Second International. The I.L.P. hesitantly gravitates towards the Third. The Dutch party stands firmly for the Fourth. Doriot and the P.U.P.ists stand for "complete unity". Whereas the alchemists from the S.A.P. assure the German workers that out of such diversified elements there will be distilled just what is needed.

Theoretically speaking, a second inception of the 2½ International is, of course, not excluded. But in view of the existence of the pathetic initial experience of this sort, and particularly in view of the extreme sharpening of the class struggle, the second experiment could only prove much weaker and much more insignificant than was the first. This prognosis already finds sufficient confirmation in the brief history of the I.A.G., the centrifugal forces of which have shown themselves up to now to be more powerful than all the Centrist formulæ. Let us once again recall several fresh facts.

The N.A.P. is a serious opportunist party: the bourgeoisie even entrusts it with the management of its state. That is why the N.A.P. broke with the S.A.P. The Bolshevik-Leninists are a

serious revolutionary organization: they have their own tradition and their own principles. That is why the S.A.P. broke with the Bolsheviks. The De Kadt clique (in the O.S.P.) upon which Schwab leaned, left the revolutionary ranks at the very first serious test. Schwab cannot find a common language with the leading group of Schmidt, which really stands for the Fourth International. Schwab and his friends considered the American Workers Party (Muste) almost as their "own" organization; yet, the A.W.P. merged with our section. Schwab almost succeeded in luring the Belgian, Spaak, into the I.A.G. But Spaak suddenly became the minister of His King. And things will proceed similarly in the future: The Centrist diplomatists of the I.L.P. will not save their party from further disintegration. An internal differentiation is inevitable within the Swedish party (Kilboom). In order to intrench oneself in the working class movement one must have, today more than ever before, clear principles and a distinct banner, one easily to be distinguished from afar.

In France, the leaders of the S.A.P. support Centrists of the type of Zyromski and Doriot *against* the Bolshevik-Leninists. While so doing, they whisper in their ears about our "sectarian-

Worthless Pilots in Stormy Weather

ism", our intolerance, our tendency to split each hair into four parts, and so forth and so on. ("Please, for God's sake, don't think we are like those fanatics—far from it. . .") They shut their eyes to a single fact: that the Bolshevik-Leninists are the only group which made a timely and correct analysis of the situation and of the tendencies of its development; which drew from its analysis all the necessary practical conclusions; and which actually does fight irreconcilably against the epidemic of lightmindedness on the part of the "leaders", and their irresponsibility, and their faith in miracles. The difference is not at all that Zyromski and Doriot are "kinder", "more broad-minded", more "realistic" than the Bolsheviks. No, the difference, or rather the misfortune is in that they, Zyromski, Doriot and the like, do not understand the character of the situation, that they dare not open their eyes as Marxists do, and that they lack the resolution to draw the necessary revolutionary conclusions. In other words, Zyromski and Doriot are passing through the very same political phase as did Brandler, Walcher and Co. in 1923. Under these conditions, the influence of the leaders of the S.A.P. is all the more dangerous because in the struggle against revolutionary policies they exploit not unskillfully the Marxian vocabulary, and even utilize the ready-made formulæ of the Bolshevik-Leninists.

This new and most important stage of the struggle of the leaders of the S.A.P. against the Bolshevik-Leninists must be attentively and seriously plumbed to its very conclusion: this time the stakes are much too great.

In all those countries where Fascism is just beginning to assume the offensive, the chief danger lies not at all in the "passivity" of the masses but in the fact that the reformists and Centrists of various shades continue to put a brake on the mobilization of the proletariat. "Objectively", to use the language of the *Neue Front*, revolutionary resistance is necessary. "Subjectively," it is impossible . . . to the extent that the Centrists, fearing a break with the reformists and among themselves, dare not take to the revolutionary road, and in their own justification, invoke the "masses". While so doing, the Centrists wage a struggle against the Leninists. We have here the very same groupings, the very same inter-relations and even the very same arguments as in the question of the Fourth International. This is no accident: *these are only the two sides of one and the same question.* When the matter in question happens to be the building of the International, the Centrists from the S.A.

P.—and it is precisely they and not we—think abstractly, abstracting themselves from historical reality: somehow, sometime the work will be done, the working class movement will be "renovated". It seems to them that they have an unlimited credit as to time. But when the question is posed of Fascism or of war, it is more difficult to hoodwink oneself and others, for the perspective is not distant and amorphous but becomes very close and distinct. Fascism is now assuming the offensive, and it assumes the offensive at its own tempo, independently of Centrist calculations. It is necessary to resist by revolutionary methods, *right now, immediately.* It is necessary not to adapt oneself to the subjective condition of the neighbors on the Right who invoke the argument from the "masses", but to explain openly to the masses the objective acuteness of the danger. Whoever actually fulfills this labor, thereby prepares the Fourth International; he has not and he cannot have any reasons for hiding his banner. These are the two sides of one and the same labor.

As regards the leaders of the S.A.P., in so far as they have any influence, let us say in France, they direct it everywhere and always in the support of Centrists, who stand marking time, and against the Bolsheviks who say what is, i.e., disclose the demands of the *objective* condition of things. The reactionary character of the work of the leaders of the S.A.P. in this case stands revealed with especial clarity because involved here is the question of the *objective* danger which is drawing closer on heels of steel. The leaders of the S.A.P. repeat, under new conditions, the very same fatal blunder which resulted in, and which brought defeat to their ill-fated policies in Germany in 1923: they lack the resolution to draw the practical revolutionary conclusions, when the objective situation pressingly demands this.

The aim of the present article consists, first of all, precisely in dispelling any illusions whatever as regards the fitness of the S.A.P. leaders to lead the *revolutionary* movement of the masses. Not because they are *personally* incapable people. No, in this group there are to be found smart, serious, and worthy activists, sincerely devoted to the interests of the proletariat. They are capable of giving advice, which is not at all bad, on the trade union movement or an election campaign during a comparatively peaceful period. But by habit of mind, they remain on the surface of events. They seek for the line of least resistance. They shut their eyes to real obstacles. They are absolutely incapable of seizing upon the logic of the struggle in the period of revolutionary—or counter-revolutionary—swirl-tide. They tragically proved it in 1923; since that time they have learned nothing, as evidenced by their entire conduct in the years of emigration. Inveterate Centrists, politicians of the golden mean, and combinationists, they become hopelessly lost in difficult and responsible situations, they lose their positive traits and play a negative rôle. Our warning reduces itself to a brief formula: with all their incontestable merits, *the leaders of the S.A.P. are absolutely worthless pilots in stormy weather.* But Europe, today, stands under the sign of storms.

The only organization which has developed during the past years, is our organization, the Bolshevik-Leninists. Both Internationals know only of defeats, decline and shambles; in the sphere of theory

The Bolshevik-Leninists and the Fourth International

they have fallen below zero. A few years ago, side by side with them there stood a very influential organization of the Right communist opposition (Brandler-Thalheimer-Walcher). Today, only chips of this organization remain: the cadres of the S.A.P. are one of these chips.

The international organization of the Bolshevik-Leninists came into being only in the Spring of 1930, on a foundation which was still weak and unstable. The brief history of the work of the

Leninists was, at the same time, the history of an internal ideological struggle. A whole number of individuals and groups, seeking a haven among us from the vicissitudes of life, have succeeded, fortunately, in leaving our ranks. At this very moment the Belgian section is passing through an acute crisis. Undoubtedly, there will be crises in the future, too. Philistines and snobs, who are ignorant of how a revolutionary organization takes shape, shrugged their shoulders ironically over our "splits" and "cleavages". Yet, upon the whole, our organization has grown numerically, it has established sections in most countries, it has become steeled ideologically, and it has matured politically. During that period, the Revolutionary Socialist Party of Holland (Sneevliet) joined our ranks. The Dutch O.S.P., after purging itself of the De Kadet clique (the staunch ally of Schwab against us) merged with the R.S.P. on a Marxist program. In America, the A.W.P. (Muste) merged with our American section on rigidly principled bases. The French Bolshevik-Leninists who have completed a very bold organizational step (entry into the socialist party) now stand with their slogans in the center of the proletarian vanguard of France. It is impossible not to point out also the new wild campaign against the "Trotskyists" in the U.S.S.R., where the underground work of the Bolsheviks is immeasurably more difficult than even in Italy or Germany. Tens, if not hundreds of thousands of expulsions from the party, mass arrests and exile testify that the Stalinist bureaucracy lives under the constant fear of the sympathies to our banner it has been unable to uproot. At the first revolutionary successes in the West, we shall reap at once a rich harvest in the U.S.S.R.

The Bolshevik-Leninists are far from being self-satisfied: our internal discussions are sufficient evidence of this. We are ready to learn from all those who have anything at all to teach. Our numerous publications in all parts of the world are evidence that our sections learn diligently and successfully. The viability of our international organization, its capacity for development, its readiness to surmount its own weaknesses and ills have been proved to the hilt.

Our Dutch friends (the majority of the party) still apparently deem it necessary to remain in the I.A.G. Let them pass through this experience! We have no qualms as to the conclusions they will draw on the morrow. But it would be a mistake to postpone even for a single additional day the work for the further building of the Fourth International. If the revolutionary Marxists of all countries, together, of course, with our Dutch friends, will establish at once an international joint body under their own banner, they will speed the inevitable disintegration of the I.A.G., as well as of the two old Internationals, and they will become the center of attraction for all the genuinely revolutionary groupings in the proletariat.

As happens often, attempts are made to invest a personal struggle with a principled character. But sometimes the contrary happens: when one cannot very well wage a principled struggle, then it is screened by personal motivations. Schwab has dozens of explanations why he and his friends are able to work with opportunists, but cannot work with the Bolsheviks: among us, you see, "personal influences" are much too strong; there is too little "counterbalance", and so on and so forth. We shall try to overcome our revulsion and to pause on this argument.

The excessive personal influence of X or Y, if it actually exists, can be (and should be) scaled down by the one and only method: by counterposing to the false or inadequately conceived views of X or Y other views which are more correct and better formulated.

This road is open to everyone: we have no censorship, no bureaucracy, no G.P.U., and no treasury to employ for corruption. The question of "personal influences" can thus be solved only *en route*, as a result of political collaboration, the clash of opinions, checking them by experience, etc. Whoever poses the question of "personal influences" as an *independent* question which must be solved by some special measures, apart from the ideological struggle and political checks, will find in his arsenal no other weapons except . . . gossip and intrigues.

Consequently, it is not difficult to understand that the raising of the bogie of "personal influence" is the product of the Centrist incapacity to give battle on the plane of principles and methods. A particular "personal influence" is hateful and inimical to us when it stands at the service of ideas *inimical* to us. All the revolutionary teachers of the proletariat, both great and small, were accused of wielding excessive personal influence by those who did not share their views. All Centrists, all muddleheads who run away from clear, open, bold, and honest ideological struggle always seek for an indirect, an accidental, and a personal psychologic justification for the not-at-all accidental fact that they themselves happen to be in an alliance with opportunists against the revolutionists.

As a matter of fact, no other organization discusses questions so openly and democratically, in full views of friends and foes, as we do. We are able to permit this only because we do not substitute horse-trading and diplomacy for the analysis of facts and ideas. To put it in simpler language we do not hoodwink the workers. But it is precisely our principle of *saying what is* that is most hateful to the leaders of the S.A.P., for the policy of Centrism is inconceivable without mouthfuls of water, tricks, and . . . personal insinuations.

For a long period of time, we tried the experiment of drawing closer to the leadership of the S.A.P.; we did it loyally and patiently, but the results are nil. Thanks precisely to the methodic

Conclusion

character of our experience, we obtained the possibility of plumbing the full depth of the Centrist conservatism of this group. In our criticism we have dealt only with a part of the controversial questions involved. But, we trust, what has been said will suffice to refute utterly the naïve or hypocritical assertions that the differences between us and the S.A.P. seemingly only touch upon partial tactical or "personal" questions. No, the differences cover the *fundamental questions of theory, strategy, tactic and organization*; and, moreover, during the most recent period, after the temporary Leftward vacillations of Schwab and his friends, these differences have increased enormously, and have broken into the open.

The leadership of the S.A.P. represents the classic type of conservative Centrism.

1.) It is capable neither of understanding a revolutionary situation nor of utilizing it (1923 in Germany; the present policies in Western Europe).

2.) It has failed to master the A B C of Leninist revolutionary strategy in the Orient (events in China in 1925-1927).

3.) Instead of waging a struggle for the masses, it chases after the opportunistic leaders, supporting the latter against the revolutionary section of the mass (Anglo-Russian Committee, the N.A.P.).

4.) It substitutes lifeless automatism and fatalism (faith in the "historical process") for revolutionary dialectics.

5.) It has the scorn of inveterate empiricists for theory and principles, placing diplomacy and horse trading first and foremost.

6.) It has acquired its conceptions of the rôle of the party and of the revolutionary leadership not from the Bolsheviks but from the "Left" social-democrats, the Mensheviks.

7.) It presents academic "Left" resolutions in order to untie its own as well as other hands for opportunistic work: the contradiction between thought and words, between words and deeds, the chief canker of Centrism rots away the entire policy of the S.A.P.

8.) Despite the enormous flood of Centrist tendencies in the present critical epoch, the leadership of the S.A.P. ignores the very concept of *Centrism*, shielding from criticism, in this manner, its own allies, and first of all, itself.

9.) It flirts with the Right wingers and carries on a disloyal struggle against the Left, putting a brake upon the process of the emancipation of the proletarian vanguard from the influences of reformism and Stalinism.

10.) In countries where Fascism is advancing with seven league

boots, the leadership of the S.A.P. aids the Centrists to lull the proletariat by the struggle it wages against the only consistently revolutionary organization.

11.) In the burning question of war, it has completely substituted pacifism ("disarmament", "the offensive for peace", "democratic control", etc.) for Leninism.

12.) It signed the programmatic resolution for the Fourth International in order to carry on a struggle against it in action.

13.) In the I.A.G., which it leads, it is steering a course toward the 2½ International.

It is clear that the work of fusing the revolutionary forces under the banner of the Fourth International must proceed apart from the S.A.P. and against the S.A.P.

The Civil War in Greece

IT CANNOT be foreseen, at the hour of writing, what the outcome will be of the Venizelist insurrection in Greece. But, broken or victorious, the insurrection has brought forward problems whose study is incumbent upon the international working class.

At the very moment when Fascist Italy is concentrating its troops on the Abyssinian frontiers, new international complications break out in Eastern Europe around a Greece gripped by civil war.

Before examining the international repercussions that this civil war has provoked and which it is still likely to produce, it is well to fix the positions occupied by the two fronts at battle.

In the peninsula situated at the southern extremity of the Balkans, in Eastern Europe, the two enemy camps do not represent, as was the case in the Asturias, at the north of the Iberian peninsula, the meridional extremity of Western Europe, two clearly hostile classes. Both camps belong to the property-owning and exploiting classes and are able to contend for power with arms in hand just because of the failure of the third factor: the working class.

But it would be far too over-simplified to reduce the civil war that has broken out in Greece to the armed dispute of two clans of politicians: that of the "monarchists" and that of the "republicans", both reactionary and both "Fascist". Such simplifications in no way help one to understand either the scope of the Venizelist insurrection or the sanguinary acuteness of the conflict.

What are the social forces and the interests that set in motion each of the two "clans"? That's what must be investigated. And to do it, we must return, even if very summarily, to the antecedents that prepared the new explosion.

The struggle between "republicans" and "monarchists" is a very old one: it goes back more than a century. It was precisely *the bourgeoisie of the islands*—the present center of the Venizelist insurrection—that financed, organized and directed the national revolution in 1821-1829 against a Turkish domination which had been weighing upon Greece since the fifteenth century. But the revolutionary struggle for national liberation came to an end, after seven years, with an enfeeblement and a great setback for the bourgeois class, exhausted and impoverished by the long war. On the other hand, the native feudal lords and the military chieftains, as well as the clergy, obtained, in exchange for "services" rendered the national struggle, the partitioned domains of the former Turkish pashas and beys. And it was these landholders who took the power into their hands, eliminating entirely the weakened bourgeoisie.

So, instead of the republic about which the representatives of the bourgeoisie dreamed under the influence of the French revolu-

tion—there came the absolute monarchy.

For a long period of time, the landholding elements were able to govern the country as its masters. But to the degree that industry developed, and commerce too, democratic bourgeois tendencies, weak at first, came to light and set themselves against the old parties of the landed property owners who were grouped around the royalty.

Starting with the opening of our century, the rise of the bourgeois class took on an increasingly accelerated rhythm. In the period from 1906 to 1909, the bourgeois offensive against the landed proprietors and the royal family extended in scope, with the slogan of "reconstruction of the state" and "reorganization of the national army".

The bourgeoisie demanded the power and it seized it by the *coup d'état* of Gudi (1909). Venizelos, its trusted agent, was brought to power without great struggles and from that moment onward he was to dominate the whole destiny of the Hellenic peninsula.

Having Venizelos as its political head, the Greek bourgeoisie prepared to lead the country into the Balkan wars of 1912-1913. These wars, which opened up a new period for Greece as well as for the whole of Europe, ended with a victory of the Greek army and the annexation of new regions, rich and economically well developed (Macedonia, Ægean Island, etc.).

But while they helped to amass fortunes for the Greek bourgeoisie, the Balkan wars also gave the royal family and the land-owning elements, who supply the greater part of the officers, a new authority. So much so that the struggle between the mercantile bourgeois class and the landed proprietors was revived.

This struggle took on a particularly acute form primarily during the great war. The bourgeois class was for participating on the side of the Entente (England, France and Russia); the monarchy, in the person of King Constantine, unable to swing Greece to the Central Empires (Germany, Austria), declared itself in favor of "neutrality". The Venizelist party (expressing the interests of the bourgeois class) came out on top.

In the course of the war of 1914-1918, Greek capitalism passed through a decisive stage of its evolution. Enormous profits were amassed, especially by the armaments men. New plants were set up. The total motor power of industry and manufacture, which stood at 1,887 horse-power in 1875 reached more than 110,000 horse-power in 1920. Two hundred thousand workers were engaged in industry. Parallel with this, the concentration of production made significant progress.

At the end of the great war, and under pressure from the threat of an uprising of the peasants returning from the trenches, the bourgeoisie proceeded to the expropriation of the big landed properties. And finally, the great historic match between "republican"

bourgeoisie and "monarchist" feudal lords, begun in 1821-1829, was decided by the removal from the throne of King Constantine. On March 25, 1924, the republic replaced the monarchy.

But the bourgeois class which, at the end of its triumph over feudal survivals and the landholders, had had to encourage a beginning of the labor movement so as to gain a support, was not long in perceiving that it had made a bad calculation.

The Greek proletariat, developing at the same time as capitalism, fought courageously against the bourgeoisie which, unable to exercise its dictatorship by means of democratic forms, found itself compelled to evolve rapidly towards the forms of open, reactionary dictatorship.

Venizelos, the "democrat", the "republican", hoisted the flag of anti-parliamentarism; he made himself the man of the anti-labor laws, the symbol of capitalist reaction (whence his identification with Fascism).

By virtue of this fact, the Venizelist party, weakened in the country by an anti-peasant policy, and in the city by an anti-labor policy, found itself weakened at the same time with regard to the monarchist elements and the old landed classes. In its turn, it was compelled to yield to the "royalist" uprisings, alternating with military *coups d'état* of the "republicans".

The Venizelist party, removed from power, was replaced by a government of the Right, from which emerged the present Tsaldaris cabinet, constituted mainly by monarchists.

Two facts surely contributed to precipitate the Venizelist insurrection of March 3: the recent "purge" undertaken by the Tsaldaris government in the ranks of the army (that is, the purging of the army of Venizelist officers), and the threat to dissolve the Senate, a majority of which still follows the party of the old Cretan politician.

By these two operations, the Venizelist party was threatened with being removed for a long time from the exercise of any power.

But is it really for the simple reason of being put on the "retired list" that Venizelos and his partisans decided to play the great game of arms? It is not this reason alone. It cannot be this reason alone.

Behind Venizelos, today as in 1909, as in 1916, as in 1924, stands

the bourgeois class, especially the big munitions men; whereas on the other side still stand the landed proprietors and the monarchist elements looking for revenge. The opposition of the islands, where the insurrection started, to the mainland, on which the "governmentals" rule, causes one to think of such a disposition of the forces.

The lesson which follows is by all means the same as can be drawn from the recent events in Spain: as in Spain, so in Greece, the bourgeoisie is powerless to carry out to the end the fight against feudal survivals and for the liberation of the oppressed nationalities (Macedonia, etc.). Only the proletariat, when it seizes power, is able by the same stroke to resolve: both the problems left unsolved by the past and the present problems engendered by the capitalist régime.

Where the working class is weak and impotent, like the Greek proletariat at the present stage, you have, as the *Manifesto* pointed out, chaos, the destruction of the nation.

The victory of either one of the two camps can only bring new misfortunes to Greece, accentuating the oppression and the exploitation of the laboring masses. Similarly, the victory of either of the two camps can only generate serious perturbations on the question of foreign policy.

It is known that the Tsaldaris government recently signed the Balkan Pact, embracing Greece, Yugoslavia, Rumania and Turkey. The axis of the Balkan pact passes through France, inspiring power behind the Little Entente. Against the Balkan Pact the Venizelist party has conducted a most active struggle, which, it is hard not to believe, was inspired by Rome (Mussolini) and by England.

That is why, as soon as the Venizelist insurrection broke out, Bulgaria (adversary of the Balkan Pact) on the one side, and Turkey (signatory of the Pact) on the other, mobilized troops on the Greek frontiers, while Italy, with France and England following suit, sent cruisers into the Ægean.

A new demonstration of the extreme precariousness of the present equilibrium, and of the striking reality of the danger of another world conflagration.

PARIS, March 8, 1935

J. P. MARTIN

☉ B O O K S ☉

History a la Carte

OUTLINE HISTORY OF THE C.P.S.U.
By N. Popov. 2 vols., 414+460 pp. New York. International Publishers. \$4.

The blurb on the cover states: "This the most authoritative book on the subject, was translated from . . . the *sixteenth* Russian edition." The publishers also recommend the book as "a systematic history".

N. Popov, the author (together with his publishers) have only a single authority and a single system: and that is *Stalinism*.

Popov is a Stalinist stooge; he dishes up history not in accordance with facts but according to Stalin's prescription. When Stalin-Yaroslavsky changes the prescription, all the big and little stooges change their history. The system, however, remains the same: falsification, vilification and abomination by omission and commis-

sion.

"The student of the works of Lenin and Stalin" has been served in English with the sixteenth edition. But he has not been told that it is the revised edition of a revised, revised, revised original edition.

Were even such a student as the publishers have in mind to compare the several revised editions, he might very readily be induced to take an oath that Popov was quintuplets, i.e., at least five historians, each using both hands and both feet at one and the same time to write not only in different languages, but with entirely different viewpoints, on utterly unrelated topics. He would also learn that these historical quintuplets have one thing in common. All the Popovs have neither regard nor occasion for history in general, or the history of the Bolshevik party in particular.

In his introduction to the *fourth* Russian edition of this "history" (Moscow, 1927),

Popov declared, "I do not belong to the school of jury-box historians, if only because I have *never had the occasion to occupy myself either with history in general or the history of the party in particular.*"

Is this modesty? Emphatically, no. These are Popov's credentials to guarantee his Master faithful service.

How else could Popov serve as the "most authoritative, and systematic"?

How else could Popov qualify himself to serve originally as lecturer on party history in the city of Kharkov, in the Artemovsk University, during the term of 1924-1925?

With ignorance as his diploma, and servility as his guide, Popov proceeded to instruct the youth in the "true principles of Leninism". After the lectures were read, they were "hastily got ready for publication". Why? "Because at that time, there was lacking [read: Stalinism was lacking] any sort [!] of adequate literature on the history of our party." (Introduction to the fourth edition.)

Thus, from the very outset, Popov's "lectures" served as a *text-book* in the Soviet schools. By 1929, eight monster editions were exhausted. But although the market improved, the requirements kept changing. Formulations "gave rise to misunderstand-

ings". From one edition to the next, Popov proceeded systematically to "render them more precise". (Introduction to the eighth ed.)

To illustrate the "system" and the "authoritativeness" of Popov, we shall briefly compare the text of the ninth revised Russian edition—with the text of the sixteenth revised English edition. One should imagine that by 1929, after the 15th party congress, after the expulsion of Trotsky, and the final "annihilation of Trotskyism", and after eight editions, Popov had arrived well-nigh to perfection in "rendering his formulations more precise". By 1929, "Trotskyism", as any authority on Stalinist history knows, had definitely been established as the "vanguard of counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie". But alas, even in 1929, Popov was not informed of the counter-revolutionary requirements for 1932.

Ninth edition-1929-Popov was still unaware that the "party" (read: Stalinism) held an absolutely 305% Leninist position before, after, and during Lenin's arrival from abroad in 1917.

In 1929, Popov thought it was 99.99¼% Leninist. He was so misinformed as to underscore the fact that after the overthrow of Czarism, "our organization was somewhat in a disrupted condition". Worse yet, he goes on to underscore that even after the February revolution the party line was somewhat distorted. And he explains it, in part, by the return to the party of a "considerable number of old members" who returned to the party "with the old moods of 1906-1907" and whose "moods could not fail to reflect upon the line of our party". (P. 212, Russian edition. Italics in the original.)

Still worse, even the line of the *Pravda* in 1917 did not at first "fully coincide with those views which were advanced by comrades Lenin and Zinoviev and others abroad, and it [*Pravda*] deviated to the side of revolutionary defensism and the support of the Provisional Government". (*Id.*, our italics.)

Popov then proceeded to quote what Kamenev wrote on March 15, 1917, and to comment upon it as follows: "Such language differs very little from the usual language of the social-patriots at that time". (P. 213, Russian ed.)

No mention is made of Stalin except to quote him *in support* of the above presentation. Not a word about his rôle, despite the fact that he, Stalin, was with Kamenev the editor of the *Pravda* in this period. Such was the historical "outline", in 1929, in the ninth "authoritative" edition.

Ah, but what an *improvement* in the sixteenth!

Was it as difficult for our party to regain its positions as Popov said it was in 1929? Nonsense, student of Lenin and Stalin, nonsense! Turn to page 351, vol. I, and read for your edification, facts Popov forgot in 1929: "In spite of severe repressive measures, the Bolshevik party developed intense activity. On the eve of the revolution the Russian Bureau of the Central Committee was quartered in Petrograd and consisted of Molotov, Shlyapnikov and Zalutsky." (What, no Stalin?) Everywhere were carried on "widespread and fairly [!] systematic activities".

True, things were not so very vigorous

and firm in the provinces. But that was due to the influx of "new workers into the party organizations; these were revolutionary-minded, but still without adequate political training. . . ."

Were there any deviations from the party line? Nonsense: "*The overwhelming majority of the party was opposed to rendering any sort of assistance to the Provisional Government.*"—And who led the fight? Stalin, of course. Against whom? "Against some 'elements . . . even among the leaders, who inclined towards defensism. . . . This was particularly true of Kamenev. . . ."

And again there follows the Kamenev quotation of March 15—but this time Popov has no comments to make. Instead he calls the attention of the students to an historical fact:

"Even before Lenin's return the Central Committee and the Petrograd committee were obliged [!] to call Kamenev to account." (P. 355, Vol. I.)

Where? when? in what documents? Silence.

Moreover, Popov no longer keeps mum about Stalin, but has quotations in full showing how the party, with Stalin at the head, fought the deviators "even before Lenin's return". We suddenly learn in the sixteenth edition that immediately upon his return from exile, Stalin "outlined a course directed towards the creation of a government of the Soviets".

A piece of news Popov was blissfully ignorant of in 1929. For, we repeat, he then quoted Stalin to prove how the best disciple of Lenin strove to correct "*the then incorrect tactic of the party*" (p. 214, Russian ed.).

The English edition, naturally, contains neither the "incorrect" quotation from Stalin nor Popov's "stupid" assertion that "Lenin's arrival aided the party to rid itself of these erroneous views, speedily and with comparative ease" (*idem*).

This scratches only the surface of the difference in treatment of this particular period in the two editions, not to mention the other editions. To do Popov justice, we would have to reprint his several editions in parallel columns. The reader has had a sufficient sample of the garbage Popov purveys, but let him bear in mind, even though his stomach may turn, that in this instance as well as *throughout* the whole book, Popov serves his Master with a colossal job of "rendering his formulations more precise".

But we cannot leave unmentioned one of Popov's most unskillful botchings. His "improved version" of the Brest-Litovsk episode in party history was vile enough to suit his taskmasters, in 1929. But even in that version, Popov admitted the following facts relating to the final vote in the Central Executive Committee on Lenin's motion to accept the terms of the German imperialists:

"Voting for this motion were seven members of the C.E.C. (Lenin, Smilga, Stalin, Vverdlov, Sokolnikov, Trotsky and Zinoviev); six voted against (Uritsky, Joffe, Lomov, Bukharin, Krestinsky and Dzhherzhinsky). *The majority of one was obtained as a result of the fact that Trotsky who up to then sided with the opponents of peace voted for Lenin's motion.*" (P. 235,

Russian ed.)

The Stalinist stooge had to admit, in a footnote, that it was Trotsky's vote that carried Lenin's motion. In 1929, the Stalinist falsifiers of history still proceeded "cautiously".

In the sixteenth edition Popov positively becomes lyrical describing:

LENIN'S FIGHT AGAINST TROTSKY . . . FOR THE CONCLUSION OF PEACE!

And, of course, it was Stalin who made possible the signing of the Brest-Litovsk treaty: ". . . a number of the Central Committee members HEADED BY COMRADE STALIN resolutely supported this [Lenin's] viewpoint." (P. 11, Vol. II, English ed.) And, of course, Popov forgot to mention it in 1929, or in any previous editions.

From the time the first edition appeared, it became obvious to Popov that his outline suffered from being overloaded with "second rate factual material, as well as several unessential facts concerning party history". Needless to say, the last edition does not contain a single fact relating to any "positive" aspects of Trotsky's revolutionary activity, which still survived in footnotes, and sneering comments of the ninth edition.

It is impossible to list the omissions, subtractions, additions, and multiplications. Suffice to mention that Bukharin in 1929 was still cautiously defended by Popov on "his" slogan: "Enrich yourself!" More remarkable still is Popov's original defense of the Chinese policy.

It is no joke being a Stalinist historian! Take the case of comrade Lozovsky. During the October Revolution this rather "well known" comrade, using Popov's language, disagreed very violently with the party line. Not only did he publish a letter in *Novaya zhizn* (the same paper in which Zinoviev's and Kamenev's statement appeared) disassociating himself from the party line, but he *left the party*, and returned only in 1919.

For some unknown reason, Popov thought that this was an important and a safe piece of historical information, and he proceeded to give it, in 1929 (p. 254, Russian ed.). But, in the sixteenth edition, Lozovsky is conspicuous by his absence. Having subtracted Lozovsky, Popov added comrade Teodorovitch to the list of "conciliators".

These mysterious appearances and disappearances turn the "outline" into a spiritualistic séance. Ghosts wander through the book—the maimed essence of Bolshevism wails from page to page, from edition to edition.

Every trace of Leninism is removed. Together with this ballast Popov threw out, first, all the programmatic documents he originally gave as a supplement, giving instead references at the end of each chapter. The sixteenth edition dispenses with these references, as well as others. The reader, if and when he is referred, finds only a *volume* given him, and a volume, thereto, of selected works. In return, however, Popov "tractates" more and more and more profusely "the opportunistic deviations from Bolshevism during the different periods of our party". As one proceeds from one edition to the next, the improvements become more and more self-evident, more and more authoritative, and more and more systematic.

In any case, and this is incontrovertible, were Popov's most apt pupil who conned the previous texts, to take his examination now, he would be promptly flunked, that is to say, reported by Popov himself as a counter-revolutionary renegade, vanguard of the imperialist bourgeoisie, the scum of reaction, etc., etc.

We close by sounding a warning to the students of the "works of Lenin and Stalin" to whom the International Publishers recommend this book: this is not the last authoritative "outline"—it still falls far short of the recent historical discoveries of Stalinism, and it will have to undergo further considerable "improvement".

J. G. WRIGHT.

A party and Its Book

SOCIALIZING OUR DEMOCRACY. By HARRY W. LAIDLER. 330+ x pp. New York. Harper & Bros. \$3.00.

It is polite, I imagine, to begin by noticing virtues. Of these, there are three that are considerable. In the first place, *Socializing Our Democracy* is a useful handbook for supplying material for lectures, popular essays, and conversation. Its analysis of contemporary United States capitalism is neither profound nor exhaustive. It does not pretend to compete with, for example, Lewis Corey's *The Decline of American Capitalism*. It does, however, bring together a variety of facts and statistics which, apart from any interpretation, are revealing. These cover such matters as income distribution, ownership, public enterprise, coöperatives, etc. There is nothing surprising, but it is well to have these things made concrete and specific. They demonstrate once more, and again conclusively, how ready the potential economic organization of this country is for socialism.

Second, Laidler must be praised for having in a single volume posed so many of the essential problems. These include not merely the usual questions involved in the seizure of power, the transfer of ownership, the nature of the workers' state. Laidler is especially interested in certain of the great issues that will confront the new society. He has chapters, for example, on "Incentives and a Socialized Society", "Guarantees of Security", "A New Political Structure", "The Family", etc. The chapter "Making Industry Pay under Socialism", though confused as usual by the failure to make a distinction between the period of working class dictatorship and the actual socialist society, is valuable, particularly in its survey of methods of accounting and management used in the Soviet Union.

It is true that discussion of issues of this kind is often no more than idle day-dreaming, the sign of a failure to face the revolutionary tasks of the day. In Laidler's case, this is to a large extent so. Nevertheless, they are real problems, and they will not be met successfully by the workers' state unless some preparation has been made. The discussion of them has likewise an agitational value in suggesting the kinds of achievement that will be possible under a workers' régime. Socialization of industry will not be gained by mere fiat of the revolutionary government, no matter how

politically powerful it may be in the initial stages. And it will not continue to hold power if its own ineptness in technical and administrative matters causes the breakdown of industry during the first years. The baffling intricacies of money and book-keeping will, unfortunately, remain to plague the workers' state long after the counter-revolution has been thoroughly suppressed.

The third virtue worth mentioning is Laidler's constant realization of the human and cultural problems involved in the revolution. He does well to include sections on education, art, recreation. We cannot be too often reminded that politics, too, is an undertaking of man.

So much for the virtues. They are, it will be noticed, the typical virtues of the enlightened social democrat. And they are amply, very amply, compensated by every one of the typical faults. Here is a socialist of some standing, a socialist with an accredited bourgeois Ph. D. to boot, writing with the experience of the war, the crisis, the N.R.A., the rise of Fascism, behind him. And what has he learned from these rich lessons of history? He has learned—and Laidler is a fair enough representative of official social democracy—precisely nothing. A review does not provide space enough for detailed analysis. I shall, however, list briefly a few of the more glaring indications:

1. On the question of war, the question now imminently confronting the working class of the world, Laidler has . . . nothing whatever to say. Apparently war is not a serious problem for the revolutionary movement. The fight for socialism can be planned quite independently of war. If war comes, it will be, no doubt, an "exceptional event", and we will then decide what to do about it. The omission is not accidental. The war of 1914-1918 was also an "exceptional event", not allowed for in the progress toward socialism. And we know what social democracy did about it.

2. The Soviet Union is many times referred to in this book. In the discussions of the problems that will confront the new "coöperative" (the currently favorite socialist adjective) society, the experience of the Soviet Union is heavily drawn on. This is as it should be; and the Soviet Union should always be looked at by Marxists as the central laboratory of revolutionary experience. But not once does Laidler touch on a single fundamental issue involved in Soviet policy and practise. It is not that he presents incorrect views on these matters; he presents no views on them at all. Of course, this in itself is, in the long run, a view, and a fatal one.

3. In spite of occasional parentheses to the contrary, Laidler systematically confuses the distinction between "public ownership" under capitalism and socialized ownership under a workers' state. This, too, is not accidental. By the confusion, the gradualist, reformist notion of the transition to a socialist society is reinforced. Socialist society is made to appear merely the quantitative extension of the "public ownership" features of capitalist society, instead of a qualitatively new form of society, in which public ownership as we know it as well as private ownership will be radically changed in kind.

4. I have already mentioned the failure to distinguish between the period of working class dictatorship and the socialist society. Since, however, Laidler is against "dictatorships" of all kinds, and in favor of "democracy"—without, of course, making any critical distinctions between kinds of dictatorship and kinds of democracy—this is hardly surprising.

5. This last matter is closely linked to Laidler's treatment of the subject—so fragile in the hands of a social democrat—of the conquest of power. It is here that we see the fine flower of neo-socialist Centrism. After Germany, Austria and Spain, the old-fashioned simple reformism won't quite do. It must be dressed up in new ambiguities and equivocations, new brave talk about what the socialist government would do if, once in power, the electorally defeated capitalists should take up a counter-revolutionary offensive (which, Laidler hastens to assure us, is most unlikely in this country, where the capitalists are intelligent and will see that they have no chance). Even the verbal possibility that some crisis (war, Fascism) might force the socialists to take power even though they did not hold an electoral majority, must now be "conceded". But the real juice of the doctrine comes out in the final paragraph from Chapter V: "Thus, while it is impossible to prophesy with certainty whether the change from capitalism to socialism will be a peaceful or a violent one, there are many forces at work which point to a genuine possibility of peaceful change in this country, and the revolutionary movement should strive with might and main to make this possibility an increasing probability as time goes on." (My italics. J. W.)

What does this last phrase actually mean when translated into the language of politics? It means exactly this: ". . . and the revolutionary movement should strive with might and main to prevent the workers from taking steps to defend and advance their rights, it must be sure to keep them from ever possessing the means for gaining power, it must carefully deceive them about the nature of their struggle, it must tie them up to hand them 'peacefully' over to Fascism; and if it does let them fight, as in Austria or Spain, it must be certain that they fight when it is too late, when their cause is already lost, and when the only possible result will be the bloody, useless sacrifice of its finest members."

Socializing Our Democracy, in short should be made a compulsory text for all those, within the socialist parties or outside them, who are now busy spinning illusions about what may be expected from the author of this book and his political companions.

J. W.

Toiler's Tale

A WORLD TO WIN. By JACK CONROY. 350 pp. New York. Covici-Friede. \$2.50.

A sturdy novel, a challenge to workers and intellectuals to join the revolutionary movement, Jack Conroy's second book is an important addition to the swiftly growing body of revolutionary literature.

Even though it lacks the powerful impact of *The Disinherited*, one of the most

significant proletarian novels of contemporary American literature, *A World to Win* again reveals Conroy's ability to portray pungently and with passion the misery of the working class in this decaying society. Conroy, thirty-six year old worker-farmer of Moberly, Mississippi, well-known novelist and winner of a Guggenheim fellowship, not only knows the workers' world but is able to portray it.

For a worker to read this book is to relive his own brutal experiences. There is the strike, vividly, tersely described, the picture of Monty Cass, coal worker, driven insane by society after he kills a scab, the story of a hungry family doomed to support another unwanted child. These chapters—so bold and so graphic—alone would justify the book. Unfortunately, they force the plot into a secondary position and relegate the main characters to the background.

The story concerns itself with the lives of Robert (son of Martha, a frustrated intellectual, and Terry, a rough vagabond), and Leo, his half-brother (born to Terry and his first wife). Robert is moulded to fit his mother's unrealized dreams and to pursue a writing career. Leo, made in Terry's image, early chooses to live by his hands. The misunderstandings between the two, their futile journeys in search of security in this uncertain era, their bitter experiences, and the final resolution in the revolutionary movement, which brings them common understanding, form the plot.

It is a sketchy plot—yet less spotty and disjointed than *The Disinherited*, and this improvement in technique is an excellent gauge of Conroy as an artist, and of his future promise. It indicates his sincere effort to better himself so that he can be of greater use to the revolutionary movement, a feeling inherent in him because of his many years as a conscious fighter in the class struggle. For Conroy, both in his writings and in his life has but one driving force, one central idea which distinguishes him from many so-called proletarian writers, and which makes him worthy of special consideration. Conroy desires one thing only: to persuade and inspire all his readers to join consciously in the revolutionary movement.

A lusty sense of humor and a healthy, natural outlook on sex, characteristics too often lacking in our writers, are of great importance to the book. But above all, the continual probing into every detail of workers' miseries, the constant demand for frank, unadulterated truth, the desire to know and write all, give promise of Conroy's future as a revolutionary writer.

Conroy is a worker with the rare faculty of recapturing the essence of his experiences—as an exploited coal miner, as an almost broken down bum (his hobo camp scene lives in the reader's mind long after he has finished the book). His life has been rich in the experiences of the class struggle and this is his material. For five years he wrote at night under the flickering light of a kerosene lamp, after he had worked for long, gruelling hours in a shoe factory and hoed a garden to provide potatoes for his family. He wrote thousands of words while his body cried for sleep, and hunger taunted him. These things must be remembered in judging the man and his book.

Jack WILSON

In Search of Diana

PUZZLED AMERICA. By SHERWOOD ANDERSON. 287 pp. New York. Charles Scribner's Sons. \$2.50.

It is important that books of this kind should be written. It is unfortunate that this particular book is not better in its kind.

Puzzled America is an assembly of sketches, "attempts at pictures of America now . . . the result of a good deal of wandering about". In such attempts the artist, if he is sensitive, honest, impersonal, can tell us much that we need to know. He can disclose states of mind, attitudes, conscious responses that individuals and even masses are making to the developing social process.

To a limited, a very limited, extent Anderson accomplishes such a disclosure. In oddly assorted impressions of persons he met in the South and the Middle West, he shows the unstable, directionless mood that now possesses the country. He finds this mood variously reflected in miners, small business men, union textile workers, farmers, the unemployed. And, as we read on, the mood becomes more closely defined: it is not hopeless, but confused; it is not exhausted, but rather waiting; it is neither conservative nor revolutionary, but so far without formulated goal or aim.

Without making the mistake of overestimating psychological factors, it should be understood that such a mood is critical in a very real sense. It is critical because it cannot last for an length of time. It must find directions and set itself goals. This is the momentous decision; and, particularly for the middle classes, the decision will be determined in part at least by the clarity and strength with which the conscious social forces—the revolutionary party and the parties of reaction—formulate a direction and a goal. We complain sometimes that the long years of the depression have failed to "radicalize the American masses" to the degree that might have been expected. But if it is true that this mood has now been widely attained; if it is true that Americans are finished with their four years of looking back to pre-1929 and are rapidly ending their two-year illusions of the milk and honey of the New Deal, then the depression has done its share. We cannot leave the whole job to history.

But Anderson has not limited himself to a recording of this mood. In earlier days Anderson systematically distorted the impressions he received through an odd sexual lens. In middle age he is abandoning sex for "the social problem". I should be the last to maintain that a correct social position can make a man a good writer. But it is nevertheless true that a false social position can, at the present time, prevent a man from writing well, particularly if he tries to make social matters part of the content of his writing. This Anderson does; and we find *Puzzled America* shot through with what might be called social sentimentality, just as his earlier books were clouded by a special kind of sexual sentimentality. Let us hope that it is this, and not an impersonal reflection of the mood he is describing, that accounts for the emergence of the C.C.C., Rush Holt and Floyd Olson as the heroes of his book.

J. W.

Anderson's Dilemma

COLLECTED POEMS: 1929-1933: A Hope for Poetry. By C. DAY LEWIS. 256 pp. New York. Random House. \$2.50.

It has become more or less the rule that an infraction of literary discipline by a member of the "group", such as an aptitude on the part of one for saying something clear, will meet with hostility from those other members who perform literary operations, major and minor, each week or each month in the literary periodicals moving toward the *Left*. However, in Lewis we do not have such a hardy venturer in prose; he has assembled in his essay "A Hope for Poetry" some badly digested scholarship on communism, many obvious truths and untruths, overstatements and nonsense. His choice has been his own. He gives advice for poetical scholarship and the following laws must be observed: the lyric is *pure poetry* and cannot deal with other than those *elements* that give to it that *purity*; "The poet's chief aim, then, is to communicate not the exact detail of an experience, but its tone and rhythm." "We may be insensitive to the first effect of a poem, it's pure communication, yet be interested by something else in it." The implications are readily seen, the marriage of Art to Propaganda is now being granted its divorce papers and each can go its way; propaganda has been too steadily infringing and cannot be disciplined; therefore a sense of purity must be established. There has been propaganda but no art, or bad art and thus worse propaganda; now the thing to do is to grow lyrical, and in lyricism, according to Lewis, one is scot free to tickle the clouds for rain and not get wet. A further idea is developed: the sprouting buds of modern poetry, meaning none other than Auden, Spender, Lewis, MacNeice, Charles Madge, etc., were first sown into the soil by Wilfred Owen, the poet killed in France in 1918, who left as a heritage such powerful lines as:

"Whose world is but the trembling of a flare,

"And heaven but as the highway for a shell . . ."

Lewis develops the following idea. Gerald Manley Hopkins, the innovator and experimentalist in poetry, a Jesuit, was the Father; to Owen's is given the task of remaining a Holy Ghost; and to T. S. Eliot the lot of the Son. Owen was slaughtered in 1918, the year that Hopkins' poems were first published in book form. Though Hopkins died in 1899, an affinity is established by some ardent writing. The essay contains many valuable illustrations of this affinity, the liege line being Hopkins to Eliot (for technique) and to Owen for the nerve centers of the body poetry. There is however in practise but one sad mistake; despite all the praise that has been showered on Auden as a satirist, he is rendered null and void—for all his brilliance—and Lewis is included; they seldom equal the clarity and beauty of the stirring poems that Owen wrote in the trenches. Spender is excepted, he has more of the tradition, of that irony and bitterness, and is not spoiled by the scholarly attitude of the caustic pedants. The preface that Lewis has taken as his inheritance from Owen is: "This book is not about

heroes. English poetry is not yet fit to speak of them. Nor is it about deeds or lands, nor anything about glory, honor, dominion or power, except War." Lewis and Auden have generally made a mockery of this testament, the power of insurrectionary images, the rising tones, the anger and emotional participation, does not exist for them, but there is a great deal of cleverness in Lewis, to wit,

"Those Himalayas of the mind
"Are not so easily possessed:
"There's more than precipice and storm
"Between you and your Everest."

The opening "Transitional Poem" which pursues a phantom of intellectual single-mindedness, which for definition rests on the following four phases of experience; metaphysical, ethical, psychological and—the experience as a whole fused with the poetic impulse. The poem itself failing to arrive at any conclusion or definiteness is forced to include an index of references, from Deuteronomy, Spinoza, Wyndham Lewis and Sophie Tucker, her contribution being, "There are going to be some changes made today."

There are some fine lines, some forceful bantering and some excellent wines are served up—for headaches, but these come after the headaches:

"Oh subterranean fires, break out!
"Tornadoes, pity not
"The petty bourgeois of the soul,
"The middleman of God!
"Who ruins farm and factory
"To keep a private mansion
"Is a bad landlord, he shall get
"No honourable mention."

There is a wealth of poetry here, a horrible confusion however exists which cannot translate its powers to the average reader, because of the preoccupation that Lewis has with the problem of technique. His search for forms endangers the merits of his poetry. Auden and Lewis could well learn from Eliot that a certain pose and nobility of line is not enough, a lofty-reaching rhythm is not to be feared, but it must be invested with no sundry digressions. The form is not essentially the poem, but the poem makes the form, and clarity above all else has its own forms.

Harry ROSKOLENKIER

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The Press

THE STALIN-LAVAL DECLARATION

WE SELECT here some of the opinions expressed by the French press on the Stalin-Laval communiqué issued on the signing of the Franco-Soviet pact, in which it is underlined that "M. Stalin understands and fully approves" the French policy of national defense.

In the Communist party organ, *l'Humanité* (May 17), M. Vaillant-Couturier writes: "The communist party is a young, realistic, honest party, a government party which has already conquered by its methods a sixth of the globe with the U.S.S.R., a fourth of China and which, in France, has just considerably increased its prestige by its successes and those of the Popular Front. We have a well-defined conception of international class defense and we apply it in deeds. . . . That our comrade Stalin, solicited by Laval whom he received in the presence of members of the government, should state that he approved of the military measures taken in France—what is more natural than that? Should he have made a declaration of disapproval? That's not serious. . . . What is of capital importance is that the interview produced concrete results for the defense of the policy of peace of the U.S.S.R."

The patriotic *Ere Nouvelle* (May 16), organ of M. Herriot, observes: "Will they cease that detestable campaign which takes place to the cries of 'Down with the two years'?' Will they still pretend not to understand that the measures of security taken by France to cover the deficit of used-up classes are one of the prime conditions of the maintenance of peace? M. Stalin, secretary of the Communist party of Russia—he understands it."

La République (May 17) points out: "M. Stalin thus understands what M. Cachin has understood poorly, what M. Blum has not understood at all. It's simply because M. Stalin is, perhaps, no politician, above all not a bourgeois politician, but he is an artist in socialism, a doctor in *ex-revolution*, a hard revolutionist, one who recalls having thrown several bombs in the streets of Tiflis at a carriage escorted by Cossacks—something M. Blum has never done and never will do."

The semi-official *Temps* (May 17) hails the personal victory of M. Laval who, it asserts, "has succeeded in making prevail to the very end the conception of the government of the republic both with regard to the actual scope of the pact of mutual assistance and with regard to the character of the coöperation of France and the Soviet Union. . . . It [the declaration of Stalin] implies the categorical condemnation of the anti-militarist and revolutionary activities by which the attempt is made to weaken the national defense of France."

The next day (May 18) the same newspaper remarks: "Let us leave the French communists in the comical situation in which the Moscow 'comuniqué' puts them.

Let them endeavor to reconcile the irreconcilable, to harmonize patriotism and the necessity of 'preserving all the material and cultural wealth of the country' until the revolution, with the defeatism which they have professed until now and which they still boast of professing. It is the business of the government, without needing, moreover, to refer to M. Stalin's words, to have the law respected, to prevent the sabotage of national defense which the communist party claims to continue."

The noted reactionary publicist Pertinax writes in the *Echo de Paris* (May 16): "It is M. Stalin in person who is intervening to redress the doctrine of the French communists. The point is important for two reasons. First, Moscow officially repudiates its followers in western Europe and nothing remains for the government but to bring up short the propagandists of pacifism, if it has the courage to do so."

M. Marcel Lucain writes in the same paper (May 17): "Nobody in the Bolshevik and Marxist circles expected this douche."

The organ of the reformist trade unions, *Le Peuple* (May 17), writes with pious disregard of its own position in 1914 (and today!): "The truth is that Laval, faithful to the promises made by him to the French bourgeoisie, has succeeded perfectly, with the priceless support of Stalin, in putting a noose around the French Communist party. Fully applicable here are the instructions of Bukharin who declared in 1925, in the *Bulletin Communiste*: 'In every country which concludes an alliance with Russia, the proletariat has the duty of concluding a truce with the bourgeoisie, and in case of war, the duty of all the revolutionists of the whole world is to support the Bolshevik-bourgeois bloc.' What remains now is that Mussolini, Weygand, Laval and Stalin are in agreement to affirm publicly that the security of the peoples rests in the first instance on the quality of their army. It is in the name of this revolutionary policy that the French proletariat will be invited one of these days to don the uniform for the common defense of the privileges of the French bourgeoisie and of the Russian bureaucracy."

The social-patriot of 1914, M. Léon Blum writes in the socialist paper *Populaire* (May 18): "For our part, we do not feel ourselves shaken. I believe I am able to affirm that the socialist party will not deviate from its traditional line, that it will retain the same attitude towards the government and its so-called policy of national defense, that it will continue to carry on the same action on the international problems. . . . [Recalling the debate on prolonging the army service to two years:] So clear a difference of opinion, it is recalled, embarrassed and retarded the organization of a joint action against the two years. If the slogan of Stalin is carried out, communists and socialists will find themselves faced with the exactly opposite difficulty. Such is the theoretical conflict. But far from becoming an obstacle to unity, it will hasten it, on the contrary, if we succeed in persuading the mass of the workers that it can be resolved only within unity itself. Organic unity first of all. Then the reunified party will be able, freely and in a sovereign manner, to establish its doctrine."

At Home

AGAIN WE were obliged to skip an issue. In addition to our severe financial difficulties an unfortunate breakdown occurred in the printshop, causing further delay. This intended June issue therefore carries the July date. But we pledge solemnly that this will positively be the last omission. It is possible for us to make this pledge in view of the encouragement received from the large number of friends that our magazine has established during its period of existence. We feel we can count on these friends to continue their magnificent support and help us make good our pledge.

Comrade Konikow sent us here regular contribution for June and July. Comrade A. F. Remus forwarded six dollars from Michigan as an initial payment on his pledge. He wrote to us: "According to the last issue of THE NEW INTERNATIONAL if the Stalinists gum up the struggle in France it will fall to America to produce a real successful movement as the European will have failed to measure up to the task for the time being. Much of the tactics advocated for French labor by the 'Trotskyist' organization there will have considerable meaning for our movement also when the Fascist bands, now in their embryonic stage, mature. It will be necessary to build physical defense organs to protect the labor unions. The last issue of THE NEW INTERNATIONAL contained much meat."

Naturally we have received also a number of anxious inquiries for the missing June issue. Most of them come from Workers Party branches and from regular bundle agents. But it is necessary to remind them that at least 90% of our difficulties would disappear the minute they make up their mind to settle promptly for each issue as it is disposed of. That is far from being the case today and we are in deadly earnest when we say that from now on we shall show that we mean business, but we expect exactly the same from you.

There are some exceptions to the generally bad rule of laxity. Most of the bundle agents abroad, who by the way always receive their supply only after a considerable delay, are among the most prompt when the time for remittance is due. The comrades from South Africa are setting the best example in this respect and on a whole such response has enabled us to build up a large foreign circulation. In the United States our circulation shows some steady progress, but not at all what it could be, and should be. The comrades in San Francisco have again managed to increase their sales and now dispose of a regular supply of 75 copies. Comrade Dahlstrom says that several of these are now being sold on newsstands in the city. A comrade in Fresno, Calif. begins with a small bundle of 5 copies and we have similar news from San Diego, Calif. The party branches in Minneapolis and Akron, Ohio disposed of extra supplies of the last issue.

From the Coöperative News Agency, operating in several states we have received requests for sample copies to be mailed to a number of prospective agents and subscribers. We, of course, complied. The sample copies were sent out and now we are waiting for the response. But our combination offer of a yearly subscription for THE NEW INTERNATIONAL and the *New Militant* both

for \$2.00 has so far proved the most successful promotion work undertaken. A rather substantial number of new subscribers has been entered on our list in this manner. This offer is still good, that is until the *New Militant* becomes an eight-page weekly. Then there will have to be a change of price for this combination offer. Meanwhile we can only urge the occasional reader to avail himself of the opportunity

and become a subscriber at the present easy rate.

In telling this little story of the manager's grief and difficulties we deliberately refrain from quoting the many encouraging messages we have received, not to speak of the praise for the magazine.

THE MANAGER.

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