

# **THE NEW INTERNATIONAL**

**A MONTHLY ORGAN OF REVOLUTIONARY MARXISM**

---

## **The 'War Deal'**

*By The Editors*

### **Where Is the P. S. O. P. Going?**

*Correspondence Between Leon Trotsky, Marceau  
Pivert, and Daniel Guerin*

### **The Economics of Cotton Farming**

*By Jerry Pytlak*

### **The 'Crisis in Marxism'**

*Reviews of Books by C. L. R. James, Lewis  
Mumford, and James Rorty*

## At Home

FOR the first time in 16 months it became necessary to curtail the number of copies sent abroad. This was caused primarily by delinquency in payments of a few important domestic accounts. We hope that full shipments abroad can be resumed soon.

However, results during the month of March, set aside by the Party for holding affairs for the benefit of the Sustaining Fund of THE NEW INTERNATIONAL, were extremely poor; flop is the proper word. A few more of the smaller Branches held such parties, with varying outcome. Lynn, Mass., S.W.P. did very well, its social netting \$21.27 for the magazine, as did Washington, D.C., with \$7.00; Akron's social netted \$4.45; Rochester, N.Y., \$5.35; Quakertown, Pa., \$1.50. Nationally, less than \$100.00 accrued to the magazine from affairs. Very few were held, as the reports show. The large cities just passed the special N.I. month by with divers reasons given. It appears, due to various causes, that THE NEW INTERNATIONAL will have to sink or swim on the waters of circulation, general sales and, above all, subscriptions. Can this be accomplished, as has been the case till now? We think it must; since the loss of our theoretical organ is surely unthinkable to all Fourth International supporters and sympathizers. With all this in mind, we continue to take up the work and attitude of the larger cities toward THE NEW INTERNATIONAL.

Of all cities, Local Los Angeles has acted the most carelessly, and for a long period of time. On various occasions in the past it has been necessary to inform the Los Angeles organization that unless it took the matter of *all our press*, including THE NEW INTERNATIONAL, more seriously, our publications would not be sent there. The Los Angeles organization has, all too often, just gone blithely on, assuming apparently that it need not pay its bills to THE NEW INTERNATIONAL, *Socialist Appeal*, *Challenge*, etc. Los Angeles, more than any other city, has "contributed" to the financial crises of our press. But that day is ended; and Los Angeles has been impressed with the need to act like grown-ups toward the press, even as it conducts itself splendidly in other fields of work, and is now taking the necessary positive measures for betterment.

There have been numerous changes of literature agents there, but John Murphy has

<h1>THE NEW INTERNATIONAL</h1> <h2>A Monthly Organ of Revolutionary Marxism</h2>		
Volume V	May 1939	Number 5 (Whole No. 32)
<small>Published monthly by the New International Publishing Company, 116 University Place, New York, N. Y. Telephone: ALgonquin 4-8547. Subscription rates: \$2.00 per year; bundles: 14c for 5 copies and up. Canada and Foreign: \$2.50 per year; bundles 16c for 5 copies and up. Entered as second-class matter December 9, 1937, at the post office at New York, N. Y., under the act of March 3, 1879.</small>		
<b>Editorial Board: JAMES BURNHAM, MAX SHACHTMAN</b> <b>Business Manager: MARTIN ABERN</b>		
TABLE OF CONTENTS		
The Editor's Comment .....		131
Once Again on the "Crisis of Marxism", by T.....		133
Where Is the P.S.O.P. Going?		
Leon Trotsky to Marceau Pivert.....		134
Pivert Answers Trotsky .....		135
Letter to a Friend in France.....		136
Daniel Guérin to Leon Trotsky.....		138
Centrism and the Fourth International.....		139
"Learn to Work in the Stalinist Manner", by Alpha		143
The Economics of Cotton Farming—II, by Jerry Pytlak .....		144
The International of Universal Chauvinism, by Jacques Detil .....		147
Wars—Defensive and Aggressive, by Gregory Zinoviev .....		148
Reading from Left to Right, by Dwight Macdonald		153
BOOKS:		
Revolution, Black and White, by George E. Novack		155
"Socialized Medicine", by Paul Luttinger.....		155
War—Mad Liberal, by Felix Morrow.....		156
CORRESPONDENCE:		
The Irish Question, by Sherman Stanley.....		157
Hospitalization Plan, by Janet Daniel.....		158
Inside Front Cover: At Home		

again been assigned to the Literature Department, and in the past he has acted very responsibly. The Los Angeles S.W.P. and Y.P.S.L. organization is among the larger bodies numerically of our movement. However, the bundle order is down to the figure of 135 copies for both the Party and Youth organizations. With less than 25 subscribers in Hollywood and Los Angeles to compensate for this bundle order, Los Angeles can be said to be rather *down the list* of magazine circulation. Coupled too often with non-payment of bills, there is legitimate grievance in the National Office with Los Angeles in this respect. This situation can and has to be remedied *swiftly*. A concerted Subscription Drive by the Party and Y.P.S.L. members can quadruple the quantity of subscribers in L. A. In the 1934-1936 period of the magazine, Los Angeles had *more than twice* the number of subscribers that it has now. "Objective factors" is too easy an excuse to explain the low number of subscribers. The *subjective* factor is the reason, and also *the answer*. That means for

the Los Angeles Party and Youth Executive Committees to organize and develop a systematic subscription campaign. Los Angeles knows *how*; go to it and make a success of a subscription drive!

At the same time, through the medium of covering public meetings, unions, open air gatherings, contacts, etc., in a regular manner, the *bundle circulation* can unquestionably easily be sharply increased. It is unlikely that the Los Angeles Party and Youth comrades will permit, for as much as an issue longer, the magazine bundle order to remain at the figure of 135 copies. Comrade Murphy writes in a manner which makes clear that he is serious about the task of building THE NEW INTERNATIONAL circulation. We hope and expect the Los Angeles members to join in full and active cooperation. An important start to improve matters has been made with the Dance scheduled for April 29 for THE NEW INTERNATIONAL, and excellent circulars issued to promote circulation; plus a payment on account just received.

NEW ORDERS: Winnipeg,

Canada, 6 copies. Berkeley, Cal. S.W.P., C. S., agent, 10 copies. Pioneer Book Shop, London, England, 24 copies. New Brunswick, N.J., M. Meyers, agent, 8 copies. Newark, N. J. Y.P. S.L. (Newark University), 10 copies. New Castle, Pa., O. M., agent, 5 copies. Havana, Cuba, 5 copies.

INCREASES IN BUNDLE ORDERS: Rochester, N. Y., James Brown, agent, from 15 to 25 copies. Rochester has been steadily going forward. Washington, D. C., Nick O., agent, from 5 to 8 copies. San Francisco, Cal., Bill F., new agent, from 60 to 75 copies. Fresno, Cal., Eugene Mc., agent, from 8 to 10 copies.

DECREASES IN BUNDLE ORDERS: Detroit, Mich., from 50 to 35—expect to go up again soon; St. Louis, Mo., from 40 to 25; have pretty good subscription lists to compensate; Cleveland, Ohio, from 40 to 25: a weak spot due to specific causes; San Diego, from 8 to 5—two members at large there; Chicago, from 240 to 190; can easily pick up again, we think, both bundle order and subscriptions. Oakland, Cal., from 30 to 15; East Oakland, Cal., from 15 to 10.

Some locals and agents, both in the United States and abroad, are being eliminated — unless improvement takes place. These will be dealt with probably in the next "At Home" column. By and large, therefore, the circulation of the magazine stayed at its customary level, but there is every reason to expect *net increased* circulation of both bundles and subscriptions.

Subscriptions during March improved considerably; the bulk of these subscriptions were *renewals*, and of the latter there are still more than two hundred renewals pending. Agents, get going after the renewals at once! Most of these subscriptions were from New York and Minneapolis.

NEW AGENTS: Bernard George, Columbus; Carmen Mikosz, Toledo; L. A. Maroney, Melbourne, Australia; M. W., Houston, Texas.

The Boston agent, John Tabor, writes: "Many people state that THE NEW INTERNATIONAL . . . is a great magazine on international topics," and from Copenhagen, Denmark, we are told: "An excellent magazine, full of information and brilliant articles and interesting discussions. It is the *best revolutionary magazine* we know."

All of which leads us to conclude that it may not be easy, but *entirely possible*, to increase the circulation in the United States by at least 1,000 more within the next six months. Our agents and comrades know *how* to achieve this goal. On your mark. Let's go! THE MANAGER

# THE NEW INTERNATIONAL

A MONTHLY ORGAN OF REVOLUTIONARY MARXISM

VOLUME V

MAY 1939

NO. 5

## The Editor's Comment

### The Director of the "War Deal" Is President Roosevelt Who, After His Inevitable Failure to Resolve the Problems of American Capitalism's Gigantic Crisis on an "Internal" Basis, Turned to an "External" Solution Which Means an Aggressive Participation in the Coming Battle of World Gangsters

**WE** HAVE AT NO TIME called Franklin Roosevelt either a socialist or a fascist. We use political and economic terms not as epithets of praise or abuse, but as scientific descriptions. Nor did we ever say that the New Deal was the beginning of fascism or communism in the United States. We have consistently explained Roosevelt and his New Deal for what they actually are. In 1933 U.S. capitalism was caught in a gigantic crisis. Even a total collapse, as the banking shutdown proved, was not excluded. Roosevelt, a shrewd, demagogic, stream-lined liberal-bourgeois politician, sailed into office with his New Deal with the aim of bringing U.S. capitalism back to life, of saving it and its profits from destruction, of "making it work", as he himself expressed it. He and his New Deal tried to do this chiefly through four means: huge governmental expenditures; governmental controls to reduce somewhat the competitive anarchy in business; open and disguised governmental subsidies to agriculture; and certain social concessions to the workers designed, from one point of view, to help lift purchasing power for the benefit of business, but more particularly to reconcile the workers to the continuance of the profit régime and the Roosevelt administration.

Of this program, we said from the beginning two things: We maintained, first, that even in its aim of making U.S. capitalism work it would not succeed. We held that U.S. capitalism, in common with capitalism internationally, had entered a period not of episodic but of general decline, and that the New Deal was incapable of arresting the fall. The prosperity and progress of capitalism depend upon the opening up of new opportunities for capital accumulation, new fields of investment, and the governmental expenditures would not be able to make good the gap left by the drying up of such new fields. Cyclical upturns would prove more uneven and of shorter duration than in the past. A large percentage of the vast army of the unemployed could not be re-integrated into the decayed "private" industry.

In the light of the impossibility of the re-consolidation of U.S. capitalism on the basis of primarily internal measures, we concluded that, as time went on and this impossibility became apparent, U.S. capitalism and Roosevelt as its state administrator would be compelled to seek

an "external" solution, would turn to aggressive imperialist war as the only means left for "making U.S. capitalism work".

Second, we held that the concessions to the workers would turn out to be far less in the flesh than in promise, that they would be only shadows when compared with the very substantial gifts to big business, that they would not greatly lift the level of life of the workers as a whole, employed and unemployed, and that, most important of all, what concessions were made would be soon enough withdrawn under pressure of the continuing crisis. Here, also, Roosevelt, as the possibility for social concessions slipped away, would be forced to turn to the war.

We were, of course, correct in our analysis.

### *Happy Days that Almost Came*

IN THE EARLY DAYS, we were almost alone in our estimate. We are not so much concerned here with big business, which welcomed Roosevelt as a savior for the first two years (an attitude which business has resolutely forgotten) and then in part, for reasons of its own, turned against him. The liberals, reformists, labor bureaucrats, and later the Communist Party set themselves the task of selling Roosevelt and the New Deal to the people, in particular to the workers. They became, unofficially and often officially, part of the Roosevelt machine. They joined hands with Roosevelt "to make U. S. capitalism work".

Not many of the workers believed us. This skepticism was not due merely to the modest size of our own organization or to our lack of propagandistic skill. It was partly caused by precisely the efforts of those numerous and powerful reformist agents of Roosevelt among the workers, who were believed by the workers. But they, in turn, were enabled to engineer their deception so widely and so successfully because during the first five years Roosevelt and the New Deal did, in truth, make a number of concessions, some important concessions even, to the workers.

Unemployment was not ended, but through the centralization of relief in the Federal government, and the work project programs, the condition of the unemployed was sensibly raised from the Hoover level. The trade unions did not grow to include the majority of the workers, but Section 7A of the N.R.A. and the Wagner Act did aid in

an unprecedented wave of labor organization which in a number of industries resulted in improved wage and working conditions. The T.V.A. was spectacular, and improved the lot of many workers and poor farmers in the Tennessee valley. Twenty-five cents an hour is not much to grow fat on, but even so miserable a level for a Wages and Hours Act meant more money for several hundred thousand workers. Pensions, maternity care, and unemployment insurance are a long way from being provided for by the Social Security Act, but the Act at any rate is more than nothing.

Above all, the largesse of the New Deal was accompanied by promises, golden, ample, shimmering promises. Most men are normally, it seems, trusting optimists. They can live for some while on promises alone. And when the promises are joined by even a little, tantalizing taste of the fruit to come, men are pushovers. Roosevelt and the New Deal gave enough, just enough, to make their promises seem like more than wind. And the workers, like too trusting creditors of a near-bankrupt, fell for them.

The reformists and the labor bureaucrats were able to say: Look at the New Deal program, there's a people's program for you. And it means business, doesn't it? Look what's been done already. And that's just a little, a tiny fraction of what is to come. It's twenty-five cents minimum now; but it will soon be forty, and then we'll get it up to a dollar. Relief is low, but it's higher than Hoover, and soon we'll all have jobs. Unemployment insurance is only a few dollars for a couple of months now, but after all that's something, you can't do everything at once, and in three or four more years it will be permanent, and high enough to live on. And even if all of it doesn't yet add up to much when you put down the cold figures, remember the Republican bogeyman who will get you if you aren't good New Dealers.

That is how it was done. And it worked. It was ninety percent demagoguery that sold the New Deal to the workers. We understood that, and tried to explain it. But so long as ten percent of the genuine article remained, the consumer bought, and paid with his political allegiance.

### ***Gone Are the Snows of Yesteryear***

THIS IS HOW THINGS WERE. They are not the same anymore. The ten percent, that quintessential ten percent, has vanished. The substance of the New Deal, never very weighty, has gone, and only its demagoguery remains. The New Deal, except as occasional words on the lips of Roosevelt and Lewis and Browder, has finished. It has been replaced by the War Deal, which is also a deal of social reaction.

This is not yet clear to the workers, but it is a fact, an enormously important fact, and it must be made clear. We, as a result of our Marxian analysis, opposed the New Deal from its beginning to its end. But let us grant, for a moment, that we were mistaken; that it was an "experiment" worth trying. Very well. The experiment is now over, absolutely, irrevocably over. There is no more gold in the hills. The reformists and bureaucrats still tell the workers to defend Roosevelt and his New Deal? That New Deal—which conceivably might, once upon a time, have been worth defending—does not exist any longer.

There is only the War Deal, and a new stage of social reaction. And Roosevelt, the New Dealer, does not exist any longer. There is only Roosevelt, the war-monger, the cleverest leader of the social reaction.

We mean this, alas, quite literally. The workers are being asked to defend not a reality but a memory, a memory of a past wholly dead. Even if it was worth defending while alive, it would seem to be a lamentable waste of energy to battle over the corpse.

The passing of the New Deal was foretold by Roosevelt himself in Chicago, in October, 1937. There he gave the first dramatic call to the war. For three months preceding, the business curve had been rushing downward, bearing witness to the complete failure of the New Deal internal measures to save U.S. capitalism—the medicine of sixteen billion Federal dollars had been poured out in vain. The time was coming to begin serious preparations for external measures, for the war. A final shot of New Deal adrenalin was administered during 1938; the business curve climbed a slow, short distance upward and W.P.A. expanded its rolls to an all-time high of 3,250,000. The patient relapsed. And, on the night when the November, 1938 election returns were counted, the New Deal was laid forever to rest.

The War Deal, painstakingly rehearsed for more than a year, took the center of the stage. The War Deal went, still goes, rapidly through its scenes: the Lima Conference; spy trials; annual messages; radio broadcasts; notes to Japan; armament budgets; sudden orders to the fleet; patriotic movies and the singing of the Star Spangled Banner; open letters to Hitler and Mussolini. . . The cues are smartly taken up. And Roosevelt is the War Deal's director, not Hoover nor Senator Taft nor even Thomas E. Dewey.

And the War Deal's sidekick, social reaction, keeps up with his partner. The three and a quarter million on W.P.A. were slashed—by Roosevelt, by Roosevelt alone—two hundred thousand before Congress even met. Another fifty or so thousand, including all non-citizens, were gradually lopped off—by Roosevelt and his administrator, Harrington—during the first three months of the year. Two hundred thousand more heads fell during April; two hundred thousand the first week of this month; at least two hundred thousand more scheduled for June.

Throughout the country reaction lifts its head higher. The courts—Democratic Party judges in most of them—crack down on labor's rights in decision after decision. Witch-hunting Congressional committees "investigate" the relief set-up and the unemployed organizations. Coal and steel and auto drive their blows against the C.I.O. Infamous anti-labor laws are passed by referendum in Oregon, by the legislature in Minnesota, and introduced in a dozen or two more States. Fantastic laws, making illegal advocacy of any change whatsoever in the government, are debated in Congress—one of them even passes the (Democratic Party-controlled) House of Representatives. The movement to open the doors to the refugees is smothered—by Roosevelt and his administration. The overwhelming majority sentiment for a war referendum bill is brutally violated—by reactionary howls led by Roosevelt. A regular Army colonel is put in charge of W.P.A.—by Roose-

velt. The N.L.R.B. draws in its horns and the Wagner Act is undermined—with the consent of Roosevelt and his man, Wagner. Nothing more is heard from the anti-lynching bill. Exception after exception is granted under even the existing miserly Wages and Hours Act. The Treasury completes plans for lowering taxes on large incomes and profits.

Is all this just some temporary “strategic maneuver”? Are the New Deal and the old Roosevelt just lying low, waiting to catch the Tories off guard? Once again we repeat: the New Deal and the old Roosevelt are dead. This is nothing temporary, no smart maneuver; it is just as serious as Daladier’s decree laws—and Daladier, remember, was a Popular Front New Dealer until yesterday. And Roosevelt is the leader of the War Deal and the new stage of social reaction. Are we doubted? Examine the record. Look at the budget proposals for relief in the new fiscal year: the W.P.A. rolls to be cut below 2,000,000, when Roosevelt himself simultaneously points out that relief needs during the past six months have risen, not lowered.

Labor’s Non-Partisan League and the Communist Party and the Social-Democratic Federation, Lewis and Browder and Oneal, ask labor to continue its support of this man and his deal. How long will labor, living on memories of a buried past, listen? Could any policy be more disastrous, guarantee more firmly the crushing defeat of labor? The first task of labor today is to throw from its back the incubus of this ghost of the New Deal, to see the War Deal for what it is, to stand up on two firm legs and fight it to the end.

### **When Thieves Fall Out**

IF TWO CLEVER GANGSTERS should be getting ready to fight it out with each other, and if they wished to win public support for their respective sides, each of them could make out a plausible case. All that each would have to do, in speeches and appeals, would be to concentrate all emphasis on the crimes of the other, and let the positive argument rest on vague and noble generalities that could never be pinned down.

Imperialist gangsters differ chiefly in scale from the Capones and Torrios. So we may see from reading and analyzing Roosevelt’s open letter to Hitler and Mussolini, and Hitler’s Reichstag speech of reply. Roosevelt and Hitler have each an excellent case to make—against the other, a case, moreover, with many true and mighty charges. When Roosevelt tells Hitler that his armaments and his threats, his aggressive actions against small nations and his signs of further actions, his flouting of international law and of treaties, shock the conscience of mankind and bring ever closer the unexampled destruction of a new world-wide war, Roosevelt is in no way exceeding the simple truth. And when Hitler replies that the iniquitous Versailles treaty bears a full share of responsibility for the present ills of the world, that he has done to small nations and races no more, not half so much, as the self-righteous democratic powers, that modern history gives no evidence that international laws and treaties and conferences ever solve any of the vital problems concerning nations, that he will not be ready to disarm until all others are—which will never be, Hitler is equally close to the truth.

For honest men, there is no real choice between gangsters. The fight has got to be against all gangsters and gangsterism. The exchange of messages between Roosevelt and Hitler could not possibly have helped the cause of peace. They are both men of war, and they use their messages as part of their build-ups for the war. They are making the record, and trying to consolidate more firmly behind them a national chauvinist spirit. But their messages may, without intending, have served one purpose: to expose more clearly on both sides the bare imperialist character of the approaching war, to show it a little more openly for what it is: a murderous struggle for a new division of the world and of the rights of exploitation among the various groups of imperialist gangsters. The two messages put together mutually cancel out both the lying claims to any sort of truth and freedom and justice. How pleasant if we could return for a moment to the Middle Ages and its Trial by Combat: and, while the rest of us watched from the stands, let the whole set of them—Chamberlain and Hitler and Roosevelt and Daladier and Mussolini—enter the ring to cut each other’s throats. Instead, they will sit comfortably, and send humanity to do the cutting.

## **Once Again on the 'Crisis of Marxism'**

IN THE GOOD OLD DAYS when people referred to the crisis of Marxism they had in mind some specific proposition of Marx which had allegedly failed to withstand the test of facts, namely: the theory of the sharpening of the class struggle, the so-called “theory of impoverishment” and the so-called theory of “catastrophic collapse” of capitalism. These three principal points served as the target for bourgeois and reformist criticism. Today it is simply impossible to engage in a controversy over these issues. Who will undertake to prove that social contradictions are not sharpening but rather softening? In the United States, Mr. Ickes, the Secretary of the Interior, and other high dignitaries are compelled to speak openly in their speeches about the fact that “60 families” control the economic life of the nation; on the other hand, the number of unemployed oscillates between ten millions in years of “prosperity” and twenty millions in years of crisis. Those lines in *Das Kapital* where Marx speaks of the polarization of capitalist society, the accumulation of wealth at one pole and of poverty at the other—these lines which have been indicted as “demagogic” now simply prove to be a picture of reality.

The old liberal-democratic conception of a gradual and universal rise of prosperity, culture, peace and liberty has suffered decisive and irreparable shipwreck. In its wake, there has been bankrupted the social-reformist conception, which represented in essence only an adaptation of the ideas of liberalism to the existing working-class conditions. All these theories and methods had their roots in the epoch of industrial capitalism, the epoch of free trade and competition, that is to say, in the past beyond recall, a time when

capitalism was still a relatively progressive system. Capitalism today is reactionary. It cannot be cured. It must be removed.

There is hardly a blockhead remaining who seriously believes (all the Blums do not believe, they lie) that the monstrous sharpening of social contradictions can be overcome by means of parliamentary legislation. Marx has been proved correct in every, yes, every element of his analysis, as well as in his "catastrophic" prognosis. In what then consists the "crisis" of Marxism? Present-day critics do not even bother to frame articulately the question itself.

It will be recorded in the annals of history that capitalism, before sinking into the grave, made a tremendous effort at self-preservation over a protracted historical period. The bourgeoisie does not want to die. It has transformed all the energy inherited by it from the past into a violent convulsion of reaction. This is precisely the period in which we are living.

Force not only conquers but, in its own way, it "convinces". The onset of reaction not only wrecks parties physically, but also decomposes people morally. Many Messrs. Radicals have their hearts in their shoes. Their fright in the face of reaction they translate into the language of immaterial and universal criticism. "Something must be wrong with old theories and methods!" "Marx was mistaken. . . ." "Lenin failed to foresee. . . ." Some even go further. "The revolutionary method has proved itself bankrupt." "The October revolution has led to the most vicious dictatorship of the bureaucracy." But the Great French Revolution also terminated with the restoration of the monarchy. Generally speaking, the universe is poorly built: youth leads to age, birth to death, "all things that are born must perish".

These gentlemen forget with remarkable ease that man has been cutting his path from a semi-simian condition to

a harmonious society without any guide; that the task is a difficult one; that for every step or two forward there follows half a step, a step, and sometimes even two steps back. They forget that the path is strewn with the greatest obstacles and that no one has invented or could have invented a secret method whereby an uninterrupted rise on the escalator of history would be rendered secure. Sad to say, Messrs. Rationalists were not invited to a consultation when man was in process of creation and when the conditions of man's development were first taking shape. But generally speaking, this matter is beyond repair. . . .

For argument's sake, let us grant that all previous revolutionary history and, if you please, all history in general is nothing but a chain of mistakes. But what to do about present-day reality? What about the colossal army of permanently unemployed, the pauperized farmers, the general decline of economic levels, the approaching war? The skeptical wiseacres promise us that sometime in the future they will catalogue all the banana peels on which the great revolutionary movements of the past have slipped. But will these gentlemen tell us what to do today, right now?

We would wait in vain for an answer. The terrified rationalists are disarming themselves in the face of reaction, renouncing scientific social thought, surrendering not only material but also moral positions, and depriving themselves of any claim to revolutionary vengeance in the future. Yet the conditions which have prepared the present wave of reaction are extremely unstable, contradictory and ephemeral and they prepare the ground for a new offensive by the proletariat. The leadership of this offensive will justly belong to those whom the rationalists call dogmatists and sectarians. Because "dogmatists" and "sectarians" refuse to renounce the scientific method so long as nobody, absolutely nobody has proposed anything superior in its place.

March 7, 1939

T.

## Where Is the P.S.O.P. Going?

### Leon Trotsky to Marceau Pivert

Dear Comrade Pivert:

I confess that it is not without hesitation that I have decided to write you this letter. Not solely because our political opinions are far from coinciding, but above all because even the idea of my addressing a political militant of France from a country far away over a matter which concerns France can seem out of place. Nevertheless, I have rejected these doubts. The situation is so critical, the fate of the proletariat of France and of all Europe, to a considerable degree of the entire world, depends to such a measure upon the next development of events in France, the fundamental elements of the situation are so clear, even from a great distance, that I consider it inadmissible not to make an attempt to explain myself to you when all is not yet lost.

The development in France during the last three or four years has proceeded much slower than could have been expected in 1934-1935 when I wrote the brochure, *Whither*

*France?* Living reality is always richer in possibilities, in turns, in complications than the theoretical prognostication. But the general course of events has not brought, despite all, anything new in principle different from our conception. I do not wish now to stop over this, since I have devoted to this question my last article, "The Decisive Hour Draws Near," which I hope will appear soon in French (in any case I enclose a copy with this letter). The development manifestly nears its dénouement. This dénouement cannot bring anything but the establishment of a fascist dictatorship, at the beginning of pre-fascist (Bonapartist), military type, or the victory of the proletariat. I do not think that we are in disagreement with you over this. I do not think moreover that there is disagreement in regard to the delay: a year or two, in my opinion, is the *maximum* which remains until the "definitive" dénouement that is irretrievable for many years.

What can save the situation in France is the creation of a genuine revolutionary vanguard of several thousand men, clearly understanding the situation, completely free

from the influence of bourgeois and petty-bourgeois public opinion ("socialist", "communist", "anarcho-syndicalist", etc.) and ready to go to the end. Such a vanguard will know how to find the road to the masses. In the last ten or fifteen years we have seen more than once how under the blows of great events great traditional parties and their groupings have fallen in dust, such as the Iron Front (without iron), the Popular Front (without people), etc. What neither breaks nor falls in dust is only what has been welded by *clear, precise, intransigent revolutionary ideas*.

I do not have the possibility of closely following the activity of your party, I do not know its internal composition, and that is why I abstain from pronouncing an evaluation. But I do know the other parties of the London Bureau, which have existed for well more than a year. I ask myself: your party, can it grapple with vast tasks hand in hand with Fenner Brockway, Walcher, Sneevliet, Brandler and other venerable invalids, who not only have not demonstrated in anything their capacity to orient themselves in revolutionary events, but on the contrary have demonstrated many times over their absolute incapacity for revolutionary action and in the following years, their not less absolute incapacity for learning what were their own errors. The best group among them was the P.O.U.M. But is it not now clear that the P.O.U.M.'s fear of the petty-bourgeois public opinion of the Second and Third Internationals and above all of the anarchists was one of the principal causes of the collapse of the Spanish revolution?

One of two things. Either the French proletariat, betrayed and enfeebled by Blum, Thorez, Jouhaux, and company, will be taken by surprise and erased without resistance, like the proletariat of Germany, of Austria, and of Czechoslovakia. . . . But it is useless to make calculations on the basis of this variant—servile prostration does not require any strategy. Or in the period which remains the vanguard of the French proletariat will again lift its head, gathering around it the masses and finding itself as capable of resisting as of attacking. But this variant supposes such an invigoration of the hopes of the masses, of their confidence in themselves, of their ardor, of their hate against the enemy, that all that is mean, mediocre, misshapen will be cast aside and dissipated in the gale. Only revolutionaries willing to go to the end are capable of directing a genuine insurrection of the masses, for the masses discern surpassingly well waverings from the spirit of resolute decision. For the insurrection of the masses firm leadership is necessary. And without insurrection catastrophe is inevitable, and that with but short delay.

I do not see any other road to the immediate formation of a revolutionary vanguard in France than the unification of your party and the section of the Fourth International. I understand that the two organizations are conducting negotiations over the fusion and the idea is far from me of interfering with the negotiations or of giving concrete advice from here. I approach the question from a more general point of view. The fact that the negotiations are lasting a long time and dragging out seems to me to be an extremely alarming circumstance, the symptom of discordance between the objective situation and the state of feeling even among the most advanced ranks of the work-

ing class. I should be happy to learn that I am mistaken.

You carry a great responsibility, Comrade Pivert, strongly similar to the responsibility which weighed on Andres Nin in the first years of the Spanish revolution. You can give events a great impulse forward. But you can also play the fatal rôle of brake. In moments of acute political crisis personal initiative is capable of exercising a great influence upon the course of events. It is solely necessary to decide firmly one thing: *to go to the end!*

I hope that you will appreciate at their true value the motives which have guided me in writing you this letter and I warmly wish you success on the road of the proletarian revolution.

Leon TROTSKY

COYOACAN, D. F., Dec. 22, 1938

### **Pivert Answers Trotsky**

Dear Comrade Trotsky:

I communicated the contents of your letter to my colleagues in the party executive. We are all, like you, agreed in our estimate of the extreme seriousness of the situation for France, and, consequently, for the international proletariat. We find only natural, therefore, an exchange of correspondence which, in spite of our differences of opinion, permits us to establish major analogies in our perspectives. We are, moreover, sufficiently free from nationalistic prejudices not to find in any way "out of order" a letter from a Marxian militant so experienced as yourself. It is up to us to force ourselves to see things as they are, and to determine honestly wherein the results of our observations coincide with your political conclusions or wherein they noticeably diverge. The only difference which seems to us to result from a comparison of your letter with our estimate pertains, perhaps, as in 1935, to the more or less rapid rhythm of predictable events: we know that the crisis approaches; but it can be advanced or retarded in accordance with the unfolding of international events upon which directly depend the situation in our own sector. And we should have been gratified if your letter had taken into account the feverish preparation of the general conflict between the imperialist camps and had made some approximation of delays in the light of that perspective.

However, in any case, the necessary task remains the same: to forge a revolutionary vanguard ready to pose the question of the conquest of power and to lead the working masses along the road of the dictatorship of the proletariat. The militants gathered around the P.S.O.P. have this formidable ambition. They have already gone through two selective tests: the September crisis proved their loyalty to proletarian internationalism; the November 30th general strike proved their capacity for direct action. These comrades do not have, certainly, the same rigorous and definitive judgment as yourself on the militants whom you mention with an underestimation of their political capacity, perhaps as a result of similarities or differences in tendency which today seem to us secondary. We have, in effect, constituted with them an International Workers' Front against the war, and it is the platform and aim of this united front that should be submitted to the Marxian critique rather than the signature of this or that personality.

But your sharp estimate of our comrades of the P.O.U.M. will surely arouse unanimous protests among our militants, for to us, who have lived close enough to the events since July 1936, it is not "the fright of the P.O.U.M. before the petty-bourgeois public opinion of the Second or the Third Internationals or of the anarchists" which is the source of the collapse of the revolutionary vanguard; but the concentration of the efforts of British-French imperialism, of Italian-German imperialism, and also those of the Stalinists. The results of a vanguard policy do not, alas, have the same fullness in a period of the retreat and depression of the labor movement as in a period of advance. But, for ourselves, we have drawn from this tragic experience the following lesson: a bold and decisive working-class strategy can, under favorable circumstances, have an incalculable range. There are indeed times when one must go "to the bottom and to the end". We lived through them in June-July, 1936; we will not forget them.

Another question is posed in your letter: that of the "fusion" of our party with the French section of the Fourth International. The "negotiations" were stopped with fusion proposals which we could not have considered without violating the firm feeling of our militants, to whom the question of our affiliation to the Fourth International was put during our founding convention (July 16-17, 1938) and who almost unanimously rejected it. This decision and this attitude should not, moreover, take on the alarming character which you imagine. We defined the programmatic basis and charter of a revolutionary, internationalist socialist party, and a democratic constitution. All militants in agreement with our principles and the democratic guarantees which we offer belong in the P.S.O.P., where they will themselves forge the instrument of liberation which was missing in June, 1936. This is entirely understood by the communist and socialist militants who are joining us, and moreover by the minority of the P.O.I. which has just taken its place in our ranks.

But we want to speak frankly to you, comrade Trotsky, about the sectarian methods which we have observed around us and which have contributed to the setbacks and enfeebling of the vanguard. I refer to those methods which consist in violating and brutalizing the revolutionary intelligence of those militants—numerous in France—who are accustomed to making up their own minds and who put themselves loyally to the school of hard facts. These are the methods which consist in interpreting with no indulgence whatever the inevitable fumbings in the search for revolutionary truth. Finally, these are the methods which attempt, by a colonization directed from without, to dictate to the labor movement attitudes, tactics or responses which do not come from the depths of its collective intelligence. It is in large part because of this that the French section of the Fourth International has shown itself absolutely incapable not merely of reaching the masses but indeed even of forming tried and serious cadres.

If the question of fusion with the P.O.I. (majority) had been posed, it would have involved as a pre-condition a discussion relative to these methods from which the labor movement has too much suffered. Since serious differences exist between the P.O.I. (majority) and the P.S.O.P.,

why propose fusion? If the proposal is sincere, do you think that we will abandon our preference for a revolutionary party, with a democratic constitution, which is capable of directing its own affairs? And if the proposal is not sincere, it would be better not to insist on it: confronted with the mighty political organizations of the working class and the bourgeois repression we have something else to do besides spending our time in this deceptive game.

Believe me that we much prefer—with no concern for personal or factional preconception (he who had such preconceptions at the present moment would be very mediocre)—the organization of a united front between the revolutionary groups which are separated by ideological differences (directed, for example, against the threatening imperialist war), rather than an illusory organic fusion carrying in its breast the germs of disorientation and speedy disintegration. To sum up, we attach very great worth to the fraternal collaboration of all revolutionary militants who are trying to subordinate their personal preferences to the exigencies of collective action. The process of the constitution of the revolutionary vanguard cannot be of the character of a mechanical operation.

In the measure to which we carry on our shoulders our share of responsibility before the working class, we are determined, comrade Trotsky, to prove ourselves not too inferior to the grave tasks which await us.

With our thanks, dear comrade Trotsky, we send our revolutionary greetings.

Marceau PIVERT

PARIS, Jan. 26, 1939

### **Letter to a Friend in France**

Dear friend,

I hasten to reply to your letter of January 24, which gave me important information about the situation in the P.S.O.P. I find it necessary to comment upon the points which Marceau Pivert brought up in his conversation with you.

He proclaimed his "complete solidarity" with me in his estimate of the general situation in France. Needless to say, I greet such a declaration warmly. But it is nevertheless insufficient. In order that there may be the possibility of subsequent collaboration, there must be not only a unity in *estimate*; it is also necessary that the *practical conclusion*, at least the most essential ones, be identical. In connection with the days of June, 1936, Marceau Pivert wrote: "Now everything is possible." That was a magnificent formula. It meant: with this proletariat, we can go to the end, that is to say, orient directly toward the conquest of power. During those same days, or soon after, I wrote: "The French revolution has begun." We thus had a common premise with Marceau Pivert. But that is exactly why I could not understand how Marceau Pivert could keep confidence in Blum, even though that confidence was conditional and limited—a semi-confidence, when it was absolutely clear that that bourgeois guardian and dolt, a deserter from head to foot, was capable of leading the proletariat only to defeats and humiliations.

But we will not go back to the past. Let us take up the present situation. The question of Freemasonry has, in my opinion, an enormous political and symptomatic im-



portance. In the epoch of profound revolutionary crisis through which France now passes and which places before the proletariat in the sharpest manner the question of the struggle for power, it is an elementary and urgent duty for the revolutionary leaders to break every political and moral link with the treacherous leaders of bourgeois radicalism and official "socialism", who will always be against the workers in decisive events.

I do not know whether Daladier is a Freemason; but Chautemps is and along with him a number of other Cabinet members. I ask myself how it is possible to oppose seriously the abject policies of the Popular Front—that is to say, the political submission of the proletariat to the radical bourgeoisie—and at the same time remain in a "moral" bloc with the leaders of the radical bourgeoisie, with these rascals and Staviskyites who, in their rôle as Freemasons, take upon themselves the task of the "moral" regeneration of humanity. Confronted with so blatant a contradiction, every worker has the right to say: "These socialists do not themselves believe in the socialist revolution, else they would not remain friends of the leaders of the class against which they are preparing, so they say, the revolution!"

Thanks to fortunate, or unfortunate (I hardly know which), circumstances, I had a chance to observe at first hand a little piece of Freemasonry, during my stay at Isère. I lived in the house of a Freemason, the majority of whose guests were also Freemasons. Among my young friends there was a Freemason who had just recently broken with Freemasonry. This is why I can base my opinion not merely on general considerations, which are entirely indisputable in themselves, but likewise on living observation of the rôle of Freemasonry in the political life of the French Provinces.

The upper layer of Freemasonry is made up of radicals or "socialists", lawyers, deputies, careerists, cynics, for whom the lodges are only an electoral apparatus. In the Grenoble lodges there are no, or hardly any, workers; on the contrary, an important position is occupied by the lesser executives of the factories. I knew one foreman, and I had interesting reports on another. Their chief concern was to get away from the workers, to be in "polite society", to listen to "educated" men. They regarded with pious respect the lawyers and professors who offered them "humanitarian" and "pacifist" banalities. The officers of the lodge, who played some rôle in the politics of Grenoble, with the help of the masonic ritual submitted to their own ends a petty-bourgeois clientele and a fragment of the semi-proletarian aristocracy. Some of these gentlemen did not themselves join the Freemasons, but pulled strings from back-stage. In the Freemasonry were thus concentrated all those parasitical traits which today give so repulsive a visage to the Second and the Third Internationals. Can one break with social-democracy and the Comintern and at the same time remain bound up with the worst caricature of the two organizations, the Freemasonry?

The revolution demands a complete gift from a man. Those revolutionists are very doubtful who do not find the satisfaction of their political and moral needs in a revolutionary workers' party but look for something "better" and "more elevated" in the society of bourgeois radicals.

What exactly are they looking for? Let them explain to the workers! . . . What is most difficult and also most important in an epoch such as France is now going through is to free oneself from the influence of bourgeois public opinion, to break from it inwardly, not to fear its barking and lies and calumnies, and equally to despise its praise and flatteries. On this condition alone can one be assured of the necessary freedom of action, of the faculty of hearing in time the revolutionary voice of the masses and putting oneself at their head for the decisive offensive. However, Freemasonry, by its very essence, is a safety-valve for drawing off revolutionary tendencies. The very small percentage of honest idealists who can be found in the lodges only increases the dangerous character of Freemasonry.

This is why I am compelled to believe that Marceau Pivert has not drawn the necessary conclusions from his revolutionary premises. And that is what is most dangerous in a revolutionary epoch. It was precisely because of its inability to draw the necessary practical conclusions that the P.O.U.M. cracked its head. The misfortune is, it seems, that Marceau Pivert even now is satisfied with his radical analysis of the situation, but remains indecisive before the revolutionary tasks which follow from that analysis.

In connection with what I have just said, I note with the greatest uneasiness the recriminations and accusation which Marceau Pivert brings against certain members of the P.O.I. who have just entered the P.S.O.P. They permit themselves, according to his statements, "brutal attacks", they employ an "incorrect tone", they are distinguished by their "sharpness", *etc., etc.* Far be it from me to analyze isolated instances which I do not know about nor can know about from here. I admit that there may have been in this or that case incidents that lacked tact. But could that have a serious political importance in the eyes of a revolutionist? Since the labor movement began, accusations of using a misplaced tone, of being too sharp or lacking tact have never ceased being brought against the representatives of the left wing (against Marx, against Engels, Lenin, Rosa Luxemburg, Karl Liebknecht). This is to be explained, on the one hand, by the fact that socialists who have not completely broken with the prejudices of bourgeois public opinion, and feel the duplicity of their own situation, do not at all welcome any criticism. That is a psychological law. On the other hand, those who, in a desperate struggle against the dominant parties, are inspired with intransigent revolutionary ideas are always inclined, especially in a critical situation like today's, toward impatience, over-insistence, and irritation toward those centrist elements who hesitate, wait, evade and lose time. The entire history of the revolutionary movement is featured by a polemical dialogue between these two types.

To appeal to internal party democracy and at the same time to complain about "tone" does not seem very convincing to me. *Democracy* is limited by *centralism*, that is, by the necessity for unity in action. But it is an error to state: *Since we have democracy, therefore do not dare to open your mouth too wide or to speak in a tone which displeases us.* It is still less pleasing to revolutionists that

certain others use in speaking to Léon Blum a tone full of suppleness, a tone of conciliation and pleading. In both cases, the tone is inextricably linked to the political content. It is precisely this *content* that must be discussed.

If some former member of the P.O.I. had broken discipline, I should understand not merely the accusations but his expulsion from the party. Every organization has the right to maintain its discipline. But when I hear these accusations according to which *x* or *y* defended his ideas too impolitely and thereby forced two "very precious" party comrades to resign, I don't understand it at all. What is the revolutionist worth who leaves his party simply because someone has sharply criticized his ideas? Petty-bourgeois sympathisers who look on the party as a salon, a friendly club or a masonic lodge are worthless in a revolutionary epoch. If they cannot endure rather sharp remarks, they only show thereby their inner emptiness: these people are only looking for a pretext for deserting the barricades.

Revolutionists who express their ideas openly, even if sharply, are not dangerous for the P.S.O.P. What is dangerous for it are unprincipled intriguers, individuals who know how to mask their true faces, who cover themselves up with any ideas whatever, who today defend one thing, tomorrow another, adventurers of the type of Raymond Molinier who try to gain influence not by ideological struggle but by corridor intrigues. Dangerous also are self-centered and absolutely sterile sectarians of the type of the Belgian, Vereecken, who need a party only as an audience for their warblings. The superiority of the Fourth International is that it has systematically purged itself of these elements. That is what must also be hoped for in the case of the P.S.O.P.

I shall not take up here the question of the P.O.U.M.: anyone who takes this problem seriously must reply to our criticism of the P.O.U.M. Events have completely confirmed it. It is better not to speak of the I.L.P. at all: compared with Maxton & Co., the deceased leader of the Mensheviks, Martov, was a genuine revolutionist. And we want to learn from Lenin, not from Martov. Is that not so, Marceau Pivert?

The P.S.O.P. split from an opportunist party *to the left*, and at a time full of responsibilities and very critical. The composition of the P.S.O.P. is, I am informed, largely proletarian. These two facts are the very precious token of a *possible* revolutionary development for the party. In order to turn this possibility into reality, the P.S.O.P. must go through a stage of the most extensive and bold discussion, held back by no external or subordinate consideration. It is not a question of the *tone* but of the *content* of the critique. It is not a question of personal pride but of the fate of the French proletariat. The next months, perhaps the next weeks even, will show whether the P.S.O.P. can and will enter the road of Marxism, that is of Bolshevism: in our epoch these two notions coincide entirely.

With best regards,

Leon TROTSKY

COYOACAN, D. F., Feb. 14, 1939

## Daniel Guerin to Leon Trotsky

Dear Comrade Trotsky:

I take the liberty of adding a *personal* word to the letter which Marceau Pivert has written you. I was out of town, and not present at the meeting of the party executive at which the contents of that letter were approved.

If I had been present I should undoubtedly have insisted that the last section should have been put differently.

I am not altogether in agreement, indeed, with my comrades on the executive when they emphasize *serious differences* which might exist between the P.O.I. and the P.S.O.P. I believe that these "serious differences" were created artificially by the sectarianism of certain of your friends, such as Naville. And I regret that we take up, on our side, the assertion that these "serious differences" exist. I have the impression that, on both sides, we take refuge behind these "differences" in order not to unite.

I do not believe, moreover, that a "united front" would be preferable to fusion, nor that such a fusion would *necessarily* carry "in its breast the germs of confusion and speedy disintegration".

It is possible, even quite possible that it might be so, *but only in the event that your friends should consider the fusion as a disloyal maneuver*, planning to get a foothold as an "alien body" in the P.S.O.P., in such a way as to destroy it from within and to prepare a new split—that is, to drag along, for the purpose of forming a new P.O.I., a certain number of our militants. Yes, if that should be the plan of your friends, the fusion would be "illusory" and disastrous.

But I cannot believe, in spite of the *suspicion* which the tactic of certain of your friends arouses in me, I cannot believe that, in the present serious circumstances, they would commit the crime of destroying the *only* movement which, in France, can serve as the crucible for forming the revolutionary vanguard. Consequently, I do not dismiss the possibility of a loyal fusion.

You will not stand on formality if I tell you exactly what I think: it is upon *you, upon you alone*, that there depends the question of whether the fusion would be loyal or disloyal.

In order to avoid any misunderstanding, I point out that by *fusion* I mean, naturally, the entry of the members of the P.O.I. as individuals into the P.S.O.P.: the numerical disproportion between the P.O.I. and the P.S.O.P., on the one hand, and the approach of our next convention, on the other, rule out a special fusion convention.

But it is actually a question of fusion, because the voice of your friends, in accordance with our principles of full workers' democracy, will be able to be freely heard in our party—as early, I believe, as our convention in May.

The only difference which I see between your friends and us, and I persist in regarding it as purely formal, is the question of the "Fourth". We want to build a new revolutionary international. The only "difference" springs from the fact that you have baptised your international secretariat as the "Fourth International", whereas in our opinion the new international cannot be created by a wave of the magic wand. It will be borne within the *masses*, and the *masses* must be actively prepared for it, must be

made to understand its necessity, must be made to find the road that leads to it. Yes, I repeat (though I understand in advance your vehement protest) that it is a question only of a *formal difference*. It should not become an obstacle to the indispensable re-grouping, the indispensable and urgent re-enforcing of the revolutionary vanguard in France.

Fraternally yours,  
Daniel GUERIN

LES LILAS (Seine), Feb. 2, 1939

### **Centrism and the 4th International**

**D**EAR COMRADE GUERIN:

I received your letter at the same time as the official letter of Marceau Pivert. I am greatly obliged to you for the exposition of your personal point of view even though—as you yourself foresaw—I cannot share it.

You, unlike Pivert, think there are no “serious differences” between us. I fully admit that there exist inside your party various nuances and that certain ones are very close to the conceptions of the Fourth International. But the tendency that dominates, it seems, in the leadership and which Pivert expresses is scarcely less divided from us than by an abyss. I have become convinced of this precisely by the last letter of Pivert.

In order to determine the political physiognomy of an organization, it is of decisive importance to examine the international continuation of its national policy. That is where I shall begin. In my letter to Pivert I expressed my surprise at seeing that your party was still able, after the experience of the last years, to find itself in political alliance with the Independent Labour Party (I.L.P.) of England, with the P.O.U.M. and other similar organizations—against us—and that in spite of a most recent experience: only yesterday Pivert found himself in political alliance with Walcher—against us. Your party is a new party. It still has to take shape, it does not yet have (in a certain sense, fortunately!) a definitive physiognomy. But the I.L.P. has been in existence for dozens of years, its evolution has taken place before our eyes; everything was established in its time, analyzed and in large measure foretold. The P.O.U.M. went through a grand revolution and in it was able to reveal its real figure. In both these cases we are not reasoning on the future possibilities of a party which is only taking shape; but we are dealing with old organizations tested by experience.

### **The I. L. P.**

Of the I.L.P. it is not worth while speaking at length. I will only recall a very recent fact. The leader of this party, Maxton, thanked Chamberlain in Parliament after the Munich pact and declared to astonished humanity that by his policy Chamberlain had saved the peace—yes, yes, had saved the peace!—that he, Maxton, knew Chamberlain well and he assured that Chamberlain had “sincerely” fought the war and “sincerely” saved the peace, *etc., etc.* This single example gives a conclusive and what is more a pretty crushing characterization of Maxton and of his party. The revolutionary proletariat rejects Chamberlain’s “peace” just as it does his war. The “peace” of Chamber-

lain is the continuation of the violence against India and other colonies and the preparation of the war in conditions more favorable for the British slaveholders. To take upon himself the slightest shadow of responsibility for the policy of “peace” of Chamberlain, is not possible for a socialist, for a revolutionist, but only for a pacifist lackey of imperialism. The party that tolerates a leader like Maxton and actions like his public solidarization with the slaveholder Chamberlain is not a socialist party but a miserable pacifist clique.

### **The P. O. U. M.**

What is the situation with the P.O.U.M.? According to the words of Pivert, your whole party is “unanimously” ready to defend the P.O.U.M. against our criticism. I leave aside the question of the “unanimity”: I am not sure that the members of your organization know in detail the history of the Spanish revolution, the history of the struggle of the various tendencies in its midst, in particular the critical work which the representatives of the Fourth International contributed in the questions of the Spanish revolution. But it is clear in any case that the *leadership* of your party has absolutely not understood the fatal mistakes of the P.O.U.M., which flow from its *centrist, non-revolutionary, non-Marxian* character.

Since the beginning of the Spanish revolution, I found myself in very close contact with a certain number of militants, in particular with Andres Nin. We exchanged hundreds of letters. It is only after the experience of quite a number of months that I came to the conclusion that Nin, honest and devoted to the cause, was not a Marxist, but a centrist, in the best case a Spanish Martov, that is to say, a Menshevik of the left. Pivert does not distinguish between the policy of Menshevism and the policy of Bolshevism in the revolution.

The leaders of the P.O.U.M. did not pretend for a single day to play an independent rôle; they did everything to remain in the rôle of good “left” friends and counsellors of the leaders of the mass organizations.<sup>1</sup> This policy, which flowed from the lack of confidence in itself and in its ideas, doomed the P.O.U.M. to duplicity, to a false tone, to continual oscillations which found themselves in sharp contradiction with the amplitude of the class struggle. The mobilization of the vanguard against the reaction and its abject lackeys, including the anarcho-bureaucrats, the leaders of the P.O.U.M. replaced by quasi-revolutionary homilies addressed to the treacherous leaders, declaring in self-justification that the “masses” would not understand another, more resolute policy. Left centrism, above all in revolutionary conditions, is always ready to adopt in words the program of the socialist revolution and is not niggardly with sonorous phrases. But the fatal malady of centrism is not being capable of drawing courageous tactical and organizational conclusions from its general conceptions. They always seem to it to be “premature”; “the opinion of the masses must be prepared” (by means of equivocation, of duplicity, of diplomacy, *etc.*); in addition, it fears to

<sup>1</sup> Just as for a long time, too long a time, Marceau Pivert did everything to remain the left-wing friend and the counsellor of Blum and company. I greatly fear that even today Marceau Pivert and his closest ideological companions have not understood that Blum does not represent an ideological adversary but an avowed and, moreover, dishonest class enemy.

break its habitual amicable relations with the friends on the right, it "respects" personal opinions; that is why it delivers all its blows . . . *against the left*, thus endeavoring to raise its prestige in the eyes of serious public opinion.

Such is also the political psychology of Marceau Pivert. He absolutely does not understand that a pitiless manner of posing the fundamental questions and a fierce polemic against vacillations are only the necessary ideological and pedagogical reflection of the implacable and cruel character of the class struggle of our time. To him it seems that this is "sectarianism", lack of respect for the personality of others, *etc.*, that is, he remains entirely on the level of petty-bourgeois moralizing. Are these "serious differences"? Yes, I cannot imagine more serious differences inside the labor movement. With Blum and company we do not have "differences": we simply find ourselves on different sides of the barricades.

### **The Cause of the Defeat in Spain**

Following all the opportunists and centrists, Marceau Pivert explains the defeat of the Spanish proletariat by the bad behavior of French and British imperialism and the Bonapartist clique of the Kremlin. This is quite simply to say that a victorious revolution is always and everywhere impossible. One can neither expect nor ask for a movement of greater scope, greater endurance, greater heroism on the part of the workers than we were able to observe in Spain. The imperialist "democrats" and the mercenary rabble of the Second and the Third Internationals will always behave as they did towards the Spanish revolution. What then can be hoped for? He is criminal who instead of analyzing the policy of bankruptcy of the revolutionary or quasi-revolutionary organizations invokes the ignominy of the bourgeoisie and its lackeys. It is precisely against them that a correct policy is needed!

An enormous responsibility for the Spanish tragedy falls upon the P.O.U.M. I have all the greater right to say so because in my letters to Andres Nin, since 1931, I predicted the inevitable consequences of the disastrous policy of centrism. By their general "left" formulæ the leaders of the P.O.U.M. created the illusion that a revolutionary party existed in Spain and prevented the appearance of the truly proletarian, intransigent tendencies. At the same time, by their policy of adaptation to all the forms of reformism they were the best auxiliaries of the anarchist, socialist and communist traitors. The personal honesty and heroism of numerous workers of the P.O.U.M. naturally provoke our sympathy; against the reaction and the rabble of Stalinism we are ready to defend them to the utmost. But that revolutionist is worth precious little who, under the influence of sentimental considerations, is incapable of considering objectively the real essence of a given party. The P.O.U.M. always sought the line of least resistance, it temporized, ducked, played hide-and-seek with the revolution. It began by trying to retrench itself in Catalonia, closing its eyes to the relationship of forces in Spain. In Catalonia, the leading positions in the working class were occupied by the anarchists; the P.O.U.M. began by ignoring the Stalinist danger (in spite of all the warnings!) and attuning itself to the anarchist bureaucracy. So as not to create any "superfluous" difficulties for themselves, the P.O.U.M.

leaders closed their eyes to the fact that the anarcho-bureaucrats were not worth one whit more than all the other reformists, that they only covered themselves with a different phraseology. The P.O.U.M. refrained from penetrating into the midst of the National Confederation of Labor [C.N.T.] in order not to disturb relations with the summits of this organization and in order to retain the possibility of remaining in the rôle of counsellor to them. That is the position of Martov. But Martov, be it said in his honor, knew how to avoid mistakes as crude and shameful as participation in the Catalan government! To pass over openly and solemnly from the camp of the proletariat to the camp of the bourgeoisie! Marceau Pivert closes his eyes to such "details". For the workers who, during the revolution, direct all the force of their class hatred against the bourgeoisie, the participation of a "revolutionary" leader in a bourgeois government is a fact of enormous importance: it disorients and demoralizes them. And this fact did not fall from the sky. It was a necessary link in the policy of the P.O.U.M. The leaders of the P.O.U.M. spoke with great eloquence of the advantages of the socialist revolution over the bourgeois revolution; but they did nothing serious to prepare this socialist revolution because the preparation could only consist of a pitiless, audacious, implacable mobilization of the anarchist, socialist and communist workers against their treacherous leaders. It was necessary not to fear separation from these leaders, to change into a "sect" during the early days, even if it were persecuted by everybody, it was necessary to put forth exact and clear slogans, foretell the morrow and, basing oneself on the events, discredit the official leaders and drive them from their positions. In the course of eight months, the Bolsheviks, from the small group that they were, became a decisive force. The energy and the heroism of the Spanish proletariat gave the P.O.U.M. several years in which to prepare. The P.O.U.M. had the time on two or three occasions to emerge from its swaddling clothes and to become an adult. If it did not, it is in no wise the fault of the "democratic" imperialists and the Moscow bureaucrats, but the result of an internal cause: its own leadership did not know where to go or what paths to take.

An enormous historical responsibility falls upon the P.O.U.M. If the P.O.U.M. had not marched at the heels of the anarchists and had not fraternized with the "People's Front", if it had conducted an intransigent revolutionary policy, then, at the moment of the May, 1937 insurrection and most likely much sooner, it would naturally have found itself borne to the head of the masses and would have assured the victory. The P.O.U.M. was not a revolutionary party but a centrist party raised by the wave of the revolution. That is not at all the same thing. Marceau Pivert does not understand this even today, for he is himself a centrist to the marrow of his bones.

### **The Game of Hide-And-Seek**

It seems to Marceau Pivert that he has understood the conditions and the lessons of June, 1936. No, he has not understood them, and his incomprehension manifests itself in the clearest manner in the question of the P.O.U.M. Martov passed through the revolution of 1905 and did not assimilate its lessons in any wise: he showed it in the revo-

lution of 1917. Andres Nin wrote dozens of times—and quite sincerely—that he was in agreement with us “in principle” but in disagreement as to “tactics” and “rhythm”; what is more, unfortunately, he never found the possibility, until his death, of saying once *clearly* and *precisely* wherein exactly he was in disagreement and wherein he was not. Why? Because he did not say so to himself.

Marceau Pivert says in his letter that his only difference with us is in the appraisal of the “rhythm” and he mentions in addition an analogous difference in 1935. But exactly a few months later, in June, 1936, imposing events unfolded which revealed fully what Pivert’s mistake was in the question of the rhythm. Pivert found himself taken unawares by these events for, in spite of everything, he continued to remain a “left-wing” friend attached to Léon Blum, that is, to the worst agent of the class enemy. The rhythm of the events does not adapt itself to the rhythm of centrist indecision. On the other hand, the centrists always cover their disagreement with the revolutionary policy by invoking the “rhythm”, the “form” or the “tone”. You can find this centrist way of playing hide-and-seek with facts and ideas throughout the history of the revolutionary movement.

Concerning the problem of the Spanish revolution—the most important problem of these last years—the Fourth International gave a Marxian analysis of the situation at each stage, a criticism of the policy of the labor organizations (above all of the P.O.U.M.), and a prognosis. Has Pivert made a single attempt to submit our appraisal to his criticism, to oppose his analysis to ours? Never! That is something the centrists never do. They fear instinctively any scientific analysis. They live by general impressions and nebulous corrections of the conceptions of others. Fearing to commit themselves, they play hide-and-seek with the historic process.

I have not the slightest intention to make extraordinary demands upon your party: it has only just separated itself from the social democracy; it has never known any other school. But it separated itself *at the left*, in a period of profound crisis, and that opens up to it serious possibilities of revolutionary development. That is my point of departure: otherwise I should not have had the slightest reason to address myself to Marceau Pivert with a letter to which he has replied, alas! by continuing to play hide-and-seek. Marceau Pivert does not take into account the real situation in your party. He writes that in September, during the international crisis, the party measured up to its tasks. I wish with all my heart that this appreciation were exact. But today it seems to me to be too precipitate. There was no war. The masses did not find themselves placed before the accomplished fact. The fear of the war dominated in the working class and among the petty bourgeoisie. It is to these *pre-war* tendencies that your party gave expression in the abstract slogans of internationalism. But do not forget that in 1914 the German social democracy and the French socialist party remained very “internationalist”, very “intransigent”—up to the moment when the first cannon-shot was fired. The *Vorwärts* changed its position so abruptly on August 4 that Lenin asked himself if that number was not a forgery of the German General Staff.

To be sure, one can only welcome the fact that your party did not enter the path of chauvinism in September. But that is still only a negative merit. To affirm that your party has passed an examination in revolutionary internationalism, is to be content with too little, is not to foresee the furious offensive that will supervene, in case of war, on the part of bourgeois public opinion, its social-patriotic and communo-chauvinistic agency included. In order to prepare the party for such a test, it is necessary now to polish and repolish its consciousness, to temper its intransigence, to go to the very end of all ideas, not to pardon perfidious friends. In the first place, it is necessary to break with the Freemasons (who are all patriots) and the pacifists of the Maxton type, and to turn towards the Fourth International—not in order to place oneself immediately under its banner—nobody asks that—but to explain oneself honestly with it on the fundamental problems of the proletarian revolution.

It is precisely in view of the approach of the war that all world reaction and above all its Stalinist agency have all evil spring from “Trotskyism” and direct all their main blows against it. Others receive a few blows in passing, being also treated as “Trotskyists”. That is not by chance. The political groupings are polarizing. To reaction and its agents, “Trotskyism” is the international menace of the socialist revolution. Under these conditions the centrists of various nuances, frightened by the growing pressure of the “democratic”-Stalinist reaction, swear at every step: “We are not Trotskyists”, “We are against the Fourth International”, “We are not as bad as you think”. They are playing hide-and-seek. My dear Guérin, it is necessary to put an end to this unworthy game!

### ***Personal Sensitivity and Ideological Intransigence***

Pivert states in a fairly supercilious tone that he and his friends—apparently in contrast to us sinners—are strangers to considerations of a personal nature or of tendency. Aren’t these words astonishing? How can considerations of a personal and a principled (“of tendency”) nature be placed on the same level? Personal preoccupations and complaints play a very great rôle among the petty-bourgeois semi-revolutionists, among the Freemasons, in general among all the centrists, haughty and skittish because they lack self-assurance. But considerations “of tendency”, that is the concern with the political program, the method, the banner. How can one say that ideological intransigence is “unworthy” of our epoch when the latter, more than any other, demands clarity, audacity and intransigence?

In Freemasonry are assembled people of different classes, of different parties, with different interests and with different *personal* aims. The whole art of the leadership of Freemasonry consists in neutralizing the different tendencies and smoothing out the contradictions between the groups and the cliques (in the interests of “democracy” and of “humanity”, that is, of the ruling class). Thus one grows accustomed to speaking aloud about everything save the essential. This false, hypocritical, adulterated morality impregnates, directly or indirectly, the majority of the official labor leaders in France. Marceau Pivert himself is permeated with the influence of this morality. It seems to

him that to name aloud a disagreeable fact is an impropriety. We however judge it to be criminal to be silent on the facts that have an importance for the class struggle of the proletariat. There is the fundamental difference of our morality.

Can you, Guérin, reply clearly and frankly to the workers: what is it that links Pivert to Masonry? I will tell you: it is that which separates him from the Fourth International, that is, petty-bourgeois sentimental indecision, dependence upon official public opinion. If someone tells me that he is a materialist and that at the same time he goes to mass on Sunday, I say that his materialism is false. He may well exclaim that I am intolerant, that I am lacking in tact, that I am assailing his "personality", *etc.* That does not move me. To combine revolutionary socialism with Freemasonry is as inconceivable as to combine materialism with Catholicism. The revolutionist cannot have two political domiciles: one with the bourgeoisie (for the soul), the other with the workers (for current politics). Duplicity is incompatible with the proletarian revolution. Wiping out internal stability, duplicity engenders sensitivity, susceptibility, intellectual timidity. Down with duplicity, Guérin!

### Sectarianism

When Marceau Pivert speaks of our "sectarianism" (we do not deny the presence of sectarian tendencies in our ranks and we fight against them) and of our isolation from the masses, he demonstrates again his incomprehension of the present epoch and of his own rôle in it. Yes, we are still isolated from the masses. By whom or by what? By the organizations of reformism, of Stalinism, of patriotism, of pacifism and by the intermediate centrist groupings of all kinds in which are expressed—sometimes in an extremely indirect and complex form—the self-defensive reflex of expiring capitalism. Marceau Pivert, while *preventing* a certain group of workers from pushing their ideas to the very end and while thus *isolating* these workers from Marxism, reproaches us for being isolated from the masses. One of these isolators is centrism; an active element of this isolator is Pivert. Our tasks consist precisely in removing these "isolators"; to convince some and win them to the cause of the revolution, to unmask and annihilate the others. Pivert simply takes fright at the fact of the isolation of the revolutionists in order to remain very close to the pacifists, the confusionists and the Freemasons, to put off to an indefinite future the serious questions, to invoke the incorrect "rhythm" and the bad "tone"—in a word, to stand in the way of the conjunction of the labor movement and revolutionary Marxism.

Marceau Pivert has a low appreciation of our cadres because he has not understood the fundamentals of the questions which are at present on the order of the day. It seems to him that we occupy ourselves with hair-splitting. He is profoundly mistaken. Just as the surgeon must learn to distinguish each tissue, each nerve in order to be able to handle correctly the scalpel, so the revolutionary militant must carefully and minutely examine all the questions and draw the ultimate conclusions from them. Marceau Pivert sees sectarianism where it isn't.

It is noteworthy that all the genuine sectarians, of the

type of Sneevliet, of Vereecken, *etc.*, gravitate around the London Bureau, the P.O.U.M., Marceau Pivert. The riddle is simple: the sectarian is an opportunist who fears his own opportunism. On the other hand, the range of the centrist's oscillations runs from sectarianism to opportunism. Thence their reciprocal attraction. The sectarian cannot have the masses behind him. The centrist cannot be at their head save for a brief, passing moment. Only the revolutionary Marxist is capable of blazing a trail to the masses.

### The Fourth International

You repeat the old phrases according to which it is first necessary to "convince the masses" of the necessity of the Fourth International and that only afterward must it be proclaimed. This opposition has absolutely nothing real, nothing serious in it, has no genuine content. The revolutionists who are for a definite program and for a definite banner gather together on the international scale to fight for the conquest of the masses. That is precisely what we have done. We shall educate the masses by the experiences of the movement. You want to educate them "preliminarily". How? By the alliance with the imperialist lackey Maxton or with the centrist preacher Fenner Brockway or with the Freemason friends? Do you seriously think that that public will educate the masses for the Fourth International? I can only laugh bitterly. The well-known Jacob Walcher, a vulgar social democrat, taught Marceau Pivert for a long time that "it was not yet time" for the Fourth International, and now he is preparing to pass into the Second International where, moreover, he has his place. When the opportunists invoke the fact that the mass is not mature, it is usually only in order to mask their own immaturity. The *whole* mass will never be mature under capitalism. The different strata of the mass mature at different times. The struggle for the "maturing" of the mass begins with a minority, with a "sect", with a vanguard. There is not and cannot be any other road in history.

Without as yet having doctrine, revolutionary tradition, clear program, masses, you did not fear to proclaim a new party. By what right? Obviously you believe that your ideas give you the right to win the masses, isn't that so? Why then do you refuse to apply the same criterion to the International? Solely because you do not know how to raise yourself up to the international point of view. A national party (even if it is in the form of an initiating organization) is a vital necessity for you, but an international party looks like a luxury, and that can wait. That's bad, Guérin, very bad!

### For an Honest Fusion

Marceau Pivert proposes, instead of the fusion of the organizations, a "united front". That has a solemn air, but there isn't very much in it. A "united front" has sense when it is a question of mass organizations. But that is not the case. Given the separate existence of organizations, episodic agreements on one occasion or another are, to be sure, inevitable. But what interests us is not the isolated cases but the policy as a whole. The central task is the work inside the trade unions, the penetration of the socialist and communist parties. This task cannot be resolved by a "united front", that is, by the diplomatic game of two

feeble organizations. What is needed is a concentration of forces on a definite program in order to penetrate the masses with the united forces. Otherwise all the "rhythms" are lost. Very, very little time is left.

Unlike Pivert, you consider personally that the fusion is possible and necessary but, you add, on the condition that it be a loyal, honest fusion. What do you understand by that? The renunciation of criticism? The mutual remission of sins? Our French section conducts the struggle for its conceptions with a definite program and definite methods. It is ready to fight in common with you for these conceptions; it is ready to fight in your ranks for its ideas—by the methods which every healthy proletarian organization guarantees. That is what we consider an honest unity.

What does Pivert understand by honest unity? "Hands off my Freemasonry, that is my personal affair." "Hands off my friendship with Maxton or with Fenner Brockway." Allow me: Freemasonry is an organization of the class enemy; Maxton is a pacifist lackey of imperialism. How can one not struggle against them? How can one not explain to all the members of the party that political friendship with these gentlemen is an open door to treason? Yet our criticism of Maxton seems to Pivert disloyal or . . . "secondary". Why these superfluous worries? It is necessary to live and to let others live. In the question of political loyalty we have different, not to say opposite, criteria from those of Marceau Pivert. It must be recognized openly.

When I wrote to Pivert, I did not have great illusions, but I did not abandon the hope of a *rapprochement* with him. Pivert's reply showed me that we are dealing with an organic centrist who, under the influence of revolutionary events, will shift to the right rather than to the left. I should be glad if I were mistaken. But at the present stage I cannot permit myself an optimistic judgment.

What is the conclusion, you will ask me? I do not identify Pivert with your young organization. The fusion with it seems to me possible. The technique of the fusion does not depend upon me: that is the business of the comrades who are working on the spot. I am for an *honest* fusion in the sense indicated above: to pose clearly and frankly before all the members of the two organizations all the questions of revolutionary policy. Nobody has the right to swear an oath on his sincerity and to complain about the pettyfoggish spirit of the adversary. It is a question of the fate of the proletariat. One cannot base himself upon the good sentiments of isolated individuals, but on the consistent policy of a party. If fusion were attained, as I hope it will be, and if the fusion should open up a serious discussion, I beg you to consider my letter as a contribution, come from afar, to this discussion.

With my sincere greetings,  
Leon TROTSKY

COYOACAN, D. F., March 10, 1939.

P.S.—I should mention even here, if only in passing, that the name of your party produces a curious impression, from the Marxian standpoint. A party cannot be worker *and* peasant. The peasant class, in the sociological sense, is part of the petty bourgeoisie. A party of the proletariat *and* of the petty bourgeoisie is a petty-bourgeois party. A revo-

lutionary socialist party can only be proletarian. It embraces in its ranks peasants and, in general, individuals coming from other classes *to the extent that they adopt the point of view of the proletariat*. In a revolutionary government we can, to be sure, conclude a bloc with a peasant organization and create a workers' and peasants' government (on the condition that the leadership be assured to the proletariat). But a party is not a bloc, a party cannot be worker *and* peasant. The title of the party is the banner. A mistake in the title is always pregnant with danger. Breaking completely with Marxism, Stalin preached a few years ago in favor of "workers' and peasants' parties for the countries of the East". The Left Opposition came forward vigorously against this opportunism. Today again we see no reason for violating the class point of view, neither for the countries of the East nor the countries of the West.

L. T.

## 'Learn to Work in the Stalinist Manner'

**A**LL CITIZENS OF THE Soviet Union are today studying, as is their duty, the Stalinist *History of the C.P.S.U.*, the unique codification of lies and frame-ups. Among the students are of course to be found thousands of thinking representatives of the youth who are trained in handling facts and checking history by documents. Many of them doubtless ask those official leaders whom they have least cause to fear: "But why do we find that the assertions in this 'history' are refuted at every step by the newspapers and periodicals of the corresponding period?" The instructor, a finger upon his lips, replies significantly: "One must learn to work in the Stalinist manner." This means, one must learn how to lie expediently, or at least wink one's eyes at the totalitarian lie.

We are struck with a peculiar kind of astonishment by the revelations of Vyshinsky and other Stalinist overlords on the subject of illegal persecutions, fake investigations, forced confessions, *etc.* The Soviet press, especially *Pravda*, Stalin's own and almost-chaste daughter, waxes indignant. It is an unheard-of thing, that in our Fatherland, secretaries, investigating magistrates, prosecutors and judges should be guided by base personal considerations in persecuting honest citizens, placing false accusations against them or extorting false testimony from them! And all this on the road from socialism to communism! Incredible!

"Let us work in the Stalinist manner," chants daily the almost-virginal *Pravda*, and after her the rest of the press. "Yes, indeed. Yes, indeed!" echo all the local big and little satraps. And following in Stalin's footsteps they promptly liquidate anyone who dares criticize them or crosses their path or simply casts upon them the reproachful glance of an honest man. The measures of the Kremlin clique inevitably become the measures of local cliques. "We too must work in the Stalinist manner," say in self-justification all the petty cheats who encounter the same sort of difficulties as their sublime patron.

And this is where Vyshinsky comes into his own. In his sternest circular letter he explains: "Thou shalt not poach upon the prerogative of Stalin. The right of political frame-ups is his monopolistic privilege, for he is the Leader and Father of the Peoples." The circular letter is very eloquent but can hardly prove effective. The Bonapartist régime, perhaps the most Bonapartist of all Bonapartist régimes in history, requires a numerically large hierarchy of swindlers and frame-up artists. The legal sphere, the military and historical "sciences", the sphere of statistics, all spheres which bear directly or indirectly upon the interests of the ruling oligarchy—and which one does not?—each one needs its own Yagoda, its own Yezhov, its own Vyshinsky, its own Beria, and a whole detachment of storm troopers at their disposal. In the nature of things, honest and devoted people are to be found everywhere, in science, in technology, in economic institutions, in the army and even within the bureaucratic apparatus. But they are the ones who are dangerous. It is against them that it is necessary to select specialized slickers, 100% Stalinists, a hierarchy of flotsam and jetsam. These people are strung together with lies, frame-ups and deceit. They have no ideal higher than their own personal interests. How can one expect and demand of people for whom the frame-up

serves as a legal and technical aid in their official capacity that they should not apply the frame-up for their personal aims? That would be against all laws of nature.

It is here that one of the tiny "lapses" of the Bonapartist system reveals itself. State power has been centralized but frame-ups have been decentralized. Yet the decentralization of frame-ups carries with it the greatest dangers. The petty provincial secretary or prosecutor demonstrates by his mode of action that he has completely penetrated into Stalin's state secrets and knows how "enemies of the people" are manufactured and how confessions are extorted. The democratization of the frame-up signifies the direct exposure of Stalin. "Oho, so that's how it's done!" finally guesses the least discerning average citizen.

It goes without saying that Vyshinsky-Krechinsky is splendid when he comes to the fore as the standard-bearer of state morals. Who else is qualified if not he? Nevertheless his efforts are in vain. Bonapartism is a régime personalized through and through. All functionaries strive to have haircuts like Stalin and "to work like Stalin". That is why frame-ups have become the all-permeating element of official life. In the end, his own frame-up will choke Stalin.

ALFA

## The Economics of Cotton Farming--II

**WE** HAVE ALREADY SEEN that long-term credit facilities are available almost exclusively to farmers who are well off. Now let us examine briefly the conditions of short term credit.

### Landlords' Short Term Credit:

The bulk of short-term credit in cotton farming is production credit. Loans are most needed when the landlord's funds are lowest, that is, in the spring and summer. In a one-crop system such as cotton farming most of the income is obtained in the fall and early winter.

Prior to the Farm Credit Act of 1933, production credit to landlords at 25% and 30% interest was not unusual. As a result of the Act of 1933, twelve area Production Credit Corporations and numerous local production credit associations were organized. One hundred and forty-seven of the latter were in operation in the seven southeastern cotton states by the end of 1934 and lending money at 5%. To maintain their credit among investors the associations demand ample security, in most cases a first lien on a fair-sized crop. Consequently, only farmers who are relatively well-off can secure loans.

As of December 31, 1937 the Production Credit Associations had \$20,142,013 and the Regional Agricultural Credit Corporations, another government lending agency, had \$1,117,016 outstanding in short-term obligations in the nine chief cotton producing states. About 17% of all landlords were in receipt of loans from the former.

In spite of the creation of the Production Credit Associations and the Regional Agricultural Credit Corporations, the insured commercial bank remains the most important source of the landlord's short-term borrowings. As of

December 31, 1937 such banks had \$166,761,000 outstanding in the nine cotton states, which is over eight times the amount loaned by the Production Credit Associations.

"Through his own farming operations" the landlord, say Johnson, Embree and Alexander (*op. cit.*, p. 28), "can secure from one-half to two-thirds of a tenant's productivity, and through his commercial operations he can, and often does, secure the rest." The method is to sell to the tenant "all that the trade can carry" and charge as much as the borrower can bear.

The following weighted average cost of credit per annum to 588 croppers on 112 farms of North Carolina in 1928 was calculated by H. H. Wooten (*Credit Problems of North Carolina Cropper Farmers*, p. 14):

For cash advances by farm owner . . . . .	20.94%
For farm supplies by farm owner and merchant . . . . .	32.06%
For household supplies by farm owner	53.46%
For household supplies by merchant on owner's guarantee . . . . .	71.29%

Johnson, Embree and Alexander state that in three selected cotton counties studied by them in Mississippi and Texas, there is not only the interest rate, but also the "special" credit price which is even greater than the interest charge, so that the tenant pays an average interest rate of 50% on all production and consumption credit.

For a tenant to borrow from a bank or a recognized credit agency is impossible, as the landlord already has his only worthwhile security, a first lien on the crop.

"It is to the advantage of the owner to encourage the most dependent form of share cropping as a source of the largest profits. And he wishes to hold in greatest depen-



dence just those workers who are most efficient. . . . The means by which landowners do this are: first, the credit system; and second, the established social customs of the plantation order." (*Op. cit.*, p. 8.) The most prevalent of the latter in cases of dispute are the broad leather strap, the lyncher's rope and the shotgun.

### Landlord's Income

According to Woofter (*op. cit.*, pp. 76 ff), the average gross cash income of big landlords on 645 plantations with an average of 905 acres was \$5,095 in 1934. On 111 plantations it was over \$8,000. The average net cash income was \$2,313, ranging from an average of \$1,091 per plantation in the counties of the Black Belt with renter majorities to a high of \$6,944 per unit in the Arkansas River area, where the proportion of croppers and laborers is heavy.

Woofter deduces from his survey that in addition to the size of the plantation, income is dependent upon crop acres, total cotton acres and the amount of land in cotton per plantation, as well as on the productivity of the land. From his figures it may also be concluded that the more tenants of the lowest type on the plantation, the higher the landlord's income will tend to be.

### Tenant's Income

The net income of the tenant is difficult to calculate as it would involve a deduction for arbitrary amounts charged for subsistence or "furnish" advanced by the landlord, and also an addition for A.A.A. benefit payments which were seldom received (Johnson, Embree and Alexander, *op. cit.*; p. 53). The latter were almost invariably credited against debts, past or future.

According to Woofter (*op. cit.*, p. 87, Table 34A), the average cropper family in 1934 got \$91 in cash<sup>1</sup> after settling, and possibly also the following items in money: wages, \$21; A.A.A. payments, \$8; receipts from unshared sales, \$2. In the Lower Delta area, the croppers received only \$33 per family in cash after settling. Only 70% of the families had any cash due them at all, whereas 17% "broke even" and 13% suffered a loss.

The average family of wage-hands received \$148 in cash after the landlord had made his deductions for advances of various kinds.

The average cash received after settling by share tenants was \$152. Theoretically the family also received \$17 in wages, \$17 in A.A.A. benefits and \$16 from unshared sales. In the Lower Delta area, the average amount received per family after settling was \$28. Only 53% of all share tenants in this area had any cash due them, all of the others "broke even" or lost. Even where the average amount of cash after settling was highest<sup>2</sup> on the Atlantic Coast Plain, 25% of the share tenants received no cash at all.

The renter family averaged \$170 for the sale of its crop, and theoretically received \$26 in A.A.A. payments.

According to Johnson, Embree and Alexander (*op. cit.*, pp. 11f), 43.4% of all tenants in six widely differing counties of North Carolina were in debt before the 1934

crop was planted. Woofter (*op. cit.*, p. 61) states that after the 1934 harvest the croppers had an average debt of \$55 per family, while the tenant and renter families owed an average of \$120.<sup>3</sup>

One of the ways of keeping tenants in debt is the following:

A tenant offering five bales of cotton was told, after some owl-eyed figuring, that this cotton exactly balanced his debt. Delighted at the prospect of a profit this year, the tenant reported that he had one more bale which he had not yet brought in. "Shucks," shouted the boss, "why didn't you tell me before? Now I'll have to figure the account all over again to make it come out even." (Quoted by Johnson, Embree and Alexander, p. 9.)

### The Tenant's Standard of Living

It is in direct and immediate interest of the landlord to keep the standard of living of his tenants down as far as possible. He needs the cheapest and most docile labor at his immediate beck and call. Progeny in plenty are particularly desirable. During the three harvest months, September, October and November, the landlord is loath to put on extra hands. The more women and children there are to break their backs from dawn to dusk, the more money the landlord saves.

The result is that the South presents a "miserable panorama of unpainted shacks, rain-gullied fields, straggling fences, rattle-trap Fords, dirt, poverty, disease, drudgery and monotony that stretches for a thousand miles across the Cotton Belt". (Quoted by Johnson, Embree and Alexander, p. 14).

The landlord rules the plantation and its tenants with an iron hand, much as the Russian landlord ruled his estate and his serfs. The cotton serf may change his master, but never his bondage under the plantation system. Woofter states categorically (*op. cit.*, p. 91), "The landlord determines what sort of house the tenant shall live in, and what the amount and characteristics of the monthly 'furnish' of foodstuffs shall be." All statistics show that the high disease and death rates are due to the living conditions which are dictated to the tenant by the system.

The overwhelming majority of tenant dwellings are unpainted frame shacks. In Louisiana and Mississippi, over four-fifths of the tenants lived in such dwellings. Ninety-three percent of the Negro tenants of Louisiana were also housed in unpainted frame shacks. In none of the seven southeastern cotton states are there an appreciable amount of houses of stucco, brick, stone or concrete. North Carolina had the highest proportion in 1934: 1.9% for owners and .6% for tenants.

White tenants averaged 1.2 occupants per room, Negro tenants 1.4; white tenants had an average of 2.4 bedrooms per house, Negro tenants had an average of 2.1. As many as thirteen people have been found living in a single bedroom and kitchen. (Johnson, Embree and Alexander, *op. cit.*, p. 15.) Only 30.2% of all tenants had screens, 43.4% being the average among whites, and 16.6% among Negroes. In every state except Arkansas, screens were reported by less than a quarter of the Negro tenants. Water was drawn from wells by 80% of all tenants; less than

<sup>1</sup> While these payments were reported to Woofter as cash payments, they were very often made in scrip redeemable only at the landlord's commissary.

<sup>2</sup> Here sixteen families received \$373.

<sup>3</sup> The greater indebtedness of share tenants and renters is explained by the fact that the expenditures of the cropper are more closely supervised, the more efficient operation of the cropper group, and the larger borrowings of tenants owning work stock.

1% made use of stream water. Of all tenants, 67.5% had only unimproved outhouses, 29% had no toilets of any kind. Less than 3% of all tenants had kerosene or gas-line stoves; less than 1% had gas or electric cooking facilities. Over 90% cooked on wood or coal stoves.

The clothing which tenants wear is of the coarsest and crudest kind. The usual garb is denim overalls for men and the cheapest cotton dresses for women. If underwear is worn, it is home-made. Brogan shoes are worn without socks. Often lack of sufficient warm clothing prevents children from going to school and adults from attending public meetings.

The usual diet of the tenant consists of fat salt-pork, meal and molasses, with pork consisting of about 40% of all food. Rarely are sweet-potatoes and cow-peas available. Vegetable gardens are taboo, as the landlord would not share in their produce. Large plantations usually "furnish" the tenant on the ration system, so that he will not eat up more than his income amounts to. The usual allotment is two pecks of meal and four pounds of pork per family every two weeks. Some landlords provide only meal.

"We can't get any flour, snuff, shoes, sugar, coffee, thread or anything from the landlord but meat and meal. We have a devil of a time. No soap, soda, or salt. Can't borrow a dime, not a damn cent. If this ain't hell, I'll eat you. We work our damn heads off and git nothing. The harder we work, the deeper in debt we gits." (Quoted by Johnson, Embree and Alexander, p. 18.) Thus put by one tenant, it is typical of the situation of the vast majority.

High death rate and disease incidence are due to poor and insufficient food, as well as to miserable shacks without any improvements. Lack of proper diet causes pellagra, lack of screens facilitates the spread of malaria. The primitive water supply and sanitary facilities contribute to typhoid epidemics. The death rate from malaria is about fifteen times that of other sections, about twelve times as high for pellagra, and about two and a half times as high for typhoid and paratyphoid. (United Bureau of Census, 1930, Mortality Statistics.)

... the squalid condition of the cotton raisers of the South is a disgrace to the southern people. They stay in shacks, thousands of which are unfit to house animals, much less human beings. Their children are born under such conditions of medical treatment, food, clothing, as would make an Eskimo rejoice that he did not live in a cotton growing country. (Johnson, Embree and Alexander, *op. cit.*, from the Dallas, Texas, *News*, p. 15.)

## Education

Public school education in the South, although improving slightly, is on a grade approximating that of the Balkans before the last war. The six southeastern cotton states (the seventh, Louisiana, is excluded) are far below average in length of rural school term.<sup>4</sup> Some states close their schools as early as January or February 1. In the same states the term in Negro schools, both rural and urban, is shorter by about a month and a half. In per capita cost for current expenses and interest per pupil in average daily attendance, which in the South is relatively low, all of the

seven southeastern cotton states fall into the lowest twelve of the nation.

In 1932, the median salary for rural white teachers in the U. S. was \$945. In seventeen southern states it was \$788, and for Negroes \$388. (W. H. Gaumnitz, *Status of Teachers and Principals Employed in the Rural Schools in the United States*, p. 68.) In 1933-1934, 40,000 Negro teachers received less than \$500 per year, many less than \$100. The proportion of illiterates over 21 years of age in the rural areas of the seven southeastern cotton states in 1930 (Fifteenth Census of the United States, 1930. Occupations Vol. IV) ranged from 10.1% in Arkansas to 23.7% in Louisiana. In five of the seven states, illiteracy in rural areas amounted to 15% of the population, or more.

## Relief

Hoffsommer in "The A.A.A. and the Cropper" (*Journal of Social Forces*, XIII, May 1935, pp. 494-502) reports that of the 800 landlords interviewed by him in 1934, 90% were opposed to any change which might make the tenant less dependent on the landlord, and 40% were opposed to granting relief because it might spoil him as a tenant if and when he might be used again. The landlord feared that relief would raise the tenants' standard of living to the extent that a resumption of bargaining on the old basis would be difficult.

For the thirty-three month relief period, January, 1933 through September, 1935, the seven southeastern cotton states expended an average of \$17.49 per capita for every person in the state, varying from \$7.25 in Alabama to \$24.41 in Louisiana. The average per capita expenditure for the United States as a whole in the same period was \$31.03.

The relief grant itself in September 1935 was from 22% to 60% less than the national average of \$20.23 for all rural areas. The grant ranged from \$8 per case per month in South Carolina, to \$15.77 in Louisiana. Each class of Negroes received less than each corresponding class of whites, and with the exception of non-agricultural cases, the grant to each class of Negroes was less than the median of \$8.98 per month per case for all classes of agricultural whites. For a Negro to receive any relief at all he had to be in much direr straits than a white.

## "Rehabilitation"

One of the achievements of the government's crop restriction program was the displacement of tenants. Thirty-seven percent of all agricultural relief cases in the eastern cotton area in June 1935, 30,000 families were of this class. Slightly over 4,000 white and slightly over 2,000 Negro families of a total of some 52,000 cases were considered "worthy" of rehabilitation. Each white family received an advance of \$205 and each Negro family an advance of \$122 for subsistence and capital goods such as seed, fertilizer, work stock, farming and household equipment. This aid made those fortunate enough to get it independent only to the extent that they were not compelled to pay exorbitant prices and interest for "furnish" from the landlord or merchant. They were still, however, compelled to work land not their own.

Jerry PYTLAK

<sup>4</sup> The average for rural United States was 159.9 days in 1931-1932. Three southeastern cotton states averaged less than 130 days for the same period. Since the beginning of the 1933-1939 term, Louisiana is offering eight months of instruction.

# The International of Universal Chauvinism

**T**HE STALINISTS try to be, in every country of the world, the most chauvinistic party. It is their formula of internationalism. It began, of course, in Russia, where they celebrate as national heroes Prince Alexander Nevsky, saint of the Orthodox Church, the despot-czar Peter I, the famous general Suvarov, who won his victories against insurgent Poland and in his capacity as commander of the troops of feudal Europe against the French Republic. In France, the communist party has "rediscovered" the slogan of "France to the Frenchmen!" and preaches the veneration of all the national glories, "from Vercingétorix to the Son of the People [Thorez]", Joan of Arc included. But what is still not widely known is the fact that the German Stalinists too make a chauvinistic propaganda and have the ambition to pass for better German nationalists than the Nazis. In the last number of the revue, *Die Internationale*, published by the Communist Party of Germany, we find, in an article by Hans Behrend on "Twenty Years of the Communist Party of Germany and the Soviet Union", some truly edifying things. Hans Behrend defends the C.P.G. against an accusation which he seems to consider particularly grave, the accusation of "internationalism". He writes:

The C.P.G. is a profoundly national party of the German people. It is reproached for its internationalism? It is proud to be the most advanced section of that Marxian labor movement which carried Germany's name all over the world and brought millions of foreigners to learn the language of Marx and Engels, and to read and speak German; the Marxian movement which, by its social conquests, placed Germany in the first rank of the historical movement. . . . (*Die Internationale*, No. 1-2, 1939, p. 72.)

According to Behrend, the work of Marx had no other importance than that of getting better publicity for the sellers of German grammars. Let us thank our fate that Stalin, in spite of his eulogists, is not a second Marx, otherwise everybody would be constrained to learn to speak Russian with a Georgian accent. . . .

As a result of their nationalistic attitude, the German Stalinists reproach Hitler and his policy not for being directed against the interests of the workers of Germany and of the whole world, but because they do not correspond to the "national interests" of Germany.

The recent conference of the C.P.G. in Berne adopted a resolution from which we quote the following passages (February 1939):

This policy of Hitlerite fascism does not serve the national interests of Germany but the interests of the big munitions merchants and the Nazi bureaucracy. It is in reality a betrayal of the true interests of the German people, for the attempt of the Nazi dictatorship and of the Axis to impose upon the peoples a fascist Versailles must inevitably fail in the same way as the Versailles dictated formerly to Germany, and can only lead to a terrible war without hope. . . .

In face of the crass policy of the Hitlerite régime which entails terrible consequences for the whole people, it is the task of the communists, of the anti-fascists and of all the Germans conscious of their responsibilities, to unmask the chauvinistic phrases of the Hitlerite régime, to demonstrate to the wide masses the anti-national character of this régime.

Note that the German Stalinists attack the bellicosity of Hitler because he is leading Germany into a war "without hope", which means into a war without the hope of victory. A fine anti-fascism that combats the Hitlerite policy because it does not give enough assurance of a military victory for German imperialism in case of war! This attitude signifies that the C.P.G. has in practice abandoned defeatism towards fascism; it is evident that in spite of all the declarations against Hitler and in spite of certain defeatist reminiscences to be found in the literature of the C.P.G., the Stalinists cannot fight consistently against Hitlerism and its war policy if, in advance, they shed tears over a possible military defeat of German imperialism.

The present leader of the C.P.G., Wilhelm Pieck, grows indignant in an article on "Twenty Years of Struggle of the C.P.G." (in the same issue of *Die Internationale*): "the crime of these Pan-German war-mongers" who, in 1918, brought about the "collapse" of the German people and the "panicky capitulation of the General Staff to the enemy" (p. 21).

The former Spartacist, Wilhelm Pieck, now regrets that imperial Germany lost the war! It is a striking example of the demoralization of the leading strata of Stalinism.

What then do the German Stalinists want? They demand the breaking off of the alliance that Hitler has concluded with Italy and Japan—not because it is an imperialist alliance but because the allies are not very reliable. Here is what the resolution of the C.P.G. conference says:

The conference of the C.P.G. in Berne declares that the policy of alliances with the war-mongers, with Mussolini and the Japanese militarists, is the greatest danger to peace and to the security of Germany, and that, for this reason, the national interests of Germany demand the liquidation of the war alliance with Rome and Tokyo. These allies of Hitler, who were the fiercest defenders of the Versailles Treaty, will attempt at the first opportunity that offers itself to betray and enthrall the German people as they are doing today with other peoples. . . .

Ah! if only one could rely on Mussolini and the Mikado!

As an alternative to the "Anti-Comintern" bloc, the German Stalinists offer to their imperialism an alliance with the U.S.S.R. Behrend writes in his already-quoted article:

The worst foreign foe could not act more injuriously against Germany than these Nazi leaders who brought Germany into antagonism with its great, natural and invincible ally in the East, and exchanged it for the alliance with certain rapacious governments who sit upon volcanoes in their own country.

As Germans we stand for the alliance with the Soviet Union. . . .

The idea of an alliance with the Soviet power which the C.P.G. proposes in sharpest contrast to the Hitlerite foreign policy, and which is independent of whether Germany is socialistically organized or capitalistically, is being shared more and more by all Germans who want to live in peace with the Soviet Union. (Pp. 73, 77.)

Which means that the efforts of the German Stalinists are not directed against the imperialist policy of German fascism as such, but only against a certain orientation of this policy. The demand for an alliance with the Soviet Union, posed "independently" of the internal régime of

Germany, that is, independent of the question of whether German fascism remains in power or not, can have no other meaning than that of a promise to support the foreign policy of German imperialism if it comes to an agreement with Stalin. Naturally, the Soviet Union cannot be prohibited from trying to find grounds for an understanding with the fascist countries in order to avert war, but what is absolutely inadmissible is not to say to the German workers that the policy of Hitlerism would remain an imperialist and war-mongering policy even in case of an agreement with the Soviet Union; it is absolutely inadmissible and criminal to treat the struggle of the German workers as a function of the diplomatic needs of the U.S.S.R.

It will be hard to find examples of such abject demagoguery as is offered by the Stalinist International which, in all capitalist countries, plays the card of chauvinism, which, in the service of the foreign policy of Stalin, eggs on, by its nationalistic propaganda, the workers of one country against those of another, which, in the long run, can only profit the imperialists who are preparing the war.

To conclude on the German Stalinists, let us still quote from an article by Pieck (*Volkszeitung*, Feb. 5, 1939), in which he speaks of the program that the C.P.G. proposes for the democratic republic that it wants to create after the fall of Hitler. Our readers know that for some time the German Stalinists have stopped demanding the work-

ers' power, but only a democratic republic, "of a new type", modelled after Spain, that is, after the Stalino-police dictatorship of Negrin. Pieck writes in this article:

It goes without saying that the democratic republic must guarantee the military force [*Wehrhaftigkeit*] of the country, by the creation of a genuine popular army as well as by its good equipment. But for that, the war industry must be in the hands of the state and not in the hands of a small stratum of profiteers and war-mongers.

The generals of the Reichswehr may rest easy. Their posts will not be lost to them. As for the nationalization of the armaments industry, it changes nothing in the capitalist character of the bourgeois republic and besides, a considerable part of that industry already belongs to the state under the Hitlerite régime.

But the German Stalinists will not find many dupes among the militants of the illegal anti-fascist movement in Germany. Even those workers who still consider themselves members of the C.P.G. will not allow themselves to be poisoned by Stalinist neo-nationalism, which only serves Hitlerite chauvinism. For it is long since most of the illegal militants of the C.P.G. in Germany have stopped following the slogans coming from the leaders of the Communist International.

[TRANSLATED FROM *Juin* 36]

Jacques DETIL

PARIS, March 24, 1939

## Wars--Defensive and Aggressive

### Colonial Conquests Since the '70s— Wars that Materialized and Wars that Didn't

LET US CONSIDER the most important events in the field of colonial conquest since the '70s of the Nineteenth century.

Since 1870, England has enriched itself in Asia with the following territories: Beluchistan, Burma, Cyprus, British North Borneo, Wei-hai-wei. The Straits Settlements were extended. In 1899, the protectorate of Koweit was taken over, the Sinai Peninsula was conquered, etc.

In Australia, England won the southeastern part of New Guinea, a part of the Solomon and the Tonia Islands.

In Africa: Egypt, the Egyptian Sudan with Nyanda, British East Africa, British Somali, Zanzibar; in South Africa, the two Boer republics, Rhodesia, British Central Africa; in West Africa, Nigeria, etc.

France conquered: Tonkin, Annam, Leos, Tunis, Madagascar, parts of the Sahara, of the Sudan, of the Ivory Coast territories in Dahomey, on the Somali coast, etc.

Germany carried off since 1884 (the official beginning of the German colonial policy): Cameroon, Togo, German Southwest Africa, German East Africa, New Guinea, a whole series of islands (Kaiser Wilhelm Land, Bismarck Archipelago, Caroline Islands, etc.).

Russia seized possession of Urga (in China) in 1870, of Kulchu in 1871, of Fergana in 1870, and then of Manchuria; finally, it has been pursuing its latest policy in Persia. . .

We have mentioned only the four Great Powers. But Japan too, since 1874, began its imperialist policy with the expedition against Formosa.

At the beginning of the Twentieth century, a few years brought about three sharp conflicts over Morocco, two over Balkan affairs. And each time European peace hung by a thread.

We present here an incomplete table of the wars conducted since 1870:

1870-1871, the German-French war.

1873-1879, Holland's war upon the Sultan in Sumatra.

1876, Serbia and Montenegro against Turkey.

1877-1878, the Russo-Turkish war.

1879, three English armies invade Afghanistan (concessions are made to England).

1883-1885, France against China (over Tonkin).

1885, Servian-Bulgarian war (the Serbs are defeated at Slirnitza, Peace of Bucharest on March 3, 1886).

1885, Russia against Afghanistan ("victory" of General Komarov).

1893, war of the French and the conquest of Dahomey (Guinea).

1894, Japan against China over Corea (Japan wins).

1895, Spain against the Island of Cuba.

1896, Italy against Menelik (the Abyssinian war; Italy defeated).

1897, Greco-Turkish war (defeat of the Greeks; the Isle of Crete obtains autonomy in 1898).

1898, Spanish-American war (over Cuba; Spain de-

feated.

1899-1900, England's war against the Boers.

1900, war of the European Powers against China (Boxer war).

1904, England against Tibet (victory of England).

1904-1905, Germany against the Hereros.

1904-1905, Russo-Japanese war.

1911-1912, Italy against Turkey (over Tripoli).

1912, war of the Slavic Balkan peoples against Turkey.

1913, Servia and Greece against Bulgaria.

1914, outbreak of the World War.

If these wars are analyzed, it is seen that most of them were of a purely imperialistic nature. Before us lies a segment of entirely new wars which are quite different from the national wars of the former epoch. Their causes are different. Their social content is different. They are the expression of a different stage of development of capitalism.

Of the same character are the majority of those conflicts in recent times which were resolved without war. The famous pacifist, Professor Fried, tried to make a list of prevented wars. In the period between 1904 and 1916, he enumerated 17 such wars that did not reach the point of outbreak. They include the following conflicts:

1. Hull incident, 1904 (conflict between England and Russia).
2. Moroccan conflict, 1905 (conflict between Germany and France).
3. Separation of Norway from Sweden, 1905.
4. Conflict between Japan and the United States, 1907.
5. Moroccan conflict, 1908 (France against Germany).
6. The Casablanca incident, 1908 (Germany against France).
7. Annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina.
8. Austria against Turkey, 1908.
9. Bulgaria against Turkey, 1908.
10. Turkey against Greece, 1908 (over the Isle of Crete).
11. Japan—China, 1909 (over the Manchurian Railway).
12. Bolivia—Peru—Argentina, 1909.
13. United States—Chile, 1909.
14. Russia—Japan, 1909 (conflict over Manchuria).
15. Greece—Turkey, 1910 (Crete).
16. Chile-Peru, 1910.
17. Ecuador—Peru, 1910.

We thus see lying before us a whole period of imperialist conflicts and imperialist wars.

### **A Few Words on the Savagery of Modern Colonial Policy**

The German imperialists began their colonial policy later than the others. Their first steps in this field were made almost at the beginning of the Twentieth century. And yet: how much blood and filth, how much violence and cruelty are on their heads!

Their whole colonial policy, from start to finish, is *one* crime. How incredible do their "treaties" sound which they conclude with the natives while stealing their land! "We, the undersigned independent [!] kings and army chiefs of Cameroon, cede our possessions to Herren Eduard

Schmidt and Johann Voss, representatives of the firm of G. Wermann," reads one such treaty. In place of their signatures, 23 Negroes ("independent kings"), since they could not write, make the sign of the cross. . . The other part of Cameroon was sold to the same firm of Wermann for 150 tons of rum!

English and French capitalists acted the same way only a short time ago in India. Whoever is on the spot first, whoever hangs out his national flag first, is the master. . .

And then the cruelties and robberies of the servants of German imperialism against the population of the colonies! Whippings are the lightest penalty in the Cameroons. During the uprising in Cameroon, hundreds of Negroes were tied together on the orders of the German officials, Leist and Wehlau, and left in the hot sun-rays until they died of thirst. The scum of German militarism is sent into the colonies, hence the unheard-of cruelties. Women are lashed with rods in the presence of their husbands, whole settlements are burned to the ground and left to die of hunger. Shooting is resorted to on every occasion. At the beginning of the Herero uprising, this tribe numbered about 100,000 persons. According to official statistics, there were only 21,699 left on January 1, 1913: 7,071 men, 9,209 women and 5,420 children.

In 1905, a new uprising broke out in East Africa. The introduction of forced labor, inhuman taxes and constant executions, provoked the uprising of the Matmuba tribe. The German soldiers gave free rein to their lust for pillage. In 1913, the German Colonial Office declared in an official report that 20,000 natives lost their lives at the time. The German Professor Schilling, however, asserted that no less than 150,000 natives were killed during the uprising. Villages were burned, the crop destroyed. Many weakened natives became the prey of lions. The lions were satiated with human flesh at that time. . .

We are writing about the cruelty of the German imperialists. But cruelty is not a characteristic of the German imperialists alone. Let us recall what reached the public about the policy of English imperialism in India, of the policy of the Belgian government in the Belgian Congo, of the French policy in the French colonies! Let us mention only this, that according to the calculations of Sir William Digly, in the period from 1850 to 1870 in India, 5,000,000 persons died of *hunger*, and in the period from 1875 to 1900, some 26,000,000.<sup>1</sup> Let us add that in 1896, 2,000,000 Indians died of the plague. Let us recall further that the former English Viceroy of India, Lord Curzon, estimated the average annual income of an inhabitant of British India at \$6.50. And all this frightfulness is produced mainly because England exports the largest part of the Indian crop (hence the starvation), and that taxes and imposts are placed mainly upon the agricultural population (about 80% of all the taxes)!

Recently, an interesting booklet on English customs in India was written by the former American Secretary of State, William Bryan, who collected personal experiences. This booklet, which appeared in the Indian language, was immediately confiscated by the English government. The American periodical, *Coast Seaman*, produces some data which are taken from this booklet. The tax burden in India is relatively twice as heavy as in England. Mortality,

<sup>1</sup> For details, see, e.g., Dr. Herm. v. Staden, *Indien im Weltkrieg*, Stuttgart, 1915.

which was 2.4% in 1882-1884, was 3% in 1892-1894, and is now 3.4%. Starvation takes on terrifying dimensions. "England boasts of having brought peace to India, in reality it has brought death to millions of persons in India . . . It sucks the sap of life from India by means of robberies which are justified by law." Thus writes not some "agitator", not even some "German", but a man who occupied a high post in the friendly American government.

In 16 years, 8,000,000 persons died of the plague in India; the land tax amounts to 65%; the average earnings of an Indian amount to 10 cents. But England gets a yearly income of \$166,000,000 from India. Thus writes the committee of the Indian Revolutionary Party in an appeal made public in San Francisco in 1916.

Let us recall the "international expeditions", which, the famous American politician, Morgan Schuster (who was a Persian minister in 1911), wrote in his book in 1912, made all literate Europe indignant—a book that bears the eloquent title, *The Strangling of Persia*.<sup>2</sup>

### The True Motives of Imperialist War

In 1909, the well-known English monthly, *The United Service Institution*, published the excellent prize-awarded treatise of a high English naval officer. In this treatise, we find the following noteworthy lines:

We [England] undertake no war out of any sentimental reasons. I doubt if this has happened even once. War is the product of commercial conflicts; the aim of war—to impose upon the enemy those economic conditions one considers necessary for oneself. We utilize all possible pretexts for war, but their actual causes are always questions of trade. Whether defense or the necessity of a strategic position is alleged as the cause of war, whether treaties must be violated or similar reasons play a part—in the long run everything has its origin in commercial interests. For the simple but decisive reason that trade is our heart's blood.

What is, is said here clearly and openly: "We imperialists (this of course also applies to the German imperialists) seize upon any pretext, we speak of defense, of violated treaties, etc. But the essential is one thing: the money-bag, the interests of the capitalists."

That is the pure truth. That's what imperialist wars are. Outward causes and pretexts may seem credible. One is "defending" himself, another is fighting nobly for the independence of a country, a third is defending the interests of "civilization", purely out of idealism, against "Russian barbarians".

In reality, however, all fight for the interests of a handful of magnates of finance capital.

What has the criterion of defensive wars to do with all this?

It is extremely easy to distinguish defense and attack in words, but extremely difficult in practise to establish exactly who is the aggressor and who the defender. In almost all the wars of recent decades, as in former times, both sides considered themselves the attacked. (Ruedorffer, *Grundzüge der Weltpolitik*, p. 218.)

By and large, the instrument of arbitration courts serves only to avert the outbreak of *unwanted* wars. . . (Loc. cit., p. 167.)

Whoever considers the history of the colonial expansion of the Great European Powers in recent decades . . . will find without trouble that all the wars of modern times in which the Great

European Powers participated were, if not contrived by the interests of capital, at least initiated by them. (Loc. cit., p. 157.)

These are the valuable admissions of the well-known German imperialist, Ruedorffer. So far as candor is concerned, they are not inferior to the above-mentioned declarations of the decorated English author.

Even the bourgeois-democratic pacifists have rightly appraised the true value of the assertions of all imperialist governments: "We" are the attacked, "they" are the attackers. In the international organ of these pacifists, *La Voix de l'Humanité*, January 5, 1916, we find the following table, drawn up not without humor:

#### Every belligerent state contends:

1. That it is conducting a defensive war and is fighting for the just cause.
2. That it is conducting a fight for the freedom and civilization of all peoples.
3. That it is striving for a lasting peace.
4. That it is bending all efforts and will fight until the enemy has been conclusively beaten.
5. That it will be the victor, beyond a doubt.
6. That it is forging ahead victoriously and has only slight losses to record.
7. That the bombs of its aviators hit only the military institutions of the enemy and always with great success.
8. That its aviators and its artillery are far better than the aviators and artillery of the enemy.
9. That at this very moment it is planning great measures which promise absolute success.
10. That the good Lord is on its side.

#### And every belligerent state further contends:

1. That the enemy wanted the war and was preparing for it long ago.
2. That the enemy began the war and attacked "us".
3. That the enemy is conducting a war of conquest and wants to dominate the world.
4. That the enemy is trampling underfoot the rights of the people.
5. That the enemy has violated the neutrality of the small states and threatens the neutrality of other small states.
6. That the enemy is conducting the war with barbarous means.
7. That the enemy uses dum-dum bullets.
8. That the enemy is misusing the Red Cross.
9. That the enemy mistreats prisoners.
10. That the enemy violates women, murders and plunders.
11. That the military courts of the enemy are a mockery of the law.
12. That the enemy kills prisoners.
13. That the enemy bombards open cities, kills women and children, but does not do "us" the slightest military damage thereby.
14. That the attack of the enemy is always nipped in the bud or else is beaten back with great losses for the enemy.
15. That the enemy is using gas bombs.
16. That the enemy is a pirate on the high seas.
17. That the enemy is needlessly preventing neutral trade.
18. That the reports of the enemy are lies through and through, and calumnies to boot.
19. That the enemy is trying to influence the neutrals by means of lies, threats and bribery.
20. That the enemy is egging the neutral states on to war—to their greatest misfortune.
21. That the enemy is suffering from a lack of money, rising living costs, industrial crises.
22. That the war loans of the enemy are subscribed only by means of deception.
23. That epidemics are ravaging the enemy.
24. That strikes and domestic disturbances are the rule in the land of the enemy.
25. That the enemy's ministers and generals are resigning.

<sup>2</sup> W. Morgan Schuster, ex-Treasurer-General of Persia, *The Strangling of Persia, A Record of European Diplomacy and Oriental Intrigue*, London and Leipzig, 1912.

26. That the enemy is war-weary.<sup>3</sup>

This list could be extended further. . . . If the wide masses of the people could read the newspapers of all countries, they would see that the ruling classes say the same thing everywhere, they would be convinced that the bourgeoisie employs the same methods everywhere, the same "technique" for the deception of "its" people. But the masses of the people read—if they read at all—only the press of "their" bourgeoisie and of "their" social-chauvinists, who only parrot the wisdom of their homeland bourgeoisie. And it is noteworthy that the same arguments, the same "technique" function in all the belligerent countries. There is but one thing left for the bourgeois and social-chauvinistic writers to do: in place of the name of one fatherland, to put the name of another, *e.g.*, Germany in place of Russia, and their goal is attained.

### Some Concluding Remarks

The stage of the *military armament* of a given country may serve as one of the important factors for an objective estimation of which side is the aggressor from the *diplo-matic* standpoint and which side the defender. Tell me who is better prepared militarily for the war, and I will tell you who it is that wanted the war at the given moment, who brought it about! Naturally, it may happen that this or that government has overrated its war preparedness, or that it is compelled, *in spite of* insufficient armament, to begin the war—for example, for reasons of domestic policy, *etc.* But all other conditions being equal, the thesis just put forward is absolutely applicable.

Back in the earliest days, there were great disputes over the question of which side was the aggressor and which the defender. Most decisive is the outcome of the war itself, victory or defeat in the war. History usually characterizes as the aggressor the one who has *triumphed*. The war of the Huns against the Visigoths in the '70s of the Fourth century may serve as a classic example from early times. Most historians agree that in 373 the Visigoths attacked. The Huns, however, are known in history as "Huns" because they proved to be the stronger in the course of the war.

Book after book has been written on the diplomatic history of the war of 1914-1916. The social-chauvinists respect dates and the contents of the dispatches of this or that diplomat on the eve of the war as exhaustive arguments. We are less interested in the question. The contents of the White, Yellow, Gray and other books, which contain fragments of the diplomatic negotiations, have of course a great significance for the appraisal of the system of modern diplomacy. But a serious importance for judging the character of the war of 1914-1916 and for establishing the socialist tactic in this war, is not contained in them. It is very likely that public opinion will consider that side the aggressor which carries off the final victory.

Such a judgment would not be an absolutely arbitrary one. Both belligerent sides would like to win; but the victory depends mainly upon the degree of military armament. The one that was better prepared militarily, has more objective prospects for winning, and all other conditions

being equal, had more cause to undertake the war; and can therefore—again, all other conditions being equal—be considered as the directly aggressive side.

On the basis of her military armament, Prussia was able to undertake a war of aggression against France in 1870. Bismarck's machinations lead Napoleon III to declare war first. But when it later appeared that France was not at all prepared militarily, whereas Prussia was excellently armed, down to the last button on her soldiers' coats—this was the best objective proof that Prussia, *at that moment*, had wanted the war.

The degree of military armament still has the same importance today. At the beginning of the war of 1914, Germany was again best prepared for the war; and once more this gives one the right to think that *at that moment* Germany wanted the war.

But this has absolutely no importance for the position of the working class towards the wars of our epoch in general, and towards the war of 1914 in particular.

We have seen that even in the epoch of the national wars, the question of who attacked first was not decisive for democracy. In our present epoch, however, defensive wars in the old sense of the word have become altogether impossible.

Twenty-five years ago, Wilhelm Liebknecht, who had the epoch of the national wars in mind, spoke of a "just" war, one in which he admitted the participation of the social democrats. A quarter of a century later, Plekhanov digs up these words in order to be able to say: That's right, we too are for a "just" war.

By referring to Liebknecht's words about a "just" war, Plekhanov facilitates a rectification of his false contention. For in reality, what does Plekhanov's juggling with the criterion of defensive war consist of? Of this, that he mixes up two epochs—the epochs of the national wars and the epoch of the imperialist wars.

Can "just" wars in general still take place in the imperialist epoch?

Yes, but only in two cases. The first case would be the war of a proletariat which has triumphed in some country, and which defends socialism against other states which represent the capitalist régime. The second—a war of China, India or similar countries which are oppressed by the imperialism of other lands and are fighting for their independence *against* these imperialist Powers.

The replacement of one epoch by the other appears most crassly in Italy. In 1859, we saw there a typically national war. In 1859 it was a question of the emancipation of Italy from the Austrian yoke, of Italian unification, in which *the whole people, the whole of democracy*, was interested. Austria was the oppressor, Italy the oppressed.

In 1859, shortly before the war, we see a man like N. A. Dobrolyubov stigmatize Austria by having her say the following words:

We, your Masters, are inexpressibly outraged  
That you rebel-folk disturb us with your rising! . . .  
What? For forty years, without once giving way,  
We shielded all the world from your blunders! . . .  
Upon you we lavished all that we possessed:  
Spies, new hangmen, garrisons and jails.  
E'en our speech, our customs, the law and the tribunal—  
And what is your thanks for Austria's faithful aid?

<sup>3</sup> *La Voix de l'Humanité*, No. 58, 1916. Prominent politicians of France, England and other countries contribute to the editing of this periodical.

For shame! What would you that we grant you more?  
Why can we not, as heretofore, in noblest concord live?  
Or mayhap our soldiers there are still too few for you?  
Or else maybe the police we have you think is ill-  
advised?

Why, swiftly do we move! The remedy is instant,  
A regiment we'll gladly quarter in every town and  
hamlet. . .

And now? Now things look quite different. Now Italy fights against Turkey for Tripoli, against Austria for Albania, Dalmatia, Istria. Can one still speak today of a just defensive war of Italy?

A just war *between* imperialist governments is impossible, just as impossible as a "just" struggle between several thieves for the division of their loot. *Every war—except for the two cases named—is, in our time, an absolutely "dishonorable" war.*

Nor can it be otherwise, so long as we apply a terminology suited for *one* epoch to one that is entirely different. There can now be no "just" wars between the Great European Powers which pursue imperialist policy. The Triple Alliance and the Triple Entente were the two important Power groupings, decisive for all of European policy. And these two groupings arose, lived and acted under the sign of imperialism, where, as Kautsky rightly observes, one plays the aggressor today, the other tomorrow, and then back again.

If those socialists who till now considered the criterion of defensive war correct could learn from history, they would have to say now: "Up to now we held to this criterion and—we now experience the collapse of the Second International, an unheard-of, unprecedented disgrace. *Anything but the repetition of August 4, 1914!* Anything but the repetition of this shame, in which, by applying the criterion of defensive war, we become traitors to the proletariat, agents of the bourgeoisie!"

And whatever the fate of the Workers' International may be—one thing can be said today with assurance: the theory of defensive war must be buried for all honest socialists. The experience of 1914 has buried it.

Can there be a more convincing, a more gruesome lesson than the one given by the war of 1914-1916? A theory which led to the collapse of the International during such events can no longer be defended.

Where have the "defense of the Fatherland" and the theory of defensive war led us? To the policy of August 4, to the Südekums of all countries, to complete collapse!

*During* the war, so long as the passions still rage, one can, if he is stubborn, continue to adhere to the criterion of the defensive war: "We are defending ourselves, we are in the right!" But once the war ends, and one is forced to draw the balance, everyone who thinks honestly will have to give up this criterion.

Could one speak, in the "just" national wars of the earlier epoch, of the struggle of the bourgeoisie against the proletariat, which put the socialist overturn on the order of the day? No, there could be no question of that. For the conditions were not yet ripe for socialism, the proletariat had not yet gathered itself together, everywhere, as a class. In the imperialist wars, however, the struggle against the labor movement is one of the main tasks of the imperialist bourgeoisie.

To characterize an imperialist war as "just" is possible only for an agent of the bourgeoisie. Now, however, this is, unfortunately, done also by such people as call themselves socialists.

"We are conducting a just war!" cry Südekum and—Hindenburg. "No, it is we who are conducting the just war," answer Plekhanov and Thomas. . . .

The criterion of defensive war has long ago become obsolete. If it had not happened long before the war of 1914, this war would have buried it. What has this war showed? Who appealed to the criterion of defensive war? Everyone and no one. Everyone—for to justify their piratical policy, the imperialists of every country seized upon it, the diplomats and governments of all the peoples, the deceivers of the European press, regardless of their language. No one—for no one really took the criterion seriously.

And then the International! Could the criterion of defensive war save it from collapse? All the parties, including the official social-chauvinistic ones, assure us that they are holding strictly to the criterion of defensive war. Germans, Frenchmen, Italians—all contend that they are observing the principle of defensive war. Who among them is right? Everyone and no one. For the principle, in and by itself, is no longer valid. For the proletariat, however, it has now led to the collapse of the Second International.

There was a time when even Plekhanov knew that the abstract criterion of defensive war is not worth much. In August 1905 he wrote:

Just as dogmatic is the viewpoint that we socialists may sympathize only with "defensive wars". Such a viewpoint is correct only from the standpoint of the conservative *sum cuique*. The international proletariat which consistently defends its standpoint, must be in sympathy with every war which—*regardless whether it is a war of defense or aggression*—can remove an important obstacle on the road of the socialist revolution.<sup>4</sup>

Plekhanov's terminology is not very clear. He makes no distinction between the defensive war in historical respects and the defensive war in diplomatic respects. In any case, however, he perceives that the theory of defensive war is inadequate and false. Defensive or aggressive war, it makes no difference, says Plekhanov. Only a dogmatist can think that "defense" or "attack" is decisive for us. For us socialists the problem is somewhat different. Decisive for us are the interests of the social revolution.

The class struggle assumes an acute revolutionary character, it overturns the old conceptions handed down by earlier generations; and moreover where the oppressed class convinces itself that its interests are identical with the interests of the oppressed classes of other countries, but are opposed to the interests of the ruling classes of its own country, the *concept of the Fatherland* loses in large measure its former allure. (Plekhanov.)

For decades the Marxists labored to deprive the bourgeois idea of the Fatherland of its attractive power, they repeatedly showed the workers how similar in form was the position of the oppressed classes in the various Fatherlands. But now, when the first imperialist war has begun, when the imperialists utilize the idea of the Fatherland in order to dupe the workers of all countries—now the former Marxist Plekhanov also glorifies the idea of the Fatherland! What an enormous turn-about-face! From

<sup>4</sup> See, *Social-Democratic Diary*, No. 2, "Patriotism and Socialism". A reply to a questionnaire of the editors of the periodical, *La Vie Socialiste*.



Marx and Engels to Heine and Südekum—that is the path trod by the former Marxists who now render homage to social-chauvinism.

Frederick the Great once said that when monarchs wanted war, they began it and then commissioned some zealous jurist to prove that right is on their side.

When we see how the Plekhanovs and Südekums of all countries are acting now, the expression of Frederick the Great can be modified in the following way: When the imperialists want a war, they begin it and then commission a zealous social-chauvinist to prove that right is on their side.

Gregory ZINOVIEV

HARTENSTEIN, SWITZERLAND, Aug. 4, 1916.

---

# Reading from Left To Right

by Dwight  
Macdonald

---

## Descent into the Maelstrom

For months now the vessel of world capitalism has been in the situation of that ship described by Edgar Allen Poe which was sucked down, slowly and inexorably, into the maelstrom. "The boat appeared to be hanging, as if by magic, midway down, upon the interior surface of a funnel vast in circumference, prodigious in depth, and whose perfectly smooth sides might have been mistaken for ebony but for the bewildering rapidity with which they spun around and for the gleaming and ghastly radiance they shot forth. . . . Round and round we swept—not with any uniform movement—but in dizzying swings and jerks, that sent us sometimes only a few hundred yards, sometimes nearly the complete circuit of the whirl. Our progress downward at each revolution was slow but very perceptible. . . . The rays of the moon seemed to search the very bottom of the profound gulf, but still I could make out nothing distinctly, on account of a thick mist in which everything there was enveloped. . . . This mist or spray was no doubt occasioned by the clashing of the great walls of the funnel as they all met together at the bottom, but the yell that went up to Heaven from out of that mist I dare not attempt to describe."

As Poe's sailor lay on the slanting deck of his ship and looked down with horror into the chaos he was gradually nearing, so the peoples of Europe and America watch their social system slide downward to war. The sailor escaped death by a simple stratagem, but no tricks will save us. No one doubts that if war doesn't come this month, it will come next month, and if not next month, next year. There have been war crises before in this country, but they have always been resolved one way or the other within a relatively short time. The present crisis, however, has been going on for an unheard-of period, and by now the tension has become almost unbearable. Day after day the thing drags on, generating ever-increasing pressures which are

deforming all social and political forms. As the pressure slowly mounts, people are coming to accept war as not only inevitable but as the normal social function of the state, as the understood end towards which all social activity is directed. In "normal" periods of capitalism, war is popularly regarded as a regrettable accident which interrupts the march of progress. Today, war has become the supreme reality and meaning of the whole system: the only questions asked are, "When?" and "Where?" And as the crisis drags itself out, our responses to each day's scare headlines become exhausted, our sensibilities become blunted. We understand Macbeth's speech at the end of the play:

"The time has been, my senses would have cool'd  
To hear a night-shriek; and my fell of hair  
Would at a dismal treatise rouse, and stir,  
As life were in't. I have supp'd full with horrors:  
Direness, familiar to my slaughterous thoughts,  
Cannot once start me."

## The President's Private World

A striking example of the effect of the interminable war crisis is the political deterioration of the New Deal. It is not simply a matter of the President abandoning his reformist program and seeking peace with business: that turn was inevitable. It is a matter of the New Deal program, never too firmly anchored to realities, floating entirely free from the actual world into a cloud cuckoo land of its own. Until recently I was inclined to dismiss as Republican canards those stories about the President bursting into peals of maniacal laughter in the midst of a startled and shocked press conference. Nor do I, speaking seriously, swallow them today. But there is certainly something peculiar about the tone of recent White House utterances. While not actually bereft of his senses, the President does appear to be more and more living in his own private world.

On the front page of today's *Times*, for example, are three separate news stories, two of them with three-column heads. In each of them, the President is the principal actor. The first states that the *Times'* Washington correspondent has just discovered that some months ago, the President invited Mussolini to board a warship and steam out to meet him somewhere in the Atlantic Ocean and talk things over. Il Duce was also requested to invite Hitler to get on a warship and meet at the appointed meridians of latitude and longitude. "The President's purpose was to learn from the dictators at first hand their minimum terms for pledging lasting peace, and, if he found them practicable, to offer his services as intermediary." American liberal statesmen have always held the illusion that the conflicts of capitalist interests could all be peacefully adjusted by a few people talking things over, but not even Wilson's exploits at the Peace Conference can match this scheme of the President. Hitler and Mussolini, it is hardly necessary to add, did *not* keep the tryst.

The second news story began, "President Roosevelt challenged the nation today to end 'an unfounded prejudice based on age alone', which he said, was preventing men past forty from sharing with other age groups in revival of employment, and urged all employers to determine whether middle-aged workers were receiving a 'fair opportunity to qualify for jobs'." This represents his attempt

to grapple with one of the great social problems today. But let it not be thought the President failed to implement his words with action. He proclaimed, over the Great Seal of the U. S., that Sunday, April 30, should be known as "Employment Sunday" and the following week as "Employment Week". One pictures industrialists retiring to their studies on "Employment Sunday" to mull over the President's proclamation, following this period of quiet thought with "Employment Week", six—or rather, five—days of busy planning with their aides as to how to take on more workers over forty. The opening sentences of the President's proclamation must have caused them to knit their brows in earnest: "As industry and business make substantial progress towards recovery, there are ever-increasing employment opportunities for all groups." From this, it follows logically that the older worker can and should be given his fair share of these new jobs. Yet, actually, the older worker is being laid off wholesale. It would seem that this returning prosperity and increasing employment exist only in the same private dream world which produced this amazing state paper.

The third and most important news story was headlined: "PRESIDENT ASKS \$1,750,000,000 FOR THE 1940 RELIEF PROGRAM." In the current fiscal year (which ends July 1) relief appropriations have totalled \$2,250,000,000 and an average of 3,000,000 persons have been employed on W.P.A. Next year, the President proposes to cut down the appropriation by one-third, and to reduce the W.P.A. rolls to 2,000,000. "The sums asked," reports the *Times*, "produced little unfavorable reaction in Congress." The sham battle between the White House and Congress over relief has now ended in the former's going over completely to the "enemy" camp. And how does the President justify his proposal to cut off 1,000,000 American citizens from relief? In the entire message, whose text takes up four full newspaper columns, I can find just one sentence of explanation: "Barring unforeseen and unpredictable developments, we are justified in expecting an upward trend in the volume of employment between now and June 30, 1940, and the sum just named represents my judgment as to the amount that should be provided on the basis of that expectation." The President does not give the data by which he arrived at this conclusion. Certainly, the dry, humdrum, everyday figures of carloadings and steel tonnage and employment totals which are to be found in the financial pages of the papers don't bear him out.

But as one reads his message, one realizes that the President apparently doesn't think he is cutting relief. With a noble humanitarian scorn he writes: "When those who talk glibly or without information about cutting down the cost of relief are pinned down to the facts, they are obliged to admit that they can offer only two alternative plans: to cut down the number of needy persons receiving relief or to cut down the per capita work payments." To the ordinary, earthbound observer, it would seem that to propose reducing the W.P.A. rolls by one-third would be "to cut down the number of needy persons receiving relief".

But this is cloud cuckoo land, where the head of the most powerful capitalist state in the world proposes to solve the problems of war and unemployment by proposing,

respectively, a meeting of three men in the middle of the Atlantic and the proclamation of "National Employment Week". If the President acts thus, it is not because there is some malign streak of insanity in his make-up. It is simply because these last few months have subjected the whole structure of bourgeois society to such unheard-of strains that all statesmen unfortunate enough to be in power at this time are acting like lunatics.

### ***The Monopoly Committee (Continued)***

The present Congress is one of the most reactionary in our history. It has voted funds to continue the Dies Committee, and it has killed off the LaFollette Committee just as the whole story of the most threatening quasi-fascist group in the country, the Associated Farmers out on the West coast, was about to be spread on the committee's records. It seems to me, therefore, of some significance that this Congress several weeks ago voted, without even a formal debate, the full \$600,000 which the Monopoly Committee asked for its next year's work. Clearly, the Monopoly Committee is considered "safe" on Capitol Hill.

Since the last NEW INTERNATIONAL went to press, the strategy of the Monopoly Committee has emerged with unmistakable clarity. This strategy is, roughly, to offset the solid concessions it makes to big business with piously phrased professions of goodwill towards little business. Thus on April 4, the papers carried a story: "NEW DEAL MAPS AID TO SMALL BUSINESS," which announced that the S.E.C., the Monopoly Committee, and the Junior Chamber of Commerce (composed of small business firms) were working together on a survey "to get the facts behind all the talk about small business enterprises not being able to get adequate capital and to provide for the small business unit the kind of research and economic advisory services which big business provides for itself." Douglas, Frank, and Hopkins are all mixed up in this scheme, whose beauty is that it sounds fine and doesn't actually mean anything at all. To finance a research bureau to serve the hundreds of thousands of small business enterprises throughout the land, Messrs. Frank and Douglas propose a governmental appropriation of \$2,000,000 or \$3,000,000, which is less than a single great corporation like U. S. Steel or General Electric spends annually on industrial research. And as for federal loans to small businesses, the more the government pours into such enterprises, the bigger the pool of capital to be annexed by the great corporations when they get around to it. Not lack of financing but ruthless competition from big business is behind the rapid expropriation of small capital in this country. It would be insulting to the intelligence of Messrs. Douglas and Frank to suggest that they don't know this perfectly well.

Six days later, on April 10, the tactical meaning of this gesture came out. That morning the *Times* carried a front-page story headlined: "SENATE COMMITTEE INVITES BUSINESS TO TELL GRIEVANCES." According to Chairman O'Mahoney, the hearings conducted to date by the Monopoly Committee represent the more aggressive and inquisitorial phase of the Committee's work—the real old-fashioned trust-busting stuff. Now, the Chairman announced, business is to have "its turn": the Committee is opening up "a new phase of its duties, par-

ticularly designed to afford business and industry an opportunity, in coöperation with the Committee, to present its own story of the nation's economic problems". The witness stand will now be turned over to all business groups which request it. There is no restriction on the kind of testimony, which may include "criticism of existing governmental . . . policies". So now, after three months of the most timid and innocuous sort of hearings, the Committee is offering itself as a sounding board for business propaganda. At once, the oil and the milk industries requested—and were

granted—the use of the Committee's witness stand. It is probably merely a coincidence that both these industries have recently been in difficulties with the Attorney General's office over a little matter of anti-trust law violation. And so we shall soon have the comic spectacle of Assistant Attorney General Thurman Arnold prosecuting Sherman Law violators in the morning and listening in the afternoon to the same gentlemen lecture him and his colleagues on the iniquities of the Sherman Law.

## BOOKS

### **Revolution, Black and White**

*THE BLACK JACOBINS.* By C. L. R. JAMES. 316 pp. *Illus.* New York Dial Press. \$3.75.

*A HISTORY OF NEGRO REVOLT.* By C. L. R. JAMES. *Fact Monograph, No. 18.* 6s.

*The Black Jacobins* tells the story of one of the major episodes in the great French Revolution: the struggles in the West Indian island of San Domingo which culminated in the only successful slave uprising in history and the establishment of the free Negro republic of Haiti.

Historians have done little to remove prevailing ignorance concerning these significant events. Even such authorities on the French revolution as Mathiez systematically belittle the importance of the colonies and slight their influence upon revolutionary developments in France. Historians of Haiti commit the opposite error of treating its early history without proper regard for its profound connections with Europe.

One of the singular merits of James' work is that he avoids both forms of narrow-mindedness. Throughout his book he views the class struggles in San Domingo and France as two sides of a unified historical process unfolding in indissoluble interaction with each other. With a wealth of precise and picturesque detail he traces the parallel and inter-penetrating phases of the revolution in the colony and mother country.

The prosperity based upon trade with the sugar island of San Domingo so invigorated the maritime bourgeoisie of Marseilles, Bordeaux and Nantes that they became the principal promoters of the protest movement against the old régime. The initial impulses of the French revolution touched off the series of civil wars in San Domingo which led in August 1791 to the insurrection of its half-million black slaves against the slave-owners. In their search for the road to emancipation these rebels fought against all the forces of the upper orders in the island and temporarily allied themselves with the Spanish and English. Their attitude was radically reversed overnight, however, when slavery was officially abolished within French dominions at the height of

the revolutionary tide in 1794. Bound to France by this pledge of freedom, the former slaves fought heroically to defend the new revolutionary régime against its domestic and foreign foes. From 1794 to 1799 the security of France was maintained by the victories of West Indian soldiers over the Spanish and English armies.

Notwithstanding this invaluable service to the cause of France, the San Dominicans again learned that "those who would be free, themselves must strike the blow." At first the revolution had tried to ignore them. The slogan of "liberty, equality, and fraternity" was interpreted to apply solely to whites and then to mulattoes. Only by rising against their masters were the slaves able to take advantage of the abolition edict. But even after they had gained legal liberation through the white Jacobins, the Black Jacobins won lasting social security and national independence only by relying on their own organized armed strength. When Napoleon endeavored to force the Negroes back into slavery, the San Dominicans had to crush his armies as ruthlessly as they had crushed the English.

The traditions of self-reliance and relentless struggle against perfidy forged in the consecutive wars against the white and mulatto upper classes of San Domingo, Spanish and British imperialism, and Bonapartist bourgeois reaction enabled the Haitians to maintain their national independence until the American intervention in the present century.

This book provides irrefutable answers to reactionary prejudices concerning the inherent inferiority of the Negro race. The black leaders who pass in review through these pages, though but lately emerged from slavery, show themselves to be equal and in certain respects superior to their white adversaries as soldiers, statesmen and administrators. James presents a critical and just appraisal of the commanding figure of Toussaint L'Ouverture, a coachman and slave until 46, yet ten years later master of the island, whom he ranks with Napoleon. There are no less interesting portraits of lesser personalities such as Rigaud, Dessalines, Christophe, Sonthonax, and others.

If coming events cast their shadows before, past events cast their light ahead. The question of the fate of the colonial peoples has even greater importance for the present

imperialist epoch than in the era of bourgeois-democratic revolution. *The Black Jacobins* demonstrates how indestructible is the link between the liberation struggle of the enslaved colonials and the revolutionary mass movements in the metropolis; how their mutual interests demand support for each other in the common struggle against reactionary oppression; and how the most downtrodden and degraded slaves can respond to the call of freedom; produce great leaders; crush their enemies; and find a solution to their problems.

The high price of *The Black Jacobins* will inevitably restrict its circulation. Fortunately James has written a short pamphlet embodying the gist of his larger work on the San Dominican events. *A History of Negro Revolt* also deals with the struggles of the slaves in North America and Africa and gives a valuable account of recent Negro movements there and in the West Indies. This useful and inexpensive parcel of information ought to be in the hands of all revolutionary internationalists.

George E. NOVACK

### **'Socialized Medicine'**

*AMERICAN MEDICINE MOBILIZES.*

By JAMES RORTY. *W. W. Norton & Co., New York, 1939; 358 pp., incl. index.* \$3.

To write a provocative and dramatic book on as dry a subject as medical economics is to most people, a feat indeed! Mr. Rorty's success is primarily due to his long and varied literary activity, his background in the radical movement and to the social fermentation which has finally thrown up the problem of medical care on the muddy surface of the capitalistic swamp.

*American Medicine Mobilizes* is the first attempt—in book form—to bring before the American public a compact and inclusive narrative of the history and development of the new forms of medical care: Group practise, hospitalization plans, medical coöperatives, compulsory health insurance, etc. Those who have read some of the chapters of the book which appeared as magazine articles, as long as three years ago, have now the opportunity to preserve in permanent form a vast array of factual information, hitherto available only in stuffy technical publications and in the dusty files of governmental reports.

But let no one be deceived into thinking that this is a book on socialized medicine. Although the publisher's blurb on the cover begins with the grandiloquent statement that "Socialized medicine is one of the major

issues before the American people today", and notwithstanding the subtitle of Chap. XIV which reads: "Why the Medicine Makers Don't Want Socialized Medicine", the body of the chapter contains no reference whatsoever to socialized medicine; nor is it advocated in any part of the book.

And yet, Mr. Rorty is intelligent enough and has been close enough to our circles to know the difference between socialized medicine and the paltry substitutes which lay and medical politicians alike are trying to foist upon us. Or did the publishers delete the corresponding text to prevent the bourgeois reader from suspecting the author of subversive tendencies? The author admits having rewritten the book twice in order to avoid polemical attacks. Was the advocacy of socialized medicine one of the controversial points left out from the final text?

Be that as it may, *American Medicine Mobilizes* is chock-full of valuable data for the average reader and even debater or popular writer who needs quick and condensed facts on a subject which promises to become one of the burning questions in our national economy. Mr. Rorty was present at the National Health Conference which took place in July of last year and is able to give first-hand and succinct information on the personalities and issues behind the event. Even to those who are somewhat familiar with the deplorable health conditions in this country, it will be a shock to learn that the gross sickness and mortality rates for the poor of our large cities are as high today as they were fifty years ago; that 30% of serious disability illnesses among relief families with incomes of less than \$300, is more than five times that of families getting \$3,000 or above; that 40% of the counties having a population of 18 million (p. 23) or 17 million (p. 230) are lacking a registered general hospital; that a million workers are exposed to the hazards of silicosis; that 50 million Americans are in families receiving less than \$1,000 income a year; that the total cost of illness and premature death is approximately 10 billion dollars yearly; that we spend haphazardly  $3\frac{1}{4}$  to  $3\frac{1}{2}$  billion dollars (not  $3\frac{1}{4}$  million as is erroneously stated on p. 246) to achieve these "brilliant" results.

There are fine chapters in the book on Unmet Medical Need and on Syphilis; but the one on compulsory health insurance is somewhat sketchy. The author is evidently unacquainted with the most recent work on the subject: *Health Insurance with Medical Care* by D. W. Orr, M. D., and J. W. Orr, published by Macmillan, December 1938, a first-hand study of the British experience with the "panel" system of national health insurance.

Mr. Rorty writes with great sincerity and force and it is quite evident that he is genuinely concerned over the abuses, the sins of commission and of omission which have developed under the present scheme of medical practise. He repeatedly emphasizes the irreconcilable clash between the science and the business of medicine; between the reactionary economic position of the A.M.A. bureaucracy and the humanitarian aspirations of the medical profession as a whole.

Yet, he fails to draw the only conclusion warranted by the facts which he so ably exposes: That the only solution to the incompatibility is the complete socialization of medicine. To quote:

Do the working men and women of this country want health? Do they want security against sickness? Then let them reach out their hands and get it! The means are at hand. The problem can all be solved. The program—even a far bigger program than our National Health Program—would save far more than it cost. What, then, are we waiting for?

The answer to this eloquent question is that no real, planned health program is possible under the present capitalistic scheme. The socialization of medicine goes hand in hand with the socialization of the instruments of production and the collectivization of the land.

In the meantime, the immediate task for trade unions and farmers' coöperatives is to organize group clinics of their own which should be in a position to take advantage of any grants or subsidies that can be wrested from the government and from employers. Only by retaining complete control of their medical organizations can the workers of America prevent the advent of the new slavery of bureaucratic state medicine.

Paul LUTTINGER, M. D.

## War-Mad Liberal

*MEN MUST ACT.* By LEWIS MUMFORD. Harcourt, Brace. \$1.50.

As a spokesman of the liberal intelligentsia, Mumford has not been conspicuous for trail-blazing; he has remained close to his constituency; and this fact gives this book an importance as an index to the present mentality of that constituency which it does not possess as a work of thought.

The post-war revolutionary upsurge lightly touched this group and therefore Mumford ("The Story of Utopias", 1922); European stability under American tutelage and the decline of the revolutionary movement brought a return to literary pursuits until the 1929 crisis drove the liberal intelligentsia again a step or two toward the revolutionary movement (Mumford chaired a Harlan miners defense meeting and introduced everybody as "comrade"); then the New Deal opened the doors of the ABC's to the intelligentsia which in turn turned its back on radicalism; Mumford's constituency is now busily engaged in providing moral justification for supporting American imperialism in the coming World War, and this book codifies the war ideology at its present roughly-fashioned stage.

The logic of politics is remorseless, indeed. In order to justify on idealistic grounds the support of one imperialist camp against another, Mumford is driven step by step to revise the former opinions of the left liberals on all basic questions: the first World War the League of Nations, the nature of capitalist democracy, the nature of fascism, etc. etc. Perhaps the best introduction to this book—and I write of it primarily for that purpose, for this is a book which every opponent of the coming war should read in order to understand how that war is being justified—is to indicate the

major amputations Mumford has been compelled by his present political logic to make on the ideas formerly held by his constituency.

Few of these liberals held out against the war in 1917; yet no tenet of the liberal creed since then and until very recently has been more firmly held than that the war was a conflict among imperialist bandits and should have received no honest intellectual's support. In the post-war years one of the main functions of *The New Republic* and *The Nation* was to publish material demonstrating that fact, painstakingly prepared, in the main, by intellectuals remorseful of their support of the war.

On their behalf, however, Mumford now abandons this tenet:

"... the United States spent thousands of lives and billions of dollars to save the world for democracy between 1917 and 1919 . . . What was wrong was not that we sought to preserve democracy: what alone was wrong was that we failed.

"... many people have come to accept the economic interpretation of our actions as one that in fact explains them. According to this fable, the war was entered into by the United States to save the Morgan loans to the Allies. . .

"... What made millions of intelligent Americans join hands with such rascals and profiteers is that something else actually was at stake. Why, toward the end of the war, did the higher type of German—I have met many — fervently wish the Allies to win? . . .

"And mark this: something was actually gained by America's entrance into the war on behalf of democracy: a breathing space. Germany's assault on democracy was staved off for another twenty years . . . it was certainly better than immediate serfdom as vassals of a triumphant, militaristic, still essentially feudal Germany. That we did not gather the beneficent results of a democratic victory is not a proof of the notion that we were fooled or misguided when we sought to save democracy." (p. 155)

If Czar Nicholas (who was overthrown not by those who fought to make the world safe for democracy but precisely by those who denounced the war), Clemenceau, Lloyd George and Bernard Baruch—not to forget those other fighters for democracy whom Mumford doesn't mention, the Emperor of Japan and the King of Italy!—were morally superior to their enemies, the peace written by the victors must also have virtues. Mumford takes this step, too, abandoning all that the liberal intelligentsia has had to say about the Versailles iniquity, the League of Nations which was put on it as a fig-leaf, and the rapacious imperialisms which it served:

"... Imperialism had become, by the end of the nineteenth century, apologetic, shame-faced, abashed: in the very hypocrisy by which their naked economic aims were cloaked, the imperial powers made their first dim acknowledgment of political morals. So they way was opened to a different state, of reciprocity and free government: this took place in Cuba and the Philippines after the American conquest there: it took place in

South Africa. . .

"For the last generation there was, in international affairs, a steady gain for moral decency. Even the Treaty of Versailles, though it lacked justice and magnanimity, was coupled with at least the lip recognition of a more rational political order, embodied in the League of Nations. . . Most intelligent Germans knew then, and still know, that the treaty the German government had in store for the Allies, had they been victorious, was far more ferocious in its injustices.

". . . Indefensible as any imperialism now is, the League of Nations, with all its shortcomings, offered a means whereby the Lilliputian nations of the world were, until 1930, gradually getting the imperialist Gullivers to accept a network of restriction that would have made further military conquests impossible." (65-66)

This idyll of American, British, French imperialism quite takes one's breath away: Cuba has free government — forget the American government-instigated overthrow of the Grau San Martin government and the American government-supported bloody régime of Batista, not to speak of American government-supported dictatorships in most of the Latin-American countries—all this under Roosevelt—the British have given the white minority in South Africa the right to a local dictatorship over the black majority—that should make you forget the Britishers' own dictatorship over four hundred million toilers in India, or the French dictatorship over the North Africans. In an offhand manner Mumford ignores a little detail of present history: that every Englishman has nine or ten slaves working for him, every Frenchman two or three slaves; never mind that, Mumford indicates, the Englishman and the Frenchman have democracy at home. Freedom for the oppressed colonial peoples? Not in Mumford's program for "Re-fortification of Democracy."

The real face of imperialism cannot appear in Mumford's book for the same reason that he cannot permit us to think for a moment upon the real nature of wage-slavery in the home countries: his thesis is that there is an "unbridgeable gulf" between the life of the fascist countries and that of the democratic empires.

And to accentuate that "unbridgeable gulf" so that we shall be sufficiently hardened to plunge cold steel into the guts of every German, Mumford not only idealizes the democracies but also indicts the entire German people. In America "those who have a firm belief in democracy . . . probably includes the greater number of intelligent Americans, representing every shade of economic status and political conviction"—bosses included. The sole exceptions Mumford makes in his "democratic front" are those "intransigent industrialists who seek to maintain the absolutism of their rule, as practiced anciently in the company town", the "stone age industrialists". But as "anciently" and "stone age" happily portend, all this is past; now, "our more progressive industries, led by men who have claims to industrial statesmanship, have in principle

accepted the need for democratic participation and security of livelihood." (p.139). We are all one happy democratic family, bosses and workers manage industry by "democratic participation", no significant section of employers are opposed to the Wagner Act or use strikebreakers or stool-pigeons or other union-busting methods, and the Fansteel, Apex and similar court decisions of the last few weeks really belong to the dim past.

In Germany, on the other hand, all — workers, including thirteen million who voted Communist or Socialist in 1932, etc. — are Nazis in their ideology. In an article on Spengler in the January 11, 1939 New Republic, Mumford proclaimed the "pathology of the German mind" to be the "sinister world problem" today. The *German mind*—not that of the rulers but of the *people*. Mumford in this book speaks of "the residual barbarisms in German civilization: the soil out of which Nazism grew" and seeks to "remove forever those superficial interpretations of Nazism which overlook how much of its animus and creed already existed—long before Hitler and Rosenberg—in Luther, Fichte, Hegel, Treitschke, Nietzsche, Wagner, and Houston Chamberlain." (p.176) Fascism is "an error of politically undeveloped countries, such as Italy and Germany historically were and are" (p.24); "the majority of Germans succumbed . . . they relapsed into the cult of Wotan: the savage and the primeval. Momentarily halted in their creative act of construction, the Germans vengefully turned on their own handiwork and tore it down." (p.55-56). Not the Nazis, mind you, but "the majority of Germans" or, better

still, "the Germans." Wield your bayonets, you fighters for democracy, with the firm assurance that those you kill are really not human; they are Huns.

That by Mumford's own criterion — "Every trade union, every coöperative society, every neighborhood association, is a training ground for the more complicated problems of collective government" — the German people were far more democratic in traditions and practice than America; that "German civilization" gave us not only the forerunners of Nazism but also Marx and Engels, Bebel and Liebknecht—we live in an atmosphere of war psychosis in which a spokesman of the liberal intelligentsia can blandly assign Hegel to the Nazis! Hegel, whose direct fructifying inspiration, to mention but one instance, on John Dewey and his disciples, and through them on progressive philosophy and education, must be known even to Mumford!

Elsewhere I propose to examine in detail Mumford's racial theory of the causes for the rise of fascism. If there is an "unbridgeable gulf" between the democratic empires and the fascist, why is the "oldest and surest form of democratic government"—Britain—ruled concededly by a "pro-fascist ruling class"?

Mumford's book is couched in the form of a polemic—against pacifists, isolationists, and neutrality-seekers. But all these will be with Mumford in the war. Why doesn't Mumford confront the arguments of those who will not be with him—the revolutionary Marxists? These consistent opponents of the war remain unmentioned; and that is an index to Mumford's intellectual dishonesty.

Felix MORROW

## Correspondence

### The Irish Question

TO THE EDITORS:

In the April issue of THE NEW INTERNATIONAL there appeared an article by William Morgan on the subject of Ireland and its "revived" nationalist movement.

I find myself to be in complete disagreement with its evaluation of the activities of the Irish Republican Army as a revolutionary force and believe that the attitude of our international movement has not been correctly represented. The article is incorrect from two aspects: (1) some of its statements are wrong politically; (2) its omissions are of a serious nature.

Our general approach to the national revolutionary movements in the world colonial empires of Britain, France, America, etc. may be briefly summarized as follows:

1. Clearly establishing the utmost solidarity with the people of the oppressed colonial or semi-colonial nation, we direct our *major* attack against the imperialist oppressor. In the case of Ireland, our energetic support goes to the people of Ireland struggling for full independence from British imperialism.

To us, the British Empire ranks among the most reactionary forces in world history and its complete breakup and destruction is our goal. This is elementary.

2. Our attitude towards the colonial nationalist movement is that of active participation in its practical struggles against the imperial power and the utmost political solidarity in each progressive step forward it makes.

3. Towards the petty-bourgeois leadership of the colonial movements (Chiang Kai-shek, Gandhi, de la Torre, etc.) and their reactionary activities we retain complete independence of the right to attack and criticize. If not for these reactionary leaders world imperialism would long ago have crumbled away. *They are our enemies*. Against their doctrines we advance the transitional program of the Fourth International as outlined in the colonial section of our World Congress thesis. In its most general form this is the program of the permanent revolution.

The above may appear to be a repetition of the familiar, but it is relevant inasmuch as it is my opinion that Ireland and its na-

tionalist movement are partly *an exception* to the above general pattern.

Ireland is a semi-colonial country that has developed a capitalist and landlord ruling class of its own, capable of independent rule. In recent years—under the de Valera régime—it has marched along the road of *clerico-fascism*, similar in many respects to the Dolfuss Austrian type. A reading of the new Irish Constitution will verify this. "The White Steed" — a new Irish play — is, I think, a fine artistic representation of the present Irish government.

This Irish bourgeoisie has succeeded in so demoralizing and isolating the nationalist forces that—in the shape of a revived I.R.A.—it has resorted to tactics that can only increase its isolation from Ireland's and England's workers. Far from witnessing the upsurge that comrade Morgan speaks of, it appears to me that the movement of Ireland's people is indeed at a low ebb. What indications are there of a mass stirring of the people in support of the I.R.A.? Ireland's labor movement is practically down to zero, its organized peasant movement is non-existent, there are no reports of labor or peasant strikes, demonstrations on behalf of those I.R.A. men who were imprisoned for their bombing activities. In a word, there are no objective facts to prove that Ireland is stirring along *class* lines. Certainly the bombings have aroused no support among England's workers. One could not for an instant, for example, compare the present Irish nationalist movement with that of India. In India—despite the treacherous leadership of Gandhi and his followers—there is an upsurge because it is based upon a mighty *class force*, namely, the throwing into action of millions of workers and peasants organized into their labor and peasant unions and struggling for independent expression in the ranks of the Nationalist Congress. What action beyond the activities of an isolated group is taking place in Ireland today? What to comrade Morgan is a "revival" appears to me as the gestures of despairing petty bourgeois, who are incapable of getting down to rock-bottom and attempting to revive the dormant labor and peasant movements.

It is necessary to be unsparingly critical of the "program" of this I.R.A. group. There is no question that we aid and protect these men from the vengeance of the British blood-hounds. This is not the issue. But the fact that they have no program whatsoever—beyond that of bombing—only makes it more necessary for us to point out its obvious limitations. Comrade Morgan does not do this. Furthermore, in practise, the I.R.A. has shown itself to be extremely *reactionary* in many instances. Its *ambiguous relations* with the traitor de Valera, its not so ambiguous relations with the fascist Franco régime in Spain, its kow-towing to the Irish Catholic Church, its supreme unconcern with labor, peasant and socialist problems—all of these clearly stamp the I.R.A. as an *exceptionally backward and limited nationalist movement*. By no means do I state that it has no possibilities. That remains to be seen. But we cannot bury our critical attitude towards the I.R.A. merely because it

appears to be the only movement.

The question of the bombings is secondary and solely a matter of the most effective tactics to be employed. That the I.R.A. considers it to be the only worthwhile activity to engage in only reveals its almost incredible backwardness. In my opinion, they have been ineffective in arousing support and action among the people. Morgan calls them the carefully planned acts of "revolutionists". Perhaps, but what of it? What sort of substitute are they for protest meetings, demonstrations, strikes, *etc.*? In what way do they further or help revive the mass movement? How do they awake England's workers to Ireland's situation? Where is the evidence of the healthy effect of these bombings? As a tactic they are as effective as a fast by Mahatma Gandhi (and incidentally belong in the same category!). Gandhi too, "plans" his fasts! He plans them so that he will appear to the masses as a substitute for their action, as their redeemer and savior. When Gandhi fasts India stands still and is "saved" — for the British!

In addition, there are two serious omissions in the article. First, comrade Morgan mentions the newly formed Irish Republican Brotherhood as a progressive development of the I.R.A. He says these men "go about their business". What is their business and how does it differ from that of the I.R.A.? Precisely what is the I.R.B.?

Secondly—and most important—there is absolutely not a word of material or information on the present Irish labor movement—in its trade union and socialist form. Or is there no labor movement?

I strongly suggest that what is needed is a more scientific and exhaustive study of the Irish question—one based less on emotional longings and wishful-thinking than Morgan has given us.  
NEW YORK.

Sherman STANLEY

## Hospitalization Plan

TO THE EDITORS:

It is a pity that Dr. Luttinger in your issue of March, 1939, should base his conclusion that "when in need of hospitalization the average worker will be wiser to enter a municipal or county hospital" than to use a group hospitalization plan, on so many false, misleading, or irrelevant statements. They may throw suspicion on advice I do not want to question. But I do want to question much of his evidence. Specific references in what follows are to the New York plan.

Before examination of the detailed arguments to which the latter and greater part of the article is devoted, it is necessary to straighten out the rather wobbly line of attack used. Dr. Luttinger says in the beginning that the hospitalization plan was invented for the sole benefit of the private hospitals, calls their rates exorbitant, throws in a reference to the profit system in general and to the profits of people who used to use private rooms in hospitals, and then proceeds to devote the rest of the article to a detailed attempt (which is not successful)

**"The best literary magazine in America."**

—JOHN DOS PASSOS

## PARTISAN REVIEW

*A Quarterly of Literature and Marxism*

**Spring issue just out:**

JAMES T. FARRELL:

*The Only Son, a short story*

SIDNEY HOOK: *The Anatomy of the Popular Front*

JAMES BURNHAM: *Farewell to the Dialectic*

DWIGHT MACDONALD: *War and the Intellectuals*

W. H. AUDEN: *The Public vs. the Late W. B. Yeats*

WILLIAM CARLOS WILLIAMS: *Back to the City, a short story*

ELISEO VIVAS: *The Achievement of John Dewey*

LOUIS MACNEICE: *Fragment from "Autumn Journal"*

"WE RENTED TO THE LENINS"—*an intimate glimpse of Lenin*

*Book Reviews . . . Paris Letter . . . Art Chronicle*

PARTISAN REVIEW  
Box 30, Station K  
New York, N. Y.

Enclosed find \$1.25. Please send me one year (four quarterly issues) of *Partisan Review*. (Add 10 cents for Canada, 25 cents foreign postage. Single copy: 40 cents.)

Name.....

Address.....

City.....

to show that the hospitalization plan does not pay out to the hospitals for enough days of hospitalization nor enough additional services. He does not claim that the plan pays out at too high a rate per day's stay or per service, but that it itself keeps too much money and somehow makes a profit. All this latter, detailed part of the article would in no way support the initial general contentions even if it were correct, and it is not.

As to those general contentions, there is some truth in them, but some distinctions must be made which Dr. Luttinger does not make. He overlooks the fact that the great majority of the private hospitals used by subscribers are non-profit making institutions also doing free work. These hospitals no doubt gain by having as semi-private patients some who were in their free wards before. They may also be cutting down overhead by having more paying patients than they had before. But nobody is making a profit. Also the rates paid by the hospitalization plan to the hospitals are not exorbitant rates. In any case the body of Dr. Luttinger's article is devoted not to proving his general contentions but to an attempt to show that subscribers pay too much to the hospitalization fund in comparison with what it in turn pays out to the hospitals. In comparing the rates charged by the hospitalization plan with those of cash in-

demnity plans he says: "These at least do not claim to make no profit." In discussing what he calls the claim that surplus goes into a reserve fund, he says that this is also true for commercial companies. In all this he implies without definitely stating that a cash profit is being made over the cost of services rendered. He does not say who gets the cash. In fact, surplus if any does go into a reserve fund. That the rates could not, before the plan had been tried, be calculated with absolute precision is not astonishing. That the leeway provided was not excessive is indicated by the fact that this year the fund was left not with a surplus but with a deficit.

Comparison with rates of farm health co-operatives is meaningless because these have available more primitive and less expensive facilities. And comparison with accident insurance is meaningless without a detailed comparison of accident and illness frequencies. Incidentally the hospitalization plan is not camouflaged insurance; it is insurance.

Dr. Luttinger's analysis of what you get and what you don't get is valuable information to have before becoming a hospitalization plan subscriber. But to anyone with even an elementary knowledge of statistics it is a rather funny condemnation. An insurance plan which included people over 66 (just when they need it most) or covered hospitalization for childbirths occurring less

than ten months after subscription, would have to have quite different rates. And a plan which accepted subscribers in need of hospital care when they subscribed would soon find that it had to charge rates at least equal to the average cost of a hospital stay. *Columbus, O.*

Janet DANIEL

**OKTOBER**

If you are a Scandinavian, ask at once for *Oktober*, official organ of the Norwegian Section of the Fourth International. Among the collaborators of *Oktober* are the well-known writers Jeannette Olsen, Helga Krog and Marie Nielsen.

Order through the Labor Book Shop, 28 E. 12th St., New York, N. Y.; or direct from J. Olsen, Sandakervereien II, Vaerelse 419, Oslo, Norway.

If the subscription number on the wrapper of the issue you have just received is **32**

Then your subscription *has expired*. Please *renew* your subscription at once to avoid missing any number.

**NEW YORK CITY**

- MANHATTAN**  
 14 St. at University Pl., S.E.  
 14 St. at Broadway, S.E.  
 14 St. at 4th Ave., S.W.  
 14 St. at 4th Ave., N.E.  
 14 St. at 4th Ave., S.E. (1 and 2)  
 14 St. at 3rd Ave., S.W.  
 14 St. at 3rd Ave., N.W. (opp. Jefferson Theatre)  
 14 St. at 2nd Ave., N.W.  
 14 St. at 6th Ave., N.E.  
 Rand Book Store, 7 E. 15 St.  
 12 St. and University Pl., N.E.  
 Candy Store, 75 Greenwich Ave.  
 42 St. at 5th Ave., S.W.  
 42 St. at 6th Ave., S.E.  
 42 St. at 6th Ave., S.W.  
 42 St. at 7th Ave., S.W. (opp. Stern's)  
 103 W. 44 St.  
 46 St. at Broadway, S.E.  
 Times Bldg. Newsstand, 42 St. at Broadway  
 Columbia University Bookstore  
 Brentano's Bookstore  
 N.Y.U. Bookstore, 18 Washington Pl.  
 Store, 58 W. 8 St.  
 Essex at Delancey Sts.  
 Bookstore at Grand and Attorney Sts.  
 Candy Store, S.E. 9 St. and 2nd Ave.  
 Biederman's Bookstore, 12 St. and 2nd Ave.  
 Wigderson, 145 St. and St. Nicholas Ave.  
 110 St. and Columbus Ave.  
 Knickerbocker Village, K. & K. Stationery Store  
 Knickerbocker Village, Catherine and Monroe  
 Maisel's Bookstore, Grand and Attorney Sts.  
 Essex and Delancey, N.E. cor. newsstand
- BRONX**  
 Jerome Ave. and 170 St. (Subway Stand)  
 Jerome Ave. and 167 St. (opp. Loew's Theatre)  
 Jerome Ave. and 176 St. (opp. Loew's Theatre)  
 Sorkin, 206 St. and Bainbridge Ave.  
 Jerome and Burnside Aves.  
 160 St. and Prospect Ave.  
 Allerton Ave. Subway Station  
 Freeman St. and Southern Blvd.  
 174 St. and Boston Rd.
- BROOKLYN**  
 Grand and Union Aves.  
 Havemeyer Ave. and S. 4 St.  
 Marcy and Broadway  
 Pitkin and Douglas Aves.  
 Sutter and Pitkin Aves.
- OUT OF TOWN**  
**LOS ANGELES, CAL.**  
 S.W.P., 233 So. Broadway, Rm. 312, Music Arts Bldg.  
 Modern Bookstore, 509-1/2 W. 5 St.  
 Smith News Stand, 5 and Main Sts.  
 Smith News Service, 6 and Hill Sts.  
 National News Stand, 221 W. 5 St.  
 General News Service, 328 W. 5 St.  
 Crescent News Co., 208 W. 8 St.  
**HOLLYWOOD, CAL.**  
 Universal News Stand, Hollywood Blvd. and Cahuenga.  
**SAN FRANCISCO, CAL.**  
 McDonald's Bookstore, 65—6 St.

**Where to Buy the  
NEW INTERNATIONAL**

- Fillmore Bookstore, Sutter and Fillmore Sts.  
 Golden Gate News Agency, 21—4 St.  
 Fitzgerald News Agency, 57—3 St.  
 Sportland Smoke Shop, 3399 Mission St.  
 Store 20, 3057—16 St.  
 Mason Grocery, Mason and Pacific Sts.  
 Ferry Bldg., Stand at Key System Entrance  
 Koblik's Stationery, 1004 Fillmore St.  
 Room 2, 542 Valencia St.  
 Ray's Smoke Shop, 1203 Sutter St.
- OAKLAND, CAL.**  
 Newsstand, 7 and Washington  
 Newsstand, 12 St., bet. B'way. and Washington  
 Newsstand in Andrew Williams Market  
 Newsstand, B'way. nr. 19 St.  
 Rich's Cigar Store, 2336-1/2 E. 14 St.  
 Norton's, 7205 E. 14 St.
- BALTIMORE, MD.**  
 Frigate Bookshop, Howard nr. Franklin
- NEW HAVEN, CONN.**  
 Nodelman's Newsstand, Church St., bet. Chapel and Center
- CHICAGO, ILL.**  
 S.W.P., 160 N. Wells St., Rm. 308  
 Post Office News Co., 37 W. Monroe St.  
 Ceshinsky's Bookstore, 2720 W. Division St.  
 Cor. 57 and Blackstone Sts.  
 Cor. 12 and Kedzie Sts.
- SAN DIEGO, CAL.**  
 Universal News Co., 242 Broadway
- BOSTON, MASS.**  
 Andelman's, Tremont St. (opp. Hotel Bradford)
- CAMBRIDGE, MASS.**  
 Felix's, Mass. Ave., at Harvard Square
- ROXBURY, MASS.**  
 Friendly Variety, Warren St. (Grove Hall)
- LYNN, MASS.**  
 S.W.P., c/o Lynn Labor Lyceum, 127 Oxford St.  
 Sam's Corner, Olympia Sq.
- DETROIT, MICH.**  
 Socialist Appeal Club, 3513 Woodward, Rm. 5  
 Corner, 13 and Market Sts., N.W.
- MINNEAPOLIS, MINN.**  
 Labor Bookshop, 919 Marquette Ave.,  
 Shinder's, 6 and Hennepin  
 Kroman's, 4 and Nicollet
- ST. PAUL, MINN.**  
 S.W.P., 147 W. 5 St.
- ST. LOUIS, MO.**  
 Foster's Book Co., 410 Washington Blvd.
- CLAYTON, MO.**  
 The Book Nook, 24A Meremac
- NEWARK, N. J.**  
 Reitman's, Cor. Broad and William Sts.  
 Littman's, 317 Straight St.

- PATERSON, N. J.**  
 A. Guabello's Stationery Store  
**ROCHESTER, N. Y.**  
 433 N. Clinton St.  
 257 N. Clinton St.  
 Cor. Cumberland and Clinton Sts.  
 Cor. East Ave. and Chestnut St.  
 S.E. Cor. Main and Clinton Sts.  
 S.W. Cor. Main and South Ave.
- ALLEN TOWN, PA.**  
 R. Zettlemayer, 637 Hamilton St.
- PHILADELPHIA, PA.**  
 S.W.P., 1806 N. Franklin St.  
 Cor. 13 and Market Sts. N.W.  
 Cor. 11 and Market Sts. N.W.  
 40 St., and Girard Ave.  
 8 St. and Arch Ave.
- QUAKERTOWN, PA.**  
 Esser's Newsstand, Front and W. Broad Sts.
- YOUNGSTOWN, OHIO**  
 Nick's, Wick St. and Commerce
- AKRON, OHIO**  
 News Exchange, 51 S. Main St.  
 Cigar Store, Cor. Barts and S. Main Sts.
- CLEVELAND, OHIO**  
 S.W.P., Rm. 214, Merlam Bldg., 5716 Euclid Ave.  
 Schroeder's Bookshop, Public Square  
 Rubin's Drug Store, 1072 E. 105 St.
- SEATTLE, WASH.**  
 Eckhart News Agency, 102 Washington St.  
 Roth Cigar Store, 1407—1st Ave.  
 Raymer's Old Bookstore, 905—3rd Ave.  
 Sunday Forum Newsstand, Independence Hall
- ABROAD**  
**CAPE TOWN, SO. AFRICA**  
 Modern Books, 12 Church St.
- SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA**  
 Communist League of Australia, 108 William St., 1st Fl.
- ADVANCE BOOKSHOP, 10 Campbell St.**  
**MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA**  
 Mrs. M. Brodny, Bookstall, Trades Hall  
 N. Gibson, 286 Drummond St., Carlton
- ENGLAND**  
**LONDON, ENGLAND**  
 Pioneer Bookshop, 268 Upper St., N. I. Islington  
 L. Grey, 12-14 Red Lion Ct., Fleet St., E.C.  
 Clapham Socialist Bookshop, 79 Bedford, S.W. 4  
 W.I.N., 14A Chichester Rd., Paddington W.2
- LIVERPOOL, ENGLAND**  
 H. Cund, Bookshop, 1 St. Hilda St.
- GLASGOW, SCOTLAND**  
 T. Mercer, Bookshop, 52 Auldhouse Rd. C.3
- BRISBANE, AUSTRALIA**  
 A. Sinclair, P.O. Box 38, So. Brisbane
- JOHANNESBURG, SOUTH AFRICA**  
 P.O. Box 2639  
 L. Sapire, Box 7428
- PALESTINE**  
 Pales Press Co., 119 Allenby St., Tel-Aviv  
 Pales, P.O. Box 476, Haifa  
 Pales, P.O. Box 619 Jerusalem
- SCOTLAND**  
 R.S.L., 18 Thistle St., Edinburgh 2.
- INDIA**  
 N. M. Jain, 21 Dalal St., Fort, Bombay 1.

## making a name for itself . . . .

**T**HE NEW INTERNATIONAL has made a name for itself as the only magazine in America that boldly and consistently presents the viewpoint of revolutionary socialism. As the coming imperialist war draws daily nearer, it is ever more important that every thinking person acquaint himself with the revolutionary way out of the social crisis.

**L. D. Trotsky**

**Felix Morrow**

**George Novack**

**Max Shachtman**

**B. J. Widick**

**Albert Goldman**

**James Burnham**

**E. Robertson**

**Li Fu-Jen**

**Dwight Macdonald**

**W. Keller**

**and others.**

We'll do our part to continue to issue and to improve THE NEW INTERNATIONAL.

In THE NEW INTERNATIONAL are to be found:

1. Thoroughgoing reviews and analyses of the international situation.

2. Articles on the American labor, economic and political arena.

An organ of revolutionary Marxism to which contribute the most competent and qualified writers in their respective fields, among whom are:

What are you going to do to assure the publication of this journal?

### SUBSCRIBE!

The subscription rate remains at the *low figure* of \$2.00 per year.

*Send check or money order to:*

## The NEW INTERNATIONAL

116 University Place, N. Y. C.

*Hailed on Two Continents as THE Book on Fascism . . .*

# FASCISM and BIG BUSINESS

### **In Europe:**

"Stands out among books on fascism as one of the most accurate and most suggestive. . . Luminous clarity."

—L'HUMANITE (*Communist Party*)

"Deserves a high place among works analyzing fascism."

—LE POPULAIRE (*Socialist Party*)

"Lucid exposition of the phenomenon of fascism. I have seen nothing approaching it for precise analysis."

—LA REPUBLIQUE (*Radical Socialist Party*)

"Strips off the veil of demagogy in which fascism drapes itself. . . Goes to the heart of the problem."

—LA LUTTE OUVRIERE (*Fourth International*)

**\$2.00**

### **In America:**

LOUIS M. HACKER: "The best analysis of the origins of fascism that I have read."

JAMES T. FARRELL: "Intelligent, well-documented, a work of the first importance. . . Especially valuable and timely in America today."

GAETANO SALVEMINI: "A penetrating analysis of the economic structure of Italian fascism and German Nazism."

BENJAMIN STOLBERG: "A book that should be read by everyone who wants to understand fascism."

LEWIS COREY: "For a clearcut understanding of the economic and class forces of fascism, you must read Guérin's splendid book."

**367 pages**

**PIONEER PUBLISHERS**



**116 University Pl., N. Y. C.**