

---

---

February 1944

# Fourth International

---

---

## The First Days of American Communism

*By James P. Cannon*

---

## Japan Faces The Abyss

*By Li Fu-Jen*

---

## How The Trotskyists Went To Jail

*By Joseph Hansen*

*From the Arsenal of Marxism*

## Military Doctrine or Pseudo-Military Doctrinairism

*By Leon Trotsky*

---

---

Twenty Cents

## Manager's Column

The letters received during the month from our readers at home and abroad indicate the FOURTH INTERNATIONAL is being read and appreciated by an ever-widening circle of workers. We quote from some of the letters:

*Lorain, Ohio:* "I would like to enter my subscription for FOURTH INTERNATIONAL.

"I never knew that such an organization or publication existed until late in November, 1943, when I was talking to a fellow worker about world affairs and I was handed the September, 1943, issue of FOURTH INTERNATIONAL.

"The next issue I got was the December, 1943 issue, so I would desire if possible, for my subscription to start with the current January issue.

"I agree with your stand against hypocrisy and double dealing which is characteristic of the world leaders of today and that includes all of them—religious, political and commercial.

"Enclosed find check for one year subscription."

\* \* \*

*Evanston, Illinois:* "Enclosed find 25c. Please send me a copy of the January issue of FOURTH INTERNATIONAL. Also tell me when I can get the February issue. And send a list of all Trotskyist literature available."

\* \* \*

*England:* "Would you please send me regularly a copy of FOURTH INTERNATIONAL and THE MILITANT. I should also like to have a copy of J. P. Cannon's 'Struggle for a Proletarian Party.'

"I have recently been drawn towards the Trotskyist movement here in Britain, mainly through the persuasiveness of another worker, who perhaps is not unknown on your side of the Atlantic, also of course through the correct ideas and policy put forward by FOURTH INTERNATIONAL.

"Incidentally, I should like to point out that the correctness of the programme of the F. I. is becoming more apparent to the workers here in Britain as the European events unfold. The reactionary policy and vicious strike-breaking tactics of the Stalinists here is leaving an in-

# FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

Volume V February 1944 No. 2 (Whole No. 41)

Published monthly by the  
Fourth International Publishing Association  
116 University Place, New York 3, N. Y. Telephone: Algonquin 4-8547. Subscription rates: \$2.00 per year; bundles, 15c for 5 copies and up. Canada and Foreign: \$2.50 per year; bundles, 16c for 5 copies and up.

Entered as second-class matter May 20, 1940, at the post office at New York, N. Y., under the Act of March 3, 1879.

Editor: FELIX MORROW

## CONTENTS

<i>The Month in Review</i>	
Dissolution of CPUSA .....	35
Roosevelt's Turn to Reaction.....	36
The First Days of American Communism	
<i>By James P. Cannon</i> 38	
How the Trotskyists Went to Jail.... <i>By Joseph Hansen</i> 43	
Japan Faces the Abyss	
I. Distinguishing Features of Japan's Economy	
<i>By Li Fu-Jen</i> 48	
Leon Sedov .....	<i>By John G. Wright</i> 54
New Trends in Nationalist Thought on European Problems (Book Review)..... <i>By J. B. Stuart</i> 56	
<i>From the Arsenal of Marxism</i>	
Military Doctrine or Pseudo-Military Doctrinairism..... <i>By Leon Trotsky</i> 60	

214

deleible imprint on the mind of the British working class, especially the miners who, perhaps more than any other section of the workers, know just who the present British leaders are and what their past 'democratic' records are.

"I was disgusted when reading of Kelly Postal's appeal being turned down by the State Supreme Court. Another instance of the methods adopted by the 'democratic' allies to subjugate the militant strata of workers."

*Ireland:* "Enclosed is a letter from an internment camp in Ireland. Will you place his name on your mailing list? Also send him a copy of all the Old Man's material as well as another copy of 'Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Spain.' There are many ex-International Brigaders in this camp who would read this latter work with eagerness.

"Also, please see that the Egyptian comrade, whose address we have previously sent, is supplied with FOURTH INTERNATIONAL and THE

**We still have in stock bound volumes of The NEW INTERNATIONAL and FOURTH INTERNATIONAL for the following years:**

1938	\$5.00
1939	5.00
1940-41	4.00

**If you do not already have your bound volume, get it now.**

Order from

Business Manager

**Fourth International**

116 University Place

New York 3, N. Y.

MILITANT, as well as Pioneer books. As a group is now in existence there, this is of vital importance."

\* \* \*

The following letters, concerning the article 'Myth of Racial Superiority' by Grace Carlson which appeared in January, 1944 issue of FOURTH INTERNATIONAL, were delivered to us just after the prison gates closed on the author of this article:

*West Haven, Conn.:* "My dear Miss Carlson, I am writing this letter to you concerning your very excellent article, 'The Myth of Racial Superiority,' in the January number of FOURTH INTERNATIONAL. It is a very coherent and thoughtful discussion of the problem . . .

"I hope you don't mind my taking the liberty of writing you this way. I thought perhaps correspondence would be welcome. You have my support in this Minneapolis affair and I'm on your side."

\* \* \*

*New York:* "Dear Miss Carlson, I have read your articles which have been appearing from time to time in THE MILITANT and have just read the one in FOURTH INTERNATIONAL. All of the articles including this one are exceptionally good and I have enjoyed all of them. Keep up the good work. You are doing a splendid job, one that I am sure will bear fruit in the future."

\* \* \*

*St. Paul:* "We are wondering if you have some of the last issue of FOURTH INTERNATIONAL left. This is the one with Grace Carlson's article on racism, and quite a few people in St. Paul would like to have it, aside from those who receive the magazine regularly.

"We would like about 12 additional copies. If you can't get this many to us, please send what you can."

\* \* \*

Our *Plentywood, Montana*, agent pledges himself to carry on the work momentarily interrupted when our 18 comrades were railroaded to prison:

"Received the F.I. today so will send \$1. I have not had a chance to look it over, but the reports on it are very good. So the good work goes on even if some of the leading comrades are not there. We will have to do our best and carry the fight to the last."

## The Month in Review

### On the Dissolution of the American Communist Party

**BROWDER AND COMPANY  
AVOW THEIR RENEGACY**

In carrying out the Kremlin's order to dissolve the American Communist Party and turn it openly into an appendage of the two capitalist parties, Browder and Co. found themselves compelled to depart from their customary device of duping their followers by some brazenly distorted quotation from Marx or Lenin. For the first time the American Stalinists have publicly acknowledged that they are unable to extract from the Marxist classics so much as a single phrase that could be palmed off as a justification for their current policy.

In his speech at Madison Square Garden in New York City, announcing the liquidation of the C.P.U.S.A., Browder admitted that he had "no formulas from the classics which give us an answer," and then added: "We are departing from orthodoxy . . ." (*Daily Worker*, January 13.)

On January 16, the editor of the *Daily Worker* likewise confessed that Browder's "proposals" were "accompanied by well-defined changes in traditional approach on a number of basic questions."

Here we have the undisguised and unabashed voice of renegacy. The Stalinists are repeating today the traditional words of their real historical predecessors, the opportunists of the Second International. It was Bernstein and his colleagues, including the Russian Mensheviks, who originally proclaimed that Marxism had been "outdated;" that the time had come to make a few "departures from orthodoxy;" that it was necessary to introduce changes "in a number of basic questions," and so on and so forth.

Lenin, on the other hand, fought mercilessly every attempt to revise Marxism. The proudest boast of Bolshevism was that it remained *orthodox*, that is, true to the teachings of the founders of scientific socialism. The distinguishing trait of Lenin and the genuine Bolsheviks was their unfaltering adherence to principles.

It is not for nothing that Browder hastens to admonish his faithful flock not to seek guidance in any of "our textbooks." He means, above all, Lenin. For literally everything that Lenin wrote constitutes a scathing indictment of these latter-day revisionists and traitors. One of the chief assignments of the Stalinists today is to embellish bourgeois "democracy." During the last war one had to look in the Social Democratic press for the most optimistic estimates of the future of capitalism; nowadays one finds the rosier perspectives for this utterly decayed system in the speeches and writings of the Stalinists.

**LENIN'S TEACHINGS ON  
BOURGEOIS DEMOCRACY**

During the last imperialist slaughter Lenin warned incessantly that the decay of the capitalist system could lead only to the ascendancy of blackest reaction unless the workers intervened with their socialist solution. Thus, in 1916 he wrote:

"The difference between the republican-democratic and the monarchist-reactionary imperialist bourgeoisie is obliterated precisely because both are rotting alive." (*Collected Works*, English Edition, vol. XIX, p. 338.)

Lenin taught the workers:

"Not a single fundamental democratic demand can be achieved to any considerable extent, or any degree of permanency, in the advanced imperialist states, except by revolutionary battles under the banner of socialism." (*Idem*, p. 67.)

In this same period he wrote:

"Capitalism in general, imperialism in particular, transforms democracy into an illusion—and at the same time capitalism generates democratic tendencies among the masses; creates democratic institutions, accentuates the antagonism between imperialism, which repudiates democracy, and the masses which strive toward democracy. Capitalism and imperialism cannot be overthrown through any reforms—not even the most 'ideal' democratic reforms—but through an economic overthrow." (*The Hoover Library: The Bolsheviks and the World War*, p. 226.)

Any number of similar quotations can be adduced.

These basic ideas of Lenin on the class nature and bankruptcy of bourgeois democracy were later incorporated in the theses and resolutions of the first four World Congresses of the Communist International. The entire course of events has borne out their correctness.

Twenty years had to pass since Lenin's death before even the Stalinists dared to proclaim that the socialist solution for which Lenin fought all his life and which he brought to realization in Czarist Russia in October 1917 is nothing but "a puerile dream-world" (Browder, *Sunday Worker*, January 16); "a form of escapism" (Allen, *Daily Worker*, January 17), etc. etc.

With a contempt for the masses that typifies all the hirelings of the Kremlin, Browder tries to cover up his abject renunciation of socialism by the "realistic" plea that the Communist Party is much too small, and besides the American people are "so ill-prepared subjectively for any deep-going changes in the direction of socialism." (*Sunday Worker*, January 16.)

In this field too Browder follows a beaten track. Every misleader of the working class has employed this argument. Every supporter of capitalism is convinced, like Browder, that a real revolution is beyond the realms of possibility.

**EARL BROWDER AND PROFESSOR STRUVE** Suffice it to cite one example from Russian history, namely the case of Professor Peter Struve. Like Browder, this individual began his political career by passing himself off as a Marxist. He was even the author of the first Manifesto issued by the illegal socialist party in Czarist Russia to which Lenin belonged. Struve quickly found it expedient to disavow Marxist orthodoxy; in fact, he disavowed Marxism altogether. On the very eve of the 1905 revolution this Russian Professor declared: "There is not yet a revolutionary people in Russia." Struve could have cited—and did cite—far weightier arguments in support of his "realistic" estimate than are at Browder's disposal when he advances as his "considered judgment" that—alas!—there is not yet a revolutionary people in the United States. For Russia of Struve's day was an illiterate peasant country without any traditions of revolutionary struggle; the Russian proletariat formed a tiny minority of the population; the Russian party was pathetically small.

"Prior to January 22, 1905," wrote Lenin, "the revolutionary party of Russia consisted of a small handful of people and the reformists of those days (like the reformists of today) derisively called us a 'sect' . . . This circumstance gave the narrow-minded and overbearing reformists formal justification for asserting that there was not yet a revolutionary people in Russia." (*Collected Works*, vol. XIX, p. 389.)

In 1944 Browder repeats almost verbatim Struve's "formal justification" of 1905. It has hardly improved with age, but Browder labels it "Marxism."

**THE ARGUMENT FROM TEHERAN** In order to peddle this ancient garbage of reformism, the Stalinists produce their trump argument: The Teheran conference alters everything and, therefore, we too must alter with it. In particular, Teheran, according to Browder, has finally established that "capitalism and socialism have begun to find the way to peaceful co-existence and collaboration in the same world." (*Sunday Worker*, January 16.)

There is nothing especially original about this thesis either. Stalin propounded it back in 1924 when he advanced his theory of "socialism in one country." At the basis of this "theory" is the contention that the socialist and capitalist systems could co-exist peacefully. However, the real originator of this theory is not Stalin at all but a right wing German socialist by the name of Vollmar who in 1878 wrote an article to prove that:

" . . . The final victory of socialism is not only historically more likely primarily in a single state, but that nothing stands in the road of the existence and prosperity of the isolated Socialist state." (*The Isolated Socialist State*, by von G. Vollmar, *Jahrbuch fuer Sozialwissenschaft und Sozial Politik*, Zurich, 1879. Page 55.)

Since 1924 the Kremlin and all its lackeys have reiterated on numerous occasions that socialism had "irrevocably triumphed" in the Soviet Union and that it could co-exist peacefully alongside capitalism.

After the signing of the Stalin-Laval pact (May 1935), Stalin proclaimed in an interview with Roy Howard that not only could the USSR abide in peace with capitalism, but that the capitalists themselves—the peaceloving variety, of course—could band together to do away with war forever.

Stalin's entry into the League of Nations was trumpeted at the time as inaugurating a new era of peace on earth. The

Stalinists betrayed the Spanish revolution and committed innumerable crimes for the sake of preserving this "peaceful collaboration" which ended up in—Munich (September 1938).

Stalin then proceeded to cohabit with Hitler (Stalin-Hitler pact, August 1939). At the end of June 1941 Stalin's new-found ally invaded the Soviet union.

Such is the record of the peaceful co-existence between capitalism and the first workers' state in its degenerate form under Stalin.

**BROWDER BLURTS OUT TRUTH ABOUT TEHERAN** Whether by accident or design, Browder did tell some truth about Teheran. In point of fact, he substantiated that in order to arrive at an agreement with Churchill and Roosevelt, Stalin pledged himself to try to drown the German revolution in blood. Said Browder:

"British and American ruling circles had to be convinced that their joint war together with the Soviet Union against Hitlerism would not result in the Soviet socialist system being extended to Western Europe under the stimulus of the victorious Red Armies." (*Sunday Worker*, January 16.)

There can be no doubt as to the meaning of these words. Western Europe includes, above all, Germany. If Browder is correct that the British and American capitalists are now finally "convinced," then it can only be because Stalin supplied them with sufficiently "convincing" guarantees along with his seal and signature.

Moreover, it must be conceded that there is a grain of truth in Browder's insistence that the explanation for the dissolution of the American Communist Party is actually to be found in Teheran. For many years Stalin has used the world labor movement as so much small change in his diplomatic deals with both the "democratic" and fascist capitalists. The belated burial of the Communist International in May 1943 and now the liquidation of the C.P.U.S.A. are apparently part of the price the Kremlin has agreed to pay for its deal with Washington and London. And the Stalinist movement has so degenerated its followers that they unquestioningly accept anything and everything the moment the order is issued in Moscow.

### President Roosevelt's Open Turn to Reaction

**THE REFUSAL OF THE WORKERS TO SUBMIT** The lessons of the coal strikes, in which the miners emerged victorious in a showdown fight with the Roosevelt Administration have penetrated deep into the consciousness of the American working class. The hypnosis that organized labor could not successfully challenge the powerful apparatus of the federal government has been largely dispelled. Less than two months after the fourth mine strike, the railroad workers voted by an overwhelming majority to set a December 30 strike date in protest against the arbitrary action of Roosevelt's economic stabilizer, Vinson, who had scaled down a wage award granted by a railway mediation board. On Christmas eve began the walkout of the steel workers in protest against the refusal of Roosevelt's War Labor Board to grant a retroactive clause dating from the termination of their agreement. Both of these conflicts were aimed directly at the government. Thus, on the heels of his settlement of the troublesome mine issue, Roosevelt found him-

self confronting a new and far greater labor crisis that threatened his whole wage freezing "stabilization" program.

A labor reporter for the *New York Herald Tribune*, commenting on the walkout of the steel workers, indicated the gravity of the developing crisis:

"The strike now ending is only a curtain-raiser to the head-on collision expected when the actual demands of the steel workers come to the WLB. Right behind the steel workers and equally pledged to break the (Little Steel) wage formula are the United Auto Workers of America, who are heading for showdowns with General Motors and Ford; the Aluminum Workers of America, who are demanding increases of the Aluminum Company of America; the Oil Workers International Union, which is preparing to take on the entire petroleum industry; the textile workers, likewise tackling a whole industry; the United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers of America, which is taking on the Westinghouse Electric and Manufacturing Company, and many other CIO unions in various industries."

These unions comprise the backbone of the CIO concentrated in the strategic mass production industries of the country. The union leadership, although composed of docile lackeys committed to the support of Roosevelt, are under sufficiently heavy pressure from the ranks to be goaded into demanding some concessions in order to be able to hold their membership in line. But the rulers of this country, with their headquarters in Wall St. and their agents in Washington are not only unwilling to grant any concessions to the workers, they are determined to retake those gains which the unions had previously won. All the elements of a new labor crisis are already boiling to the surface.

\* \* \*

#### U. S. STEEL HEADS OPEN SHOP DRIVE

F. Fairless, president of the United Steel Corporation. In a speech before the Pittsburgh Chamber of Commerce Fairless informed his cronies:

"Gentlemen, our conviction is as firm today as it ever was that the right to work should not be dependent upon membership or non-membership in any organization." (*New York Times* January 21.)

This is the classic formula of the open shop under which the billion dollar corporations prevented unionization of the basic mass production industries for many years by employing gangs of armed thugs to terrorize the workers. Some of the bloodiest battles in the history of the world trade union movement were waged over the elementary question of union recognition. The war has provided Wall St. with a convenient cover under which to wage its campaign for the return of the open shop.

#### LABOR OFFICIALS AND THEIR ROLE

It is precisely the role of the labor bureaucracy that has cleared the way for the mounting wave of reaction which now threatens the very existence of the unions. The mechanics of capitalist class rule and the role of the trade union bureaucrats in the epoch of imperialism were analyzed in the *Manifesto of the Fourth International on the Imperialist War and the Proletarian Revolution*:

"While the magnates of monopoly capitalism stand above the official organs of state power, controlling them from their

heights, the opportunist trade union leaders scurry around the footstool of state power, creating support for it among the working masses."

For over ten years, the labor skates have carefully nurtured the legend of "labor's friend" in the White House. The Greens, Murrays and Hillmans, screened Roosevelt's responsibility for a whole series of anti-labor measures by directing their vapid criticism at the President's hirelings. When Roosevelt found that his prestige had suffered irreparable damage—after he had been forced out in the open by the coal miners and railroad workers—he discarded his mask and took the initiative in advocating repressive labor legislation. He was able to contemptuously ignore the spineless labor bureaucrats, knowing that they are organically incapable of breaking with their capitalistic masters.

\* \* \*

#### THE DRIFT AWAY FROM ROOSEVELT

As the workers became more and more disillusioned with Roosevelt's demagogic promises they began to grope toward independent class action on both economic and political field. The adoption by a number of important unions of the demand for an escalator clause in their contracts signified a radical departure from the wage freezing policy of the administration. The unmistakable labor drift away from Roosevelt was evident in the recent elections. Sentiment for the formation of an Independent Labor Party was crystalizing in a number of important sections of the labor movement.

In order to divert this sentiment for independent political action into surreptitious support for Roosevelt, Hillman and Co. organized the CIO Political Action Committee. So low had Roosevelt's prestige fallen among the ranks of labor and so great was the sentiment for independent political action among a powerful section of the CIO that the labor fakers had to pretend: (1) That no candidate would be endorsed who did not support the program of the CIO Political Action Committee; and (2) that the device of refraining from giving one or another capitalist politician endorsement in advance constituted independent political action by labor.

\* \* \*

#### THE INEVITABLE RADICALIZATION

As Roosevelt's swing to reaction becomes more pronounced the gap between the bureaucrats hanging to his coattails and the militant membership of the mass production unions will widen into an unbridgeable gulf. The die-hard monopolists are bent on crushing the unions. The drive of reaction will inevitably speed the radicalization of the American working class. This in turn will impel the labor bureaucrats to lean more and more on the repressive machinery of the capitalist state. The *Manifesto of the Fourth International* analyzes this process:

"The regime in the unions, following the pattern of the regime of the bourgeois states, is becoming more and more authoritarian. In war time the trade union bureaucracy becomes the military police of the Army's General Staff in the working class."

While the process of bureaucratization has proceeded to a greater or less degree in all the unions it has by no means been uniform or complete. A number of powerful CIO unions still retain a considerable degree of democracy due primarily to the militant tradition of the membership and the experience gained in the struggles to build the union. This is the Achilles heel of both the labor bureaucracy and their "friend" in the White House.

# The First Days of American Communism

By JAMES P. CANNON

EDITOR'S NOTE: Reprinted below is the first chapter of James P. Cannon's new book *The History of American Trotskyism*, scheduled for early spring publication by Pioneer Publishers. The material contained in the first chapter was originally presented as a lecture in New York City on March 18, 1942. Subsequent issues of *Fourth International* will carry some of the other chapters of this book which fills a long-felt gap in the basic documents of the revolutionary socialist movement in the United States.

\* \* \*

It seems rather appropriate, Comrades, to give a course of lectures on the history of American Trotskyism in this Labor Temple. It was right here in this auditorium at the beginning of our historic fight in 1928 that I made the first public speech in defense of Trotsky and the Russian Opposition. The speech was given not without some difficulties, for the Stalinists tried to break up our meeting by physical force. But we managed to get through with it. Our public speaking activity as avowed Trotskyists really began here in this Labor Temple, thirteen, nearly fourteen, years ago.

No doubt, in reading the literature of the Trotskyist movement in this country, you frequently noted the repeated statements that we have no new revelation: Trotskyism is not a new movement, a new doctrine, but the restoration, the revival, of genuine Marxism as it was expounded and practised in the Russian revolution and in the early days of the Communist International.

Bolshevism itself was also a revival, a restoration, of genuine Marxism after this doctrine had been corrupted by the opportunists of the Second International, who culminated their betrayal of the proletariat by supporting the imperialist governments in the World War of 1914-18. When you study the particular period I am going to speak about in this course—the last thirteen years—or any other period since the time of Marx and Engels, one thing is observable. That is, the uninterrupted continuity of the revolutionary Marxist movement.

Marxism has never lacked authentic representatives. Despite all perversions and betrayals which have disoriented the movement from time to time, a new force has always arisen, a new element has come forward to put it back on the right course; that is, on the course of orthodox Marxism. This was so in our case, too.

We are rooted in the past. Our movement which we call Trotskyism, now crystallized in the Socialist Workers Party, did not spring full-blown from nowhere. It arose directly from the Communist Party of the United States. The Communist Party itself grew out of the preceding movement, the Socialist Party, and, in part, the Industrial Workers of the World. It grew out of the movement of the revolutionary workers in America in the pre-war and war-time period.

The Communist Party, which took organizational form in 1919, was originally the Left Wing of the Socialist Party. It was from the Socialist Party that the great body of Communist troops came. As a matter of fact, the formal launching of the Party in September 1919, was simply the organizational culmination of a protracted struggle inside the Socialist Party.

There the program had been worked out and there, within the Socialist Party, the original cadres were shaped. This internal struggle eventually led to a split and the formation of a separate organization, the Communist Party.

In the first years of the consolidation of the Communist movement—that is, you may say, from the Bolshevik revolution of 1917 until the organization of the Communist Party in this country two years later, and even for a year or two after that—the chief labor was the factional struggle against opportunist socialism, then represented by the Socialist Party. That is almost always the case when a workers political organization deteriorates and at the same time gives birth to a revolutionary wing. The struggle for the majority, for the consolidation of forces within the party, almost invariably limits the initial activity of a new movement to a rather narrow, intra-party struggle which does not end with the formal split.

The new party continues to seek proselytes in the old. It takes time for the new party to learn how to stand firmly on its own feet. Thus even after the formal split had taken place in 1919, through the force of inertia and habit and also because the fight was not really ended, the factional struggle continued. People remained in the Socialist Party who were undecided and who were the most likely candidates for the new party organization. The Communist Party concentrated its activity in the first year or so to the fight to clarify doctrine and win over additional forces from the Socialist Party. Of course, as is almost invariably the case in such historical developments, this factional phase eventually gave way to direct activity in the class struggle, to recruitment of new forces and the development of the new organization on an entirely independent basis.

The Socialist Party Left Wing, which later became the Communist Party, was directly inspired by the Bolshevik revolution of 1917. Prior to that time American militants had very little opportunity to acquire a genuine Marxist education. The leaders of the Socialist Party were not Marxists. The literature of Marxism printed in this country was quite meager and confined almost solely to the economic side of the doctrine. The Socialist Party was a heterogeneous body; its political activity, its agitation and propagandistic teachings were a terrible hodgepodge of all kinds of radical, revolutionary and reformist ideas. In those days before the last war, and even during the war, young militants coming to the party looking for a clear programmatic guide had a hard time finding it. They couldn't get it from the official leadership of the party which lacked serious knowledge of such things. The prominent heads of the Socialist Party were American counterparts of the opportunist leaders of the Social Democratic parties of Europe, only more ignorant and more contemptuous of theory. Consequently, despite their revolutionary impulses and spirit, the great mass of young militants of the American movement were able to learn little Marxism; and without Marxism it is impossible to have a consistent revolutionary movement.

The Bolshevik revolution in Russia changed everything almost overnight. Here was demonstrated in action the conquest of power by the proletariat. As in every other country, the

tremendous impact of this proletarian revolutionary victory shook our movement in America to its very foundation. The inspiration alone of the deed enormously strengthened the revolutionary wing of the party, gave the workers new hope and aroused new interest in those theoretical problems of revolution which had not received proper recognition before that time.

We soon discovered that the organizers and leaders of the Russian revolution were not merely revolutionists of action. They were genuine Marxists in the field of doctrine. Out of Russia, from Lenin, Trotsky and the other leaders, we received for the first time serious expositions of the revolutionary politics of Marxism. We learned that they had been engaged in long years of struggle for the restoration of unfalsified Marxism in the international labor movement. Now, thanks to the great authority and prestige of their victory in Russia, they were finally able to get a hearing in all countries. All the genuine militants rallied around them and began studying their writings with an interest and eagerness we had never known before. The doctrine they expounded had a ten-fold authority because it had been verified in practice. Furthermore, month by month, year by year, despite all the power that world capitalism mobilized against them, they showed a capacity to develop the great revolution, create the Red Army, hold their own, make gains. Naturally, Bolshevism became the authoritative doctrine among revolutionary circles in all the workers political movements of the world, including our own here.

### Role of the Language Federations

On that basis was formed the Left Wing of the Socialist Party. It had publications of its own; it had organizers, speakers and writers. In the spring of 1919—that is, four or five months before the Communist Party was formally organized—we held in New York the first National Conference of the Left Wing faction. I was a delegate to this conference, coming at that time from Kansas City. It was at this conference that the faction virtually took shape as a party within a party in preparation for the later split. The official organ of the Left Wing was called *The Revolutionary Age*. This paper brought to the workers of America the first authentic explanation of the doctrines of Lenin and Trotsky. Its editor was the first one in this country to expound and popularize the doctrines of the Bolshevik leaders. Thereby, he must be historically recognized as the founder of American Communism. This editor was a man named Louis C. Fraina. His heart was not as strong as his head. He succumbed in the struggle and became a belated convert to bourgeois “democracy” in the period of its death agony. But that is only his personal misfortune. What he did in those early days retains all its validity, and neither he nor anybody else can undo it.

Another prominent figure of the movement in those days was John Reed. He was no leader, no politician. But his moral influence was very great. John Reed was the American socialist journalist who went to Russia, took part in the revolution, truthfully reported it and wrote a great book about it, *Ten Days that Shook the World*.

The bulk of the membership in the early Left Wing of the Socialist Party were foreign-born. At that time, more than twenty years ago, a very large section of the basic proletariat in America were foreign-born. Prior to the war the doors of immigration had been wide open, as it served the needs of American capital to accumulate a great labor reserve. Many of these immigrants came to America with socialist sentiments

from their home countries. Under the impact of the Russian revolution the foreign-language socialist movement grew by leaps and bounds. The foreign-born were organized into language federations, practically autonomous bodies affiliated to the Socialist Party. There were as many as eight or nine thousand members in the Russian Federation; five or six thousand among the Poles; three or four thousand Ukrainians; about twelve thousand Finns, etc.—an enormous mass of foreign-born members in the party. The great majority rallied to the slogans of the Russian revolution and after the split from the Socialist Party constituted the bulk of the members of the early Communist Party.

The leaders of these Federations aspired to control the new party and did in fact control it. By virtue of these blocs of foreign-language workers whom they represented, they exercised an inordinate influence in the early days of the Communist movement. This was good in some ways because for the greater part they were earnest Communists and helped inculcate the doctrines of Bolshevism.

### “Struggles for Control”

But their domination was very bad in other respects. Their minds were not really in the United States but in Russia. They gave the movement a sort of unnatural formation and afflicted it at the start with an exotic sectarianism. The dominant leaders of the party—dominant, that is, in the sense that they had the real power because of the blocs of members behind them—were people absolutely unfamiliar with the American economic and political scene. They didn't understand the psychology of the American workers and didn't pay them too much attention. As a result, the early movement suffered from excesses of unrealism and had even a tinge of romanticism which removed the party in many of its activities and thoughts from the actual class struggle in the United States. Strangely enough, these leaders of the Foreign Language Federations were convinced, many of them, of their messianic mission. They were determined to control the movement in order to keep it in the pure faith.

From its very beginning in the Left Wing of the Socialist Party and later in the Communist Party, the American Communist movement was wracked by tremendous factional struggles, “struggles for control” they were called. The domination of foreign-born leaders created a paradoxical situation. You know, normally in the life of a big imperialist country like this, foreign-language immigrant workers occupy the position of a national minority and have to wage a constant struggle for equality, for their rights, without ever fully getting them. But in the Left Wing of the Socialist Party and in the early Communist Party this relationship was reversed. Each of the Slavic languages was very heavily represented. Russians, Lithuanians, Poles, Letts, Finns, etc., had the majority. They were the overwhelming majority, and we native Americans, who thought we had some ideas about the way the movement ought to be led, were in the minority. From the start we waged the struggle of a persecuted minority. In the early days we had very little success.

I belonged to the faction first in the Left Wing of the Socialist Party and later in the independent Communist movement that wanted an American leadership, an American direction for the movement. We were convinced that it was impossible to build a movement in this country without a leadership in control more intimately acquainted with and related to the native movement of the American workers. They for their part were equally convinced, many of them, that it was impossible

for an American to be a real simon-pure Bolshevik. They wanted us and appreciated us—as their “English expression”—but thought they had to remain in control in order to keep the movement from becoming opportunist and centrist. Over the years a great deal of time was spent fighting out that fight which, for the foreign-language leaders, could only be a losing fight. In the long run the movement had to find native leadership, otherwise it could not survive.

The struggle for control assumed the shape of a struggle over organization forms. Should the foreign-language groups be organized in autonomous federations? Or should they be organized into local branches without a national structure or autonomous rights? Should we have a centralized party or a federated party? Naturally the conception of a centralized party was a Bolshevik conception. However, in a centralized party the foreign language groups couldn't be mobilized so easily in solid blocs; whereas in a federated party it was possible for the Federation leaders to confront the party with solid blocs of voting supporters in conventions, etc.

This struggle disrupted the Left Wing Conference at New York in 1919. By the time we got to Chicago in September 1919; that is, at the National Convention of the Socialist Party where the split took place, the forces of the Left Wing were already split among themselves. The Communists at the moment of their break with the Socialist Party were incapable of organizing a united party of their own. They announced to the world a few days later that they had organized not one Communist Party, but two. One holding the majority was the Communist Party of the United States, dominated by the Foreign Language Federations; the other was the Communist Labor Party, representing the minority faction, which I have mentioned, with its larger proportion of natives and Americanized foreigners. Naturally there were variations and individual fluctuations, but this was the main line of demarcation.

Such was the inauspicious beginning of the independent Communist movement—two parties in the field with identical programs, fiercely battling against each other. To make matters worse our divided ranks faced terrific persecution. That year, 1919, was the year of great reaction in this country, the post-war-reaction. After the masters finished the war to “make the world safe for democracy,” they decided to write a supplementary chapter to make the U.S. safe for the open shop. They began a furious patriotic drive against all the workers organizations. Thousands of workers were arrested on a nation-wide scale. The new Communist Parties bore the brunt of this attack. Almost every local organization from coast to coast was raided; practically every leader of the movement, national or local, put under arrest, indicted for one thing or another. Wholesale deportations of foreign-born militants took place. The movement was persecuted to such an extent that it was driven underground. The leaders of both parties thought it impossible to continue open, legal functioning. So, in the very first year of American Communism we not only had the disgrace and scandal and organizational catastrophe of two separate and rival Communist parties, but we also had both parties, after a few months, functioning in underground groups and branches.

The movement remained underground from 1919 until early 1922. After the first shock of the persecutions passed over, and the groups and branches settled down to their underground existence, the elements in the leadership who tended toward unrealism gained strength, inasmuch as the movement was then completely isolated from public life and from the labor organizations of the country.

Factional strife between the two parties continued to consume an enormous amount of time; refinements of doctrine, hair-splitting, became quite a pastime. Then, I, for my part, realized for the first time the full malignancy of the sickness of ultra-leftism. It seems to be a particular law that the greater a party's isolation from the living labor movement, the less contact it has with the mass movement and the less correction it can get from the impact of the mass movement, all the more radical it becomes in its formulations, its program, etc. Whoever wants to study the history of the movement closely should examine some of the party literature issued during those days. You see, it didn't cost any more to be extra-radical because nobody paid any attention anyhow. We didn't have public meetings; we didn't have to talk to workers or see what their reactions were to our slogans. So the loudest shouters at shut-in meetings became more and more dominant in the leadership of the movement. Phrasemongering “radicalism” had a field day. The early years of the Communist movement in this country were pretty much consecrated to ultra-leftism.

## The Underground Years

During the 1920 presidential elections the movement was underground and couldn't devise any means of having its own candidate. Eugene V. Debs was the candidate of the Socialist Party, but we were engaged in the fierce factional fight with that party and mistakenly thought we couldn't support him. So the movement decided on a very radical program: It issued a ringing proclamation calling the workers to boycott the elections! You might think that we could have just said, “We have no candidate; we can't do anything about it.” That was the case, for example, with the Socialist Workers Party—the Trotskyists in 1940; because of technical, financial and organizational difficulties, we weren't able to get on the ballot. We didn't find it possible to support any of the candidates, so we just let the matter pass. The Communist Party in those days, however, never let anything pass without issuing a proclamation. If I quite often show indifference to proclamations it is because I saw so many of them in the early days of the Communist Party. I lost entirely the idea that every occasion must have a proclamation. It is better to get along with fewer; to issue them on the more important occasions. They then have more weight. Well, in 1920 a leaflet was issued calling for boycott of the elections, but nothing came of it.

A strong anti-parliamentary tendency grew up in the movement, a lack of interest in elections which took years and years to overcome. In the meantime we read Lenin's pamphlet, *The Infantile Sickness of Left Communism*. Everybody recognized—theoretically—the necessity of participating in elections, but there was no disposition to do anything about it, and several years were to elapse before the party developed any serious electoral activity.

Another ultra-radical idea gained predominance in the early underground Communist movement: The conception that it is a revolutionary principle to remain underground. For the past two decades we have enjoyed the advantages of legality. Practically all the comrades of the Socialist Workers Party have known no form of existence other than that of a legal party. It is quite possible that a legalistic bias has grown up among them. Such comrades can get some rude shocks in time of persecution because the party has to be able to carry on its activities regardless of the attitude of the ruling class. It is necessary for a revolutionary party to know how to operate even in underground formations. But this should be done only from necessity, never from choice.



After a person experiences both underground and open political organization, he can easily convince himself that the most economical, the most advantageous is the open one. It is the easiest way of coming in contact with workers, the easiest way of making converts. Consequently, a genuine Bolshevik, even in times of sharpest persecution, tries always to grasp and utilize every possibility to function in the open. If he can't say everything he wants to say openly, he will say as much as he can—and supplement legal propaganda by other methods.

In the early Communist movement, before we had properly assimilated the writings and teachings of the leaders of the Russian revolution, a tendency grew up to regard the underground party as a principle. As time went on and the wave of reaction receded, possibilities for legal activities opened up. But tremendous factional struggles were necessary before the party took the slightest step in the direction of legalizing itself. The absolutely incredible idea that the party can't be revolutionary unless it is illegal was actually accepted by the majority in the Communist movement in 1921 and early in 1922.

### The Virus of Ultra-Leftism

On the trade union question "radicalism" held sway, too. It is a terrible virus, this ultra-leftism. It thrives best in an isolated movement. That's always where you find it at its worst—in a movement that is isolated from the masses, gets no corrective from the masses. You see it in these split-offs from the Trotskyist movement—our own "lunatic fringe." The less people listen to them, the less effect their words have on the course of human events, the more extreme and unreasonable and hysterical they become in their formulations.

The trade union question was on the agenda of the first underground convention of the Communist movement. This convention celebrated a split and a unification too. A faction headed by Ruthenberg had split away from the Communist Party, dominated by the foreign-language groups. The Ruthenberg faction met in joint convention with the Communist Labor Party to form a new organization called the United Communist Party in May 1920 at Bridgeman, Michigan. (This is not to be confused with another convention at Bridgeman in August 1922 which was raided by the police.) The United Communist Party gained the upper hand and merged with the remaining half of the original Communist Party a year later.

The 1920 Convention, I remember very distinctly, adopted a resolution on the trade union question. In the light of what has been learned in the Trotskyist movement, it would make your hair stand on end. This resolution called for "boycott" of the American Federation of Labor. It stated that a party member who "is compelled by job necessity" to belong to the AFL should work there in the same way that a Communist works in a bourgeois Congress—not to build it up but to blow it up from within. That nonsense was later corrected along with many other things. Many people who committed these stupidities later learned and did better in the political movement.

Following the Russian revolution the young generation revolting against opportunist betrayals of the Social Democrats, took radicalism in too big doses. Lenin and Trotsky led the "Right Wing"—that is what they demonstratively called their tendency—at the Third World Congress of the Communist International in 1921. Lenin wrote his pamphlet, *The Infantile Sickness of Left Communism*, directed against the German leftists, taking up questions of parliamentarianism, trade unionism, etc. This pamphlet, together with the Congress decisions, did a great deal in the course of time to liquidate the leftist tendency in the early Comintern.

I don't at all want to picture the founding of American Communism as a circus, as the side-line philistines do. It wasn't, by any means. There were positive sides to the movement, and the positive sides predominated. It was composed of thousands of courageous and devoted revolutionists willing to make sacrifices and take risks for the movement. In spite of all their mistakes, they built a party the like of which had never been seen in this country before; that is, a party founded on a Marxist program, with a professional leadership and disciplined ranks. Those who went through the period of the underground party acquired habits of discipline and learned methods of work which were to play a great role in the subsequent history of the movement. We are building on those foundations.

They learned to take program seriously. They learned to do away forever with the idea that a revolutionary movement, aiming at power, can be led by people who practise socialism as an avocation. The leader typical of the old Socialist Party was a lawyer practising law, or a preacher practising preaching, or a writer, or a professional man of one kind or another, who condescended to come around and make a speech once in a while. The full-time functionaries were merely hacks who did the dirty work and had no real influence in the party. The gap between the rank and file workers, with their revolutionary impulses and desires, and the petty-bourgeois dabblers at the top was tremendous. The early Communist Party broke away from all that, and was able to do it easily because not one of the old type leaders came over wholeheartedly to the support of the Russian revolution. The party had to throw up new leaders out of the ranks, and from the very beginning the principle was laid down that these leaders must be professional workers for the party, must put their whole time and their whole lives at the disposal of the party. If one is thinking of a party that aims to lead the workers in a real struggle for power, then no other type of leadership is worth considering.

In the underground the work of education, of assimilating the writings of the Russian leaders, went on. Lenin, Trotsky, Zinoviev, Radek, Bukharin—these were our teachers. We began to be educated in an entirely different spirit from the old lackadaisical Socialist Party—in the spirit of revolutionists who take ideas and program very seriously. The movement had an intensive internal life, all the more so because it was isolated and driven back upon itself. Faction struggles were fierce and long drawn out.

The movement began to stagnate in the underground blind alley. A few of us in the leadership began to seek a way out, a way to approach the American workers by legal means. These efforts were resisted fiercely. We formed a new faction. Lovestone was closely associated with me in the leadership of this faction. Later we were joined by Ruthenberg upon his release from prison in the spring of 1922.

For a year and a half, two years, this struggle continued unabated, the fight for the legalization of the movement. Resolute positive struggle on our side; equally determined resistance on the other by people convinced in their bones that this signified some kind of betrayal. Finally in December 1921, having a slender majority in the Central Committee, we began to move, taking one careful step at a time, towards legality.

We couldn't legalize the party as such, the resistance in the ranks was still too strong, but we did organize some legal groups for holding lectures. We next called a convention to federate these groups into a central body called the American Labor Alliance, which we converted into a propaganda organization. Then in December 1921, we resorted to the device of

organizing the Workers Party as an open, legal organization in addition to the underground Communist Party. We could not dispense with the latter. It was not possible to get a majority to agree to that, but a compromise was effected whereby while retaining the underground party, we set up the Workers Party as a legal extension. Two or three thousand die-hard undergrounders revolted against even this makeshift move toward legality, split away and formed their own organization.

We continued with two parties—a legal and an illegal one. The Workers Party had a very limited program, but it became the medium through which all our legal public activity was carried on. Control rested in the underground Communist Party. The Workers Party encountered no persecution. The reactionary wave had passed; a liberalistic political mood prevailed in Washington and in the rest of the country. We were able to hold public meetings and lectures, publish newspapers, participate in election campaigns, etc. Then the question arose, did we need this encumbrance of two parties? We wanted to liquidate the underground organization, concentrate all our activity in the legal party, and take a chance on further persecution. We met renewed opposition.

The fight went on uninterruptedly until we finally appealed the matter to the Communist International at the Fourth Congress in 1922. At that Congress I was the representative of the "liquidators" faction, as we were called. This name comes from the history of Bolshevism. At one time following the defeat of the 1905 revolution, a section of the Mensheviks came forward with a proposal to liquidate the underground party in Russia and confine all activity to Czarist "legality." Lenin fought this proposal and its proponents savagely, because it signified a renunciation of revolutionary work and organization. He denounced them as "liquidators." So naturally, when we came forward with a proposal to liquidate the underground party in this country, the leftists with their minds in Russia mechanically transferred Lenin's expression and denounced us as "liquidators."

So we went to Moscow to fight it out before the Communist International. That was the first time I met Comrade Trotsky. In the course of our struggle we tried to get support from individual members of the Russian leadership. In the summer and fall of 1922 I spent many months in Russia. For a long time I was somewhat of a pariah because this campaign about "liquidators" had reached ahead of us, and the Russians didn't want to have anything to do with liquidators. Unacquainted with the situation in America, they tended to be prejudiced against us. They assumed that the party had really been outlawed; and when the question was put to them they were inclined to say off-hand, "If you cannot do your work legally do it illegally, but you must do your work."

But that wasn't really how matters stood. The political situation in the United States made a legal Communist Party possible. That was our contention, and all further experience has proved it. Finally, I and some other comrades met with Comrade Trotsky and expounded our ideas for about an hour. After asking a few questions when we had finished, he said, "That is enough. I will support the 'liquidators' and I will talk to Lenin. I am sure he will support you. All the Russians will support you. It is just a question of understanding the political situation. It is absurd to bind ourselves in an underground strait jacket when it is not necessary. There is no question about that."

We asked if he would arrange for us to see Lenin. He told us that Lenin was ill but, if necessary, if Lenin did not agree with him, he'd arrange for us to see him. In a few days

the knot began to unravel. A Congress Commission was set up on the American question and we went before the Commission to debate. Already the word had passed down that Trotsky and Lenin favored the "liquidators" and the tide was turning in our favor.

In the discussion at the Commission hearing Zinoviev made a brilliant speech on legal and illegal work, drawing on the vast experience of the Russian Bolsheviks. I have never forgotten that speech. The memory of it serves our party in good stead to this day and will do so in the future, I am sure. Radek and Bukharin spoke along the same lines. These three were in those days the representatives of the Russian Communist Party in the Comintern. The delegates of the other parties, after full and thorough debate, gave complete support to the idea of legalizing the American Communist Party.

## Leninist Teachers

With the authority of the Comintern World Congress behind the decision, the opposition in the United States soon subsided. The Workers Party, which had been formed in 1921 as a legal extension of the Communist Party, held another convention, adopted a clearer program and completely replaced the underground organization. All experience since 1923 has demonstrated the wisdom of that decision. The political situation here justified legal organization. It would have been a terrible calamity and waste and crippling of revolutionary activity to remain underground when it was not necessary. It is very important that revolutionists have the courage to take those risks which can't be avoided. But it is equally important, I think, that they have enough prudence to avoid unnecessary sacrifices. The main thing is to get the work done in the most economical and expeditious manner possible.

A final remark on this question: One little group remained unreconciled to the legalization of the party. They were going to remain underground in spite of us. They were not going to betray Communism. They had their headquarters in Boston and a branch in Cleveland. Every once in a while through the years we would hear of this underground group issuing a pronouncement of some kind.

Seven years later, after we had been expelled from the Communist Party and were organizing the Trotskyist movement, we heard that this group in Boston was somewhat sympathetic to Trotskyist ideas. This interested us, as we were badly in need of any support we could get.

On one of my visits to Boston the local comrades arranged a conference with them. They were very conspiratorial and took us in the old underground manner to the meeting place. A formal committee met us. After exchanging greetings, the leader said, "Now, Comrade Cook, you tell us what your proposition is." Comrade "Cook" was the pseudonym he knew me by in the underground party. He was not going to trifle with my legal name in an underground meeting. I explained why we had been expelled, our program, etc. They said they were willing to discuss the Trotskyist program as the basis for unity in a new party. But they wanted agreement first on one point: The party we were going to organize would have to be an underground organization. So I passed a few jokes with them and went back to New York. I suppose they are still underground.

Now, Comrades, all this is a sort of background, an introduction to the history of our Trotskyist movement. Next week I will deal with the further development of the Communist Party in the early years prior to our expulsion and the reconstitution of the movement under the banner of Trotskyism.

# How The Trotskyists Went To Jail

By JOSEPH HANSEN

The Socialist Workers Party is the only party in this country which has maintained the socialist anti-war position and held to its opposition to the war under fire. The Trotskyists were penalized for their courageous stand. The capitalist courts took revenge upon 18 individuals for daring to hold aloft the banner of socialism in wartime. But not one took back a single word. What kind of people are these whom the Roosevelt regime wishes behind bars? What stuff are Trotskyists made of that so many of them can meet severest tests without buckling? I had opportunity to observe them the last days before they entered prison. Perhaps a few sketches of them during those days will help to answer these questions.

## AMERICA'S No. 1 SOCIALIST

James P. Cannon has long been recognized as the leading representative of American Trotskyism. When I came to his home in New York on Tuesday afternoon, December 28, 1943, to accompany him on the trip to prison, he was relaxed in his workshop, quietly smoking a cigar. He greeted me affably, invited me to make myself at home while he waited for his granddaughter Lorna—he calls her "Mickie"—to finish her nap so that she might accompany "Gramp" to the station.

I glanced about Jim's lean, efficient workshop where he prepares his speeches and articles. Beside the desk and a few chairs, the only furnishings are shelves of Marxist classics. The walls border on austerity—only two pictures in the entire room, one of Trotsky, the other of Carlo Tresca.

Jim took out his gold watch to check the time. So steeped is Jim in the movement that everything about him brings to mind some phase of party life. That gold watch was a present from comrades of Local New York of the Socialist Workers Party, the *Webster's New International Dictionary* near his elbow a present from a class he taught on the history of Trotskyism; even his cigar was a present from sea-going Trotskyists. "When America's No. 1 Socialist exchanges his clothes for prison garb, he will get a receipt for that gray suit the Los Angeles comrades gave him," I thought. "When he gets out, it will be the first thing he puts back on—that suit is party harness so to speak."

Rose, his wife, typed busily, bringing up to date the scoreboard of the branches of the Socialist Workers Party in their drive to collect \$15,000 in celebration of the 15th anniversary of American Trotskyism. Gray hair framing dark eyes, Rose looked beautiful behind Jim's desk. The wrist watch comrades gave her when they presented Jim with his watch, flashed in the sunlight. Only two nights before, Rose had stood up at the farewell banquet in New York to speak for the wives of the defendants and the Trotskyist women of the party. It was hard to see the men go, she had said with simplicity, but there would be no moping. The women would carry on.

Leavetakings can be embarrassing to an outsider, for he does not know the intimate things and cannot share in them. He is not directly linked to the emotional threads drawn taut. Jim's two-year-old granddaughter, whom Walta now brought in, kept the sentiment in this farewell from distressing anyone. As Walta, Rose's daughter, stuffed Mickie's arms into her snow

suit, Jim kept up a running conversation with the youngster, smiling at her like a wise old grandfather.

"Bam going calaboose," responded Mickie; "I go too." Hearing her use that word "calaboose," it wouldn't surprise me if she could already sing some of the old IWW songs Jim knows so well. As Jim took a few more moments to laugh with Mickie over their secret understanding, it was difficult to hold steadily in one's mind the fact that soon he would be on the train, soon in Minneapolis, soon in prison.

At Grand Central station Rose said goodbye. In my mind, as I watched her, came the image of Natalia Trotsky, the great woman hero of the Marxist movement . . .

As for little Mickie, faithfully carrying out her part of the deal, she gave everybody a laugh holding out her arms to go with Gramp to the calaboose.

We had taken a compartment on the Commodore Vanderbilt to Chicago, for Jim still had some editorial work to complete on the manuscript of his book that is to be published this spring, *The History of American Trotskyism*, and did not want to be disturbed. But Jim was still unsettled from his leave-taking. He watched the unsavory tenements of Harlem move bleakly past the train window—that monstrous ghetto where capitalism forces the Negro people of New York to live in segregation. The lines in Jim's face grew deep and grave. I thought him sad at leaving his family, sad at all the things Harlem brought to mind. Socialism will leave not one stone upon another where slum tenements now mar America. The road to achieving that great social gain, however, is not an easy one. Jim was on his way to prison now precisely because of his fight for such an alternative to the imperialist war.

## On the Train

Jim likes to speak about the great future facing mankind once the economic system has been organized upon rational lines that will eliminate poverty and war. In 1938 when they came to visit Trotsky, I listened to him and Vincent R. Dunne in the patio of a hotel at Cuernavaca after dinner, talking about the future. Under socialism, they said, the enemy will not be our fellow human beings, but the enemy of all human beings: *disease*. All the energy that now goes into such destructive waste as imperialist war will go into a socialist war against disease. The campaign will be organized on a world scale with unlimited funds at the disposal of the earth's scientists and laboratories. The head lines in the press will not boast that so many thousand tons of bombs have been dumped on men, women and children, but will announce such things as really free the world of fear: *Rheumatic Fever Surrenders to New Cure, Infantile Paralysis Stamped Out, CANCER CONQUERED*.

What of death itself? If the Socialist Administration of the United States of the World were to appropriate an amount equal say to what the former capitalist Congress poured into imperialist war, could life expectancy be extended scores of years?

People will follow professions not out of economic compulsion but out of their own desire, for the economic system unshackled from capitalist fetters will produce goods in such undreamed of abundance as virtually to free everyone from

the daily grind that holds us down today. How joyous it will be to live under socialism! You want to delve into the mysteries of the atom? Good. Society needs new sources of power to further free us from drudgery. You want to become an astronomer? Good. The heavens are virtually unexplored. We need intelligent men ambitious to extend our knowledge in that field. Who knows what they will find about the origin of the universe, its limits and its end? Under socialism art will really flower in full beauty and creativeness for the first time. And then the highest art of all will come into its own, the art of loving one's fellow man.

That evening in Mexico was memorable. Barefoot campesinos trudging over the cobblestones with towering burdens of pottery on their backs like draft animals . . . Vincent and Jim discussing the great ideals which have kept them organizing for socialism nearly 40 years . . .

As the crack train gathered speed along the banks of the river, the man soon to be locked in a cell because of his beliefs leaned back in his seat watching the barren trees and the ice-fringed water skim by. The pillars of a famous geologic formation moved in stately procession into the past—scenes of the Hudson warmed by the winter sun for this socialist fighter to remember in the hard days ahead. The sun fell on his hair as the train leaned around a curve and the iron gray waves lighted up luminously. Jim's lips moved; "The Palisades are beautiful."

## Rosedale and World War I

A few questions led Jim to speak about his youth. He was born near the geographical center of the United States; in Rosedale, Kansas. The somber rural middle west of the nineties was the background of his childhood. For all practical purposes, his formal education ceased at the age of twelve. Only "bitter will" drove him to educate himself. He carried a grocer's notebook in which he jotted down the words he stumbled across in books. He memorized and tried to use in conversation these fascinating new words despite the raillery of his companions, who like many country boys considered education so far beyond the reach of their station in life that whoever exhibited ambition in that direction was in their eyes a little touched. Undoubtedly Jim misused many words; for years he experienced embarrassment unlearning the Kansas pronunciation he had assigned to them; but no matter, defying all obstacles, by sheer main force he muscled through.

Having finished formal schools at the age of 12, he went to work 60 hours a week for the Swift Packing Company. His next job was in the railroad yards at the age of 14; 70 hours a week. Once a month he was entitled to a whole day off for relaxation. When he spoke at the farewell banquet about the "pathetic pleasures" of those who have not yet gained the emancipating vision of socialism, Jim said, he had that boy of Rosedale, Kansas, in mind trying to have fun on his day off.

Jim brought out his pipe and lit it. Through the smoke that drifted along the window, Jim's eyes remained on the scenery rushing by. Space and time were perishing under the train wheels, as the Commodore rushed this stiff-necked man to the penitentiary. "Tell me about your father," I asked.

Although now well in his eighties, responded Jim, old Cannon still stands by his son and follows everything that happens to him. When Jim began organizing for the IWW, his father hungered for every word about his successes, his speeches and debates. "Some of the boys knew this," Jim went on, "and on their way through town they'd stop off to see my father and let him know about me." He smiled, "I guess they used to lay

it on a bit more than I really deserved; but my father was always proud of me." The interest of Jim's father is understandable. He was a socialist himself as early as 1901. In England where the Irish Land League had ramifications he was a member of the Boulton Local. The Irish revolutionist Robert Emmett was his hero; Emmett, martyred by the British, who said, "Don't write my epitaph until Ireland is freed." As a boy Jim memorized an entire speech of Robert Emmett's; could recite it word for word. Now this son was entering prison as America's No. 1 Socialist.

As he smoked his pipe he answered another question of mine about the persecution of socialists in the first World War, telling me his experience in Rosedale. Despite his becoming an advocate of the rights of labor and even a member of the IWW and Socialist Party, the town elders still considered him destined for Congress. "Probably they were right. I might have ended up these past decades in Congress if I hadn't become convinced that the only fight worthwhile is the fight for socialism.

"The crucial turning point was my attitude on the war. In those days the socialist movement hadn't arrived at the correct approach to this question. We thought that the way out, in our uncertainty, was to become conscientious objectors. Now we know of course that it is wrong to separate yourself from your generation; you should go with them into the armed forces. When I came up before the board to register for the draft, one of the venerable town elders tried to counsel me, to advise me, not to get into trouble, to go along, but when he asked me what to put down, I said, 'Conscientious objector.'

"Why?" he asked me.

"I don't believe in the war."

"The others didn't think they had heard right. 'What did he say?' one of them asked.

"He doesn't believe in the war."

"I'll never forget the way he said that, without lifting or turning his head. He felt very bad that I would do such a thing.

"From then on I was a pariah in my own home town. No work. Complete isolation. They came and took away my wife's kitchen cabinet. You don't know what that means—but in Rosedale it was a terrible blow. My little boy held on to the man's legs, biting him like a little dog because they were taking away his mother's kitchen cabinet. They took away our phonograph records. I'll never forget how my little boy went around cranking his arm and hand, pretending he was playing a phonograph record. The whole world seemed against us.

"Finally we had nothing to go with our mush, except a quart of milk a day. The milkman took pity on us week after week, leaving a bottle each morning without asking for money. Maybe he sympathized a little. Finally one bitter day I went out to get the milk and it wasn't there, just the empty bottle I had put out. Tom Hampton hadn't left the milk that morning. He wasn't going to leave any more without money. I had two babies and a wife waiting inside the house. I just sat down on the step and held that empty bottle in my hands.

"I know what the most desperate poverty means. I've had to stuff my books in the stove to keep my family from freezing to death."

Now for the second time, he was being hounded and persecuted for his opposition to imperialist war. He didn't believe Wilson that the first World War would make the world safe for democracy; he didn't believe Roosevelt that the second World War will bring "four freedoms" to our planet.

I was reminded of an incident: Several years ago at a New York banquet for Angelica Balabanova, old John Dewey, relating how he came to serve on the Commission of Inquiry

that exposed the falsity of the Moscow Trials, said to Max Eastman in the presence of Cannon, "This is the man who got me to serve on the Commission. He appealed to my better nature."

Eastman, who long ago gave up the fight for socialism, responded ironically, looking at Cannon: "He's appealed to the better nature of a lot of people."

I recalled the incident to Jim. "How did you get an eminent person like John Dewey to serve on that Commission?"

## John Dewey and the Moscow Trials

Stalin was flooding the world with monstrous lies, Jim explained: murdering tens of thousands of Trotskyists and others under pretense they were spies and traitors. The sole "crime" of the Trotskyists was to be in political opposition to the regime which had usurped power. Trotsky for instance was guilty of nothing but wanting to defend the Soviet Union in accordance with the ideas of Lenin. Stalin had even succeeded through his machinations with the Norwegian government in preventing Trotsky from explaining to the world press what was happening in these purge trials. It was necessary to give Trotsky a hearing so that people who believed in truth could decide whether he was guilty of the charges or not. Several people had already gone to Dewey to ask him to serve on the Commission but he had refused. His family didn't want him to go to Mexico, for he was more than 80 years old.

"I went to him and told him what the situation was." Jim smiled warmly at the memory. "I told him he must do something for justice. I wouldn't let him go until he agreed to do something for justice. That was how he came to serve on the Commission. That was how Trotsky was given the opportunity to prove his innocence before the whole world, to prove that he was the best defender of the Soviet Union."

Jim continued: "But even John Dewey was not wholly impartial. As a judge it would have served the cause of justice to simply announce the verdict of not guilty, without injecting his own personal views on politics. He took advantage of the occasion to attack the theory of socialism; in that he departed from strict morality. When the history of this epoch is written, when they excavate through this geologic stratum of lies as Natalia Trotsky expressed it, they'll discover that the only really moral people were the Trotskyists."

"As for the judges on the Supreme Court who are supposed to be such liberals and such moralists, they are not even as moral as Pontius Pilate. They refused even to hear the case. Pontius Pilate at least asked, 'What is truth?'"

As evening reddened the sky, Jim turned to the editorial work on his book *The History of American Trotskyism*. Many things stirred his memory as he went through the manuscript. He broke off occasionally to talk about the hard days in the early Trotskyist movement, how the Minneapolis comrades held him up when the going became bitter beyond endurance. He mentioned earlier things which he projects for his autobiography. The men he knew in the IWW. Frank Little who was murdered by a mob at Butte, Montana, during the persecution of labor militants in World War I. Jim was in two strikes with Frank Little, one at Peoria, Illinois, the other at the ore docks in Duluth, Minnesota. He was a close friend of James Larkin, the Irish revolutionist. Vincent St. John, great organizer of the IWW, came within an ace of joining his pupil Cannon in organizing for the Communist movement after the October Revolution.

We changed trains at Chicago, leaving the sprawling smoke which clothed that city for the sunlit flat lands of Illinois. We

now rode a bit closer to the blinds; that is, in a coach jammed with the traffic of war, soldiers and sailors on furlough, workers, women and children. Jim enjoyed the democratic atmosphere. He began humming "What song is that?" I asked.

"Haven't you ever heard it? It's one of Joe Hill's best." Joe Hill was the IWW poet who came from Sweden to put the thoughts and emotions of the militant American working men to music. The victim of a frameup, he was shot at Utah state prison in 1915, but his songs are imperishable in the labor movement.

"Shall I sing you the words?" offered Jim. Then and there he presented me with Joe Hill's famous ballad about "Overalls and Snuff." The words seemed singularly appropriate in view of the labor crisis on the railroads, for the song tells about the railroad strikers of an earlier day who sang, "We'll build no more damn railroads just for overalls and snuff."

The Hiawatha sped out into Wisconsin. Patches of bare trees held stiff fingers up to the winter sun. Jim talked about Mickie's goodbye. "I'm going to miss her. Oh how I'm going to miss that little tyke. 'Bam going calaboose; I go too!'" He chuckled at Mickie—this man who had come out of the iron school of the IWW and the early Communist Party. "Some of us may never live to see the Socialist society. But she will. She'll see in real life what we've been fighting for as an ideal."

## REPRESENTATIVES OF THE AMERICAN WORKING CLASS

When the Hiawatha pulled into Minneapolis after dark, Carl Skoglund and Oscar Coover took us to a hotel. During the hours that followed I saw a side of Jim that was completely new to me. In New York he is cosmopolitan, a politician of the working class dealing in world problems. The capitols of the warring powers lie before him like a chess board as he follows the diplomatic moves, the maneuvers, calculates the next probable stage of development in the international class struggle. Now as his old friends and comrades-in-arms came to welcome him—even though it be welcome to prison—he seemed the small town boy reporting back to the family how things are in the metropolis. Here his past cropped up in a new form. These men all know *Rosedale* although they may never have been there. Jim speaks their language as they want it spoken. Jim is the home town boy who went out to champion their historic interests. What he accomplishes they also accomplish. They held him up when the going was tough, sent him support and encouragement; he is their ambassador in the court of world politics.

And so, because wit is a handy material with which to build a fence around such intimate friendships, wit encircled Jim. I think that is why Jim is so appreciative of Minneapolis humor—not because it is peculiar to Minneapolis, but because it is the humor of the America Jim loves, concentrated on him for the good of his soul. That is why, for instance, he likes to tell the story about Bill Brown and Miles Dunne when the National Guard entered Minneapolis to break the July 1934 strike. As the uniformed "apple-knockers" nervously marched Cannon and Shachtman away in a circle of bayonets, Bill and Miles leaned out of the court house window overhead, holding their sides in laughter at this rare comedy. "Anything for a laugh in Minneapolis," Jim says reminiscently.

The Minneapolis comrades undoubtedly would have felt keenly disappointed if their leader were forced to serve his term in a separate prison; they covered up their appreciation of his presence by ribbing him for ever having come to Min-

neapolis in the first place. "You see where it got you to come to Minneapolis and open your mouth?"

During the evening, walking along the dark streets of Minneapolis toward a restaurant, I became better acquainted with Carl Skoglund. Long an outstanding figure of the Northwest labor movement, Skoglund represents the revolutionary tendency in the Scandinavian flavoring of Minnesota politics. Born in Sweden on an ancient feudal estate, his serf ancestors had been bound to the soil as far back as records extend. Capitalism penetrated into this area with saw mills and other enterprises when Carl was still a boy. Overnight, youths changed from serfs into proletarians.

## An Old Timer

The conflict with the older Lutheran generation became peculiarly sharp. As against devout belief in witchcraft, charms and the catechism, these youths were confronted by the ultra-modern scientific doctrines of Karl Marx. The feudal home broke up. At the age of 15 Carl scandalized the locality by refusing to go through with confirmation in the Lutheran church.

The 1905 revolution in Russia and the consequent upsurge in Norway had a powerful influence upon him. His older brother, already a Socialist, talked to him of the coming classless society. In 1911 he came to the "land of freedom." Working on the railroad, he met Oscar Coover. "We hardly worked," said Carl, "we had such good arguments about socialism."

But the freedom Carl sought in America was apparently somewhat exaggerated in the steamship company advertisements. Because he played a prominent part in building the labor movement of the Northwest, Roosevelt's regime decided to imprison him. Still worse they insulted him . . . were he to stand on the side of Tobin's stool pigeons in the trial . . . things might go easier for him . . .

He faces 16 months in prison. When he gets out, he does not know his fate—perhaps deportation to Sweden, a country which has become completely alien to him in the 30 odd years since he left there. Thus two ages as well as two continents are blended in this union man. He was born into the last remnants of feudal economy; in his maturity he is pursued by capitalism in its death agony.

As Carl told these things to me, he interrupted himself continually to point out where the 1934 strikers had their headquarters, how they had a picket line here, how the employers had trembled there across the street in their exclusive club. He talked about Cannon's role in gaining the victory, adding: "You know, right in the thick of it, when the police and the National Guard and everybody was after us what he tried to do? He tried to make us international-minded. He warned us not to be provincial." He laughed. "Yes, not to be provincial."

"As for me," he continued; "I am of the working class and that class I'm going to stick with. I'm going to fight the class that's trying to cut us down."

Thursday revolved about the Minneapolis branch headquarters of the Socialist Workers Party. From morning until evening friends milled in and out with last greetings and expressions of solidarity for the defendants. Memories were awakened. Harry DeBoer and Emil Hansen, cutting each other down in pinochle, interwove the main theme of their conversation with references to the many activities of the Teamsters Union, the strikes, picket lines, negotiations, the dangers they had encountered and the victories that had been won.

Oscar Coover, watching the fall of cards, chipped in with this or that correction as to fact, sucking on his pipe, reminding

them of characters in the labor movement, incidents worthy of repetition.

I told the comrades about Mexico; what respect Trotsky and Natalia had for Emil when he was a guard there.

Max Geldman, father of a baby boy, born Christmas morning, spent little time acting the proud father. He was busy describing his previous incarceration at Sandstone for union activity, preparing his comrades for the first difficult days.

Karl Kuehn, Oscar Schoenfeld and Al Russell, the three sent to Danbury, were present in spirit. Again and again their names came up in reminiscences of their roles in the great drive to organize the Northwest into one of the most union-conscious areas of the nation.

Jake Cooper told about the assault on Leon Trotsky's house in May 1940. How Stalin's assassins riddled L. D.'s and Natalia's bedroom with machine gun slugs. Justice has not yet caught up with Siqueiros, the Stalinist leader of that assault. He is free to work on fresh jobs for the GPU. But Jake Cooper who tried to defend the Old Man and his wife, is being sent to prison.

Grace Carlson described how as a child in a strict Catholic family she had been taught to regard a socialist uncle as beyond the pale. However, he had given her books about Eugene V. Debs when she was nine or ten years old, and she had read them. Now tenderly saying goodbye, proud of the fight she was making in the tradition of Debs, he had reminded her of that fact; "I never thought then your reading those books would come to this."

## Thursday at Headquarters

Felix Morrow and Albert Goldman arrived. Comrades eddied about them, saying "hello and goodbye." Goldman had stopped in Chicago to address a mass meeting protesting the imprisonment of the 18. With a cup of coffee in his hand from the spotless commissary of the Minneapolis headquarters he described the indignation of the advanced Chicago workers over the frameup. Some of the Minneapolis humorists ribbed Morrow about incidents when he was there a few years ago. Felix laughed goodhumoredly.

Farrell Dobbs, who had come a few days earlier to visit his father and mother and the youngest of his three daughters, talked with Ed Palmquist, Clarence Hamel and the others about the great days when they drove forward to make the Teamsters Union one of the most powerful in the nation. "They are *men*," he told me as we sat in the headquarters: "Every inch of them."

Farrell Dobbs was a name to conjure with in the drive to organize the Teamsters. He could have reached a high place in the circle surrounding Tobin. Yet he spurned that career since it would have meant supporting Roosevelt's regime and imperialist war. He chose instead to fight for socialism. That is why Tobin and Roosevelt decided to railroad him to prison.

Vincent Dunne moved quietly, efficiently about the headquarters, finding time even with this magnificent group of organizers on hand to take care of details himself. He wrote a letter to Kelly Postal, a copy of which I managed to obtain. "Dear Kelly," Vincent wrote,

"I am sending you this letter before going away, to greet you and to tell you that I appreciate the sacrifice you are making.

"It is my conviction that in the future yours and my position, which are one and the same, will be vindicated.

"I am going to be denied the right to participate in the movement, the same as you, for a little time; but in the future you and I together will fight on and complete the task of liberating the working class.

"In this spirit I am greeting you and hope that you will soon be free.

"The hands of the 18 close comrades guide mine as I send you fraternal greetings of solidarity."

Vincent Dunne took Jim and a small group for the last supper before going to prison. We sat in a private room. Dark wooden beams overhead, copies of rich Renaissance paintings on pastel walls gave that supper an unforgettable tone. Vincent ordered wine—it seemed appropriate on this occasion, and poured a glass for Grace Carlson at his side.

They began talking about Trotskyism. "Our movement is historic," said Dunne. "Take our press for instance. The first volume of *The Militant* is a collector's item, worth I don't know how much. Compare it with other radical publications. Who cares about the first volumes of *The Call* for example. Or take the *Workers Age*, which at one time was so imposing. Who cares about that? Our movement was real because it followed the long-range historical perspective."

Reaction could not assassinate the ideas of Trotsky by sinking a pickaxe into his brain. Reaction will be as little able to confine within a strait jacket the coming socialist revolution by locking its leading advocates behind bars. The enormous masses of people throughout the world, surging irresistibly forward to the program of socialism, cannot be halted by anything within the arsenal of these parasites from an outmoded past. Ideas cannot be imprisoned or slaughtered.

As I listened to these native American socialists, I could not help but conclude: When the history of our country is written by future historians, they will not look for material in the library at Hyde Park where Roosevelt employs a staff to file away minutiae about himself. They will dig painfully into scattered memoirs, accidental bits written in the heat of struggle, items preserved in the files of Trotskyist publications, to find out what the real figures of American history were like.

Then Jim told his comrades about Rose at the farewell banquet in New York. "She gave a magnificent speech . . . 'No moping,' she said. She spoke for all the women. How proud I was of Rose. That was a beautiful speech Rose made . . . The most beautiful thing I've heard in a long time. She stood up like a Spartan woman. I was very proud of her."

## Last Hours of Freedom

On the last day, December 31, the defendants gathered at the headquarters. A constant stream of workers came in for a final handshake—men taking off a few minutes from their jobs where they could, under one excuse or another, just to give the defendants moral encouragement. For the Minneapolis comrades lead the labor movement there even though they no longer stand at its head.

Al Goldman worked on a press release; Felix Morrow greeted people, seized spare moments to write letters.

Jim took a few small items out of his valise and wrapped them in a handkerchief to take to the county jail—tooth brush, etc.

"Looks like you're hitting the road, Jim," someone remarked.

"Yes; made up my mind to get out of here . . . I've been many a time on the road with a bundle no bigger than that."

One of the photographers sent down by the press found his memory stirred about the great struggle in Butte, Montana, where Frank Little was murdered. He related some of the incidents of those days; how his own father was something of a socialist for a while. "Everyone was something of a socialist then."

Goldman explained how the power of the socialist movement can suddenly expand: "When the revolution comes, there will be hundreds of thousands and millions of people appear who had some connection with socialism."

Tension mounted as the hour drew near. Tentative arrangements had been made to leave between two and three in the afternoon. Jim set the time at precisely 2:30. For a few minutes he sat, draining this hour of freedom to the last. Then he arose to lead the way.

## A HISTORIC MARCH

When they came out of the headquarters in formation like soldiers of the proletariat, a crowd quickly formed. The 15 halted—a last minute check to see that all was in order, for they intended to go two by two in order of their length of service in the ranks of the working class vanguard. When Trotskyists do something, they do it right. Then forward down Marquette Avenue from Ninth Street to Third.

Well-wishers met them as they marched. "Goodbye," one could hear again and again. "Good Luck." The sentiment of the advanced workers of Minneapolis was expressed most aptly I believe by the truck driver who told Skoglund shortly before the march began: "You've still got lots of friends, Carl. We won't forget you."

Jim Cannon and Vincent Dunne led the way, the two men whose lives mirror the main stream of socialism in the United States for almost four decades. Bulbs flashed as press photographers crouched at vantage points—the capitalist press too is interested in the way the victims of the class struggle act at such painful and dramatic moments. But the faces of these two veteran leaders expressed nothing in that march which could comfort the class enemy. They were living embodiments of the motto which Trotsky used to quote: "*Not to laugh; not to weep; but to understand.*"

Behind Cannon and Dunne marched Carl Skoglund and Oscar Coover, those fine old warriors of socialism whose lives have earned them immortality in the hearts of the American working class. Then Albert Goldman, who has spent a lifetime speaking out against reaction and injustice in the courts, a Trotskyist lawyer willing to stake far more than career and comfort in defense of socialism. Beside him strode Farrell Dobbs, outstanding union organizer who rose out of the great 1934 Minneapolis strikes like a flame seeking its way toward the final destruction of this whole dying archaic capitalist system of hunger, misery and bloodshed.

Next Felix Morrow, editor of *Fourth International*, whose writings burn the bourgeoisie like a lash. And Grace Carlson, former candidate for Minnesota senator—all the Trotskyist movement can take pride in Grace as she marched resolutely toward prison; the only woman demanded as a victim by the Roosevelt regime, she faces 16 months alone.

Carlos Hudson and Max Geldman came in the next rank. Hudson distinguished himself too well as a champion of labor when he edited the *Northwest Organizer*—Tobin and Roosevelt decided that he must pay the penalty. Geldman, who has already served one imprisonment for strike activity, was taken as a matter of course.

Behind them marched Harry DeBoer and Emil Hansen, union organizers who fought labor's fight with both hands from the day they became conscious of the necessity to organize against the bosses.

Then Clarence Hamel and Ed Palmquist, two more organizers of Teamsters Local 544 who could not conceive of knuckling under to a moneyed employer or a wealthy international union head with powerful political connections.

Last, Jake Cooper, the youth who went down to Mexico to do everything he could to help guard Trotsky and Natalia from Stalin's assassins. Trotsky loved Jake for his devotion and his willingness. He would have embraced him again seeing how he marched.

They crossed the street to walk in the sun. As they strode past a bank they made a remarkable picture. That imposing structure, representing all the accumulated wealth and power of the capitalist society they have challenged, looked down coldly and forbiddingly. But they did not walk at all like trapped slaves. The sun high-lighted their hats, their shoulders, touched their swinging hands. In dark overcoats they appeared in uniform. Against the chill wall of stone, they looked like a contingent of a powerful conquering army. In truth that is precisely what they were, coming down the streets of Minneapolis, the advance contingent of the army that will eventually destroy all the evil power represented by the bank in the background.

At the Federal Court they were met by deputies of the U. S. Marshal. Again a crowd of the curious gathered while the formalities were completed. Then began the short march to the County Jail. This grim building loomed ever higher and more repellent as the defendants neared. In the canyon-like street, split by sun and shade, the great blocks of granite, grimy from years of smoke and dirt, rose like an upthrust of primeval rock. All the ignorance, superstition and cruelty of tens upon tens of thousands of years seemed to have been embodied by the architect in his design. Here in stone was the terrible lag of the human mind, particularly when it is ossified in the ruling class; the lag which resists blindly and ferociously

the next step in progress, demanding on its altar the blood and lives of millions of the oppressed.

The 15 marched into the gloomy maw of that monument of capitalism, disappearing two by two inside. Down the long corridors of the basement they marched. Already the atmosphere seemed to wash over them, that atmosphere of sterile, hopeless stultification and decay which is so characteristic of these institutions and which hard tile and glazed marble only intensify. Bulbs of the press photographers still flashed in the faces of these working class leaders as the camera men climbed on stools, crouched low to find "interesting" angles.

At the elevator they halted for the last time. An elevator in a dungeon seems an anachronism, as if all the technique of modern industry, that could build a marvelous society of freedom, were subverted solely to the task of making more solid and impregnable the most savage institutions of the Pharaohs.

As the elevator lifted the first load out of sight, the full essence of our era came home to those still present. When a program speaks of the evil of capitalism in the death agony, it can appear as an abstraction, difficult to grasp. But when you see men who have spent their lives organizing for a better society thrown into prison, then the concrete meaning of the abstraction enters your bones.

The last man stepped into the elevator and so ended the historic march. In my mind I could hear the voice of Trotsky, that rich resonant voice welling up from memory. I thought to myself: If Trotsky could be here now to see how the leadership of our party conducted itself under persecution, he would have said: "Good; very good."

# Japan Faces The Abyss

## I. The Distinguishing Features of Japan's Economic Life

By LI FU-JEN

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** The author of this thorough study of Japan's economic and social life spent many years in the Far East and visited Japan several times, the last occasion being in 1940. The study—the publication of which begins in this issue—is based on his own knowledge and observations, though for much of his statistical and other factual material he is of course indebted to other sources. The next installment will appear in the March issue of *Fourth International*.

For those who intend to pursue further the study of Japan, the author recommends Freda Utley's very excellent analytical work, *Japan's Feet of Clay*—(New York, 1937). Other sources recommended to Marxist students are *Japan's Emergence as a Modern State*, by E. H. Norman; *Le Japon, Historie et Civilization*, by La Mazaliere; *Japan—the Hungry Guest*, by G. C. Allen; *Japan in Recent Times*, by A. Morgan Young; *Japan's Economic Position*, by A. J. Orchard; *Foundations of Japan*, by Robertson Scott.

### FOREWORD

What is happening inside Japan and in the colonies, both new and old, to Japanese imperialism? Of all the imperialist powers in the present war, Japan has been the most successful in concealing from the rest of the world the real state of her internal affairs. The Tokyo censorship appears to be almost

ironclad and complete. In the American press there appear frequent and well authenticated reports of internal conditions in Nazi Germany and the Nazi-dominated countries, reports of worsening social conditions and of growing war-weariness on the part of the masses. Similar reports leak out from behind the British censorship. But from inside Japan we hear practically nothing. There are frequent press dispatches describing conditions in the colonies of the "democratic" imperialists: uprisings in Lebanon, famine and revolt in India, etc. But the colonies of Japan—Manchuria, Korea, Formosa—occupied China, Malaya, Burma, the Netherlands East Indies and the Philippines are shrouded in the silence of censorship.

The absence of news from inside Japan lends strength to the myth of Japanese national unity which, created by Japan's rulers, is now sustained by her antagonists in order to prepare the people of the United States and Britain for that serious and costly struggle with Japan which is still only in its preparatory stage. The Japanese are depicted as a completely unified nation, bound solidly together in zeal for conquest and fanatical devotion to the Emperor. This myth, which flatly contradicts the reality of Japanese life as known until the moment of the attack on Pearl Harbor, is buttressed by the



superficial observations of returning repatriates, who, from the well-guarded internment camps of Dai Nippon, were somehow miraculously able to discern evidence of Japan's "national unity."

While news from inside Japan has been negligible in both volume and value, there have been a few reports of the highest significance for estimating the real situation within the country. Thus toward the end of 1942, after Japan had been at war with America and Britain for a year and had won spectacular victories, we were able to learn that Premier Hideki Tojo had decreed the death penalty, without trial or other legal procedure, for any person attempting "to change the government's policy or plans during war time." A little later, at a conference of prefectural governors in Tokyo, in a speech broadcast to the entire nation, he declared that Japan faced a "very serious current situation," adding this very revealing admonition:

"If one of you should detect any dissatisfaction or unsettled feeling within your (the governors') jurisdiction, you should take immediate and concrete steps for the complete removal of these elements . . . Now the people of our nation must endure their inconveniences and overcome painful hardships in order to win this war."

Here, certainly, is no picture of 70-million Japanese fervently united in loyalty to the Emperor, and through the Emperor to the Japanese ruling class and its imperialist aims. All the imperialists—whether "democratic" as in America and Britain, or openly dictatorial as in the fascist countries and Japan—take exceptional steps to control public thinking and to curb manifestations of mass discontent in time of war: they understand well enough that the masses will continue to fight, sacrifice and die only so long as they can be kept believing that they are doing so in the general interest of the nation. But Japan's rulers, like the Nazis, have deemed it necessary to hold over the people a threat of the ultimate penalty—death—for any display of opposition. This is indicative of a public state of mind, in turn reflecting a condition of social relationships, just the opposite of that picture of monolithic national unity currently being purveyed in this country in order to prepare the American working-class for the bloody trials to come.

The Bolshevik revolution established, *a posteriori*, the fact that Czarist Russia constituted the weakest link in the capitalist chain in the period of World War I. Long before that event, however, Lenin had disclosed the grave weaknesses of Russian capitalism through concrete economic and sociological analysis. Precisely the "hard facts" of economics and sociology, brought to light and interpreted politically by the method of Marxist science, were the source of Lenin's revolutionary optimism. The great leader of the Bolsheviks was no wishful thinker. Neither was he a prophet. He did not know for certain, and could not know, that Russia definitely would be the scene of the first successful revolution in history. But in the light of his analysis he believed this most probable. While the imperialist allies of Czarism were marvelling at the power of the "Russian steamroller" following the early victories of the Czar's armies on the secondary Austro-Hungarian front, Lenin anticipated the catastrophic breakdown that was to come and prepared for the revolution.

We can apply the method of Lenin, i.e., the method of Marxism, to an analysis of imperialist Japan. This analysis will reveal that Japan's position in World War II is comparable to that of Czarist Russia in World War I. Beyond all doubt Japan is today the weakest link in the imperialist chain. Since we are Marxists, not prophets, we do not assert that Japan *will* be the first country in this war to experience the throes of

social revolution, for under conditions of change a still weaker link could develop. But we can and do assert that of all the imperialist belligerents Japan, objectively, is the most ripe for fundamental social change.

In the literature of the Trotskyist movement, as of Marxism in general, there is an unfortunate dearth of material regarding Japan. As regards the Fourth International, this is not accidental. All the happenings of great revolutionary moment during this decade and a half have occurred in Europe. The great Orient, following the collapse of the Chinese revolution in 1927, has remained politically dormant. But today, with the war in the Pacific gathering momentum, there is to be expected a quickening of developments in that part of the world. Imperialist Japan is at the center of the Pacific stage—on the one hand trying to draw into peaceful vassalage the peoples of surrounding and adjacent Oriental territories, and on the other locked in mortal combat with the world's mightiest imperialist powers. It is essential that Marxists understand the nature and the actual strength of Japan's economy and the character of the social relationships erected upon it. Despite the paucity of material referred to above, Japan has by no means been ignored in the literature of the Fourth International. The theses *War and the Fourth International*, adopted in 1934, contained the following appraisal:

### Trotskyist Prognoses

Belated Japanese capitalism, feeding on the juices of backwardness, poverty and barbarism, is being driven by unbearable internal ulcers and abscesses on the road of unceasing piratical plunder. The absence of an industrial base of its own and the extreme precariousness of the whole social system makes Japanese capitalism the most aggressive and unbridled. However, the future will show that behind this greedy aggressiveness there are but few real forces. Japan may be the first to give the signal to war; but from semi-feudal Japan, torn by all the contradictions that beset Czarist Russia, sooner than from other countries, the call to revolution may sound.

This basic estimate of Japanese imperialism was repeated some four years later, in 1938, in one of the documents adopted by the Founding Conference of the Fourth International, the thesis entitled *The War in the Far East and the Revolutionary Perspectives*:

Insular Japan, in the era of the twilight of capitalism, proceeding from a weak economic base, is debarred historically from achieving the imperial destiny of which her ruling classes dream. Underlying the imposing facade of Japanese imperialism are fatal organic weaknesses which have already been aggravated by the military conquest of Manchuria. The resources of Japanese capitalism have been proved inadequate for the task of empire building. The economic fabric of the country is being strained to breaking point by the new military campaigns. Japanese capitalism survives by means of the intensest exploitation of the Japanese proletariat, while the peasants, forming the major part of Japan's population, are victims of growing impoverishment and distress. The burdens of both workers and peasants are being increased unbearably by the war. More than 30,000,000 Chinese in Manchuria await the opportunity to liberate themselves from the Japanese yoke. Another 21,000,000 Koreans and 5,000,000 Formosans strive for their independence from Japan. All these factors constitute the Achilles heel of Japanese imperialism and foredoom it to destruction. Such military victories as the Japanese army is able to win in China have only an episodic importance. The first serious reverses . . . will become the starting point of social and political explosions in Japan and in the territories of Manchuria, Korea and Formosa. Regardless of the immediate outcome of the war in China, Japanese imperialism is doomed.

The military machine of the Japanese imperialists has never yet been flung against a first-class power. Weakened by what will turn out to be Pyrrhic victories in China, Japanese imperialism will go down to defeat in the coming world war if its career is not brought to a speedier end by the proletarian revolution.

As far back as 1932 and 1933, Trotsky devoted two articles to the subject of Japan in which the main weaknesses of Nipponese imperialism were set forth with a clarity that left nothing to be desired. Asserting that Japan's invasion of Manchuria (1931) had "arisen directly out of the putting down of the Chinese Revolution and out of an impending revolution in Japan," Trotsky wrote:

Japan's military intervention in Manchuria is . . . by no means an expression of the *strength* of the present Japanese state. On the contrary, the act was dictated by its increasing weakness. It is very instructive to consider the analogy between the Manchurian adventure of Czarism which led to the war of 1904-5, and this adventure of the Mikado's government. (*Liberty* magazine, February 27, 1932.)

## Leon Trotsky on Japan

Trotsky was impressed by the numerous close resemblances between Czarist Russia and Japan. Nearly two years after the above article appeared, he returned to the subject of Japan with a critical appraisal in which, anticipating the second imperialist world war, he delineated all the main weaknesses of the Mikado's empire and concluded that it was "headed toward the abyss." The following excerpts indicate the main lines of Trotsky's thought:

So far, Japan has never measured her strength with the advanced nations. Her victories have been those of a backward nation over nations of even greater backwardness . . . The Russian army won minor successes only so long as it was engaged with the Austro-Hungarian side show; as soon as it entered the main theater of military operation against Germany it once more revealed its complete insufficiency.

. . . The comparative elements in the strength of armies spring from no mysterious properties of "race." They spring from combinations of vital social and political factors: The condition of a country's natural resources, the level of its business development, the relations between its social classes; the internal quality of its army; its soldier material, its corps of officers, its equipment, and its General Staff.

. . . The real armament of a nation is determined, not by the weapons on parade, not even by the weapons stored in arsenals, but by the weapons implied by the productive power of the nation's industries . . . the facts indicate that Japan would be crushingly defeated . . . (*Liberty* magazine, November 18, 1933.)

Discussing the Meiji Restoration, which laid the foundations of present-day Japan, Trotsky wrote:

It was not a middle-class revolution: it was a bureaucratic attempt to buy off such a revolution . . . today the mighty remains of Japanese feudalism have become a terrible brake on the development of the country . . . as a result of historical conditions and forces, the Japanese middle classes have adopted aggressive foreign policies before cutting the knot of medieval serfdom. In this lies Japan's greatest danger; her structure of military power is erected over a social volcano. Furthermore her empire has been erected over a political volcano. In the collapse of Czarism—and the Mikado's counselors had better study how this happened—the oppressed nationalities, which composed 53 percent of the population of pre-war Russia, played an enormous part. The political unity of the Japanese islands would be Japan's greatest advantage if her business system and her army were not entirely dependent on Formosa, Korea and Manchuria. Counting Manchuria, there are today almost fifty million oppressed Koreans and Chinese to the sixty-five million

Japanese. This mighty reservoir of political revolution will become especially dangerous to Japan in time of war. (*Idem.*)

Trotsky concluded his article with the following categorical assertions:

Imperial Japan is headed toward the abyss:

Japan is economically weaker than either Russia or America . . .

Japanese industry is incapable of assuring an army of several millions of arms and military supplies for war of several years.

The Japanese financial system cannot support the burden of military armaments even in time of peace.

The Japanese soldier, on the whole, isn't good enough for the new technology and the new tactics of modern war.

The Japanese people are strongly hostile to the government. The disunited nation could not be united by the aims of conquest. Hundreds of thousands of real or possible revolutionists would flow into the army with mobilization. Korea, Manchuria and China would reveal in action their bitter hatred of the Japanese yoke.

War would pave the way for revolution. (*Idem.*)

While there is a scarcity of Marxist literature dealing with Japan, there is a fair abundance of bourgeois writing on the subject which includes a wealth of data upon which to base a Marxist analysis of Japan's history, economy and social relationships. Trotsky was conversant with this data and his estimate of Japan's strength (more correctly, her weaknesses) was based upon it. It is the main purpose of this study to lay bare the core of these data in order to refute the current myths of imperialist propaganda and to furnish a guide in the "Japanese problem" to revolutionary internationalists throughout the world. In the course of this work we shall present overwhelming evidence to confirm the estimates of Japan made by Trotsky and the Fourth Internationalists; showing, too, that these estimates have retained their validity to the present day.

\* \* \*

Japan is no enigma. Nor are her 70 million people wily, savage Orientals\* with mysterious minds and racial traits so queer as to be beyond the comprehension of Western mortals. As a matter of fact, many journalistic scribblers emphasize racial characteristics of the Japanese people when in reality they mean social characteristics. Racial attributes are innate;

\*The "willingness" of the Japanese is nothing more than a strong tendency toward secretiveness induced by Japan's pervasive police system which pries into even the most intimate personal affairs of the people. As for the charge that the Japanese soldiers are "naturally" barbarians who commit unspeakable atrocities, this needs to be remembered: Apart from the fact that atrocities are inseparable from war, the point is never brought out that a very large part of Japan's armed forces are peasants drawn from a backward agrarian environment removed only in point of time from the most primitive, that is, the most barbarian, system of social relationships. Trotsky, in his *History of the Russian Revolution*, explained that the barbarities perpetrated by the mouzhiks in the great upheaval were in large part excrescences of that village barbarism which, among other things, the revolution set out to destroy. Bourgeois writers alternated between describing them as manifestations of a Russian, that is, a fundamental racial quality, and efforts to depict them as an essential attribute of Bolshevism. Trotsky marked them down as a social debt against Czarism and Russian capitalism to be liquidated by the revolution. After the sack of Nanking by Japanese troops in 1937, the Japanese commander, Gen. Iwane Matsui, was questioned on the subject by a *New York Times* correspondent. "Yes," he said quite laconically, "my soldiers are savages." In thus slandering his own army, Gen. Matsui was indicting the social system of Japan.—L.F.J.

social attributes derive from a specific social system that can be changed. The eminent anthropologist Professor John F. Embree, in his pamphlet *The Japanese* (Smithsonian Institution), points out that Japanese "basic mental and psychological abilities and processes are similar at birth to those of Americans or Germans or Chinese." Social influences, with roots in Japan's historic past, are the source of Japanese "peculiarities." What imperialist propagandists would have us believe are the innate and therefore eternal characteristics of this people, are simply the products of a given society. As we examine Japan's economic and social systems, and their historic origins, the things, which we are told are so incomprehensible take their place in a lawful order of things and at the same time display, not their eternal but their evanescent character.

\* \* \*

The principal characteristic of Japan's industrial economy is its extreme dispersal and atomization. In the foreground of the picture are modern, highly organized, powerful trusts and combines controlling whole industries equipped with the most modern machinery, while the background consists of small-scale industry—the tiny workshops of artisans working for a local market, and a widespread domestic industry. The entire structure rests on the narrow foundation of a primitive, small-scale agriculture too weak to bear the great burdens placed upon it and which may crack at any moment to bring the whole vast superstructure crashing to the ground.

### The Principal Characteristic

Nowhere in the world are there greater concentrations of capital than in Japan, where the twin giants Mitsui and Mitsubishi dominate the entire economic life of the country. Nevertheless, the characteristic of industry as a whole is not power-driven machinery and corporate finance, but primitive tools, handicraft or semi-handicraft production, and minute investments of capital by traders or small masters. In spite of the occasional use of a small motor, most industries catering to the home market still depend mainly on human muscles and the dexterity of human fingers. In establishments classified as factories (those having 5 or more workers) 20% have no prime movers. Every nail driven in Japan is still produced by hand. And as late as 1937 only 34% of the machinery produced in Japan came from factories employing 500 or more workers, as against 45% from medium-size plants (between 50 and 500 workers) and 17% from those employing 5-9 workers. The majority of master craftsmen producing goods mainly by hand in small workshops by their own labor and that of a few journeymen and apprentices, are no longer independent producers for a purely local market (although such artisans also survive as a feudal feature of Japan's economic organization); they are small capitalists exploiting their few workers mainly for the benefit of the big financial and merchant houses which give credit on usurious terms to the small industrialists and shopkeepers, and which market the produce of the farmer. The master craftsman who produces goods of purely Japanese consumption for the local market is little more independent than the others, since there is no longer any regulation of production by a guild and he is subject to all the hazards of competition with other small producers. Rarely is he able to avoid becoming indebted to banks or usurers, or to the suppliers of raw material, even if no electric power is used in his workshop and there is consequently very little capital invested in means of production.

At this lower end of the industrial ladder the organization of production is similar to that which prevailed in Western

Europe in the 17th and 18th centuries and which was already characteristic of the woolen trade in England and Holland as early as the 16th century. It is a system in which a so-called manufacturer—in reality a middleman or merchant—gives out raw material to a home worker, or to a master artisan employing a few workers and apprentices, and takes from him the finished product to sell to the wholesaler, thus financing and controlling the whole process of production. In the case of enterprises producing strictly for a local market, the master craftsman or tiny capitalist can still dispose of his own product, but the small producers of goods which must find an outlet in the national market or abroad are completely dependent on a merchant jobber not only for raw materials but also for disposal of the product. Except for the fact that the *ultimate* control of all production in Japan is in the hands of a very small group of monopoly capitalists, this penetration of capitalism into the tiny enterprises—still so close to the feudal age in their productive relationships and technique—shows that Japan is at a stage of economic development, in respect to organization of production in the greater part of her industries, which corresponds to the very infancy of capitalism in Europe.

### What Statistics Show

The relative weight of this small industry in the economy as a whole can be illustrated statistically. Japan's population, according to the census of 1930, was 64,067,000; and less than half (namely 29,320,000, not including some 3,000,000 juvenile workers) were listed as having an occupation. The occupational divisions were approximately as follows:

(I) Factory workers .....	2,032,000
Small independent producers in industry and transport .....	1,200,000
Casual workers (who are engaged and paid by the day, though they frequently work long periods for the same master).....	1,963,000
Total of I	5,195,000
(II) Transport workers .....	532,000
Miners .....	202,000
Total of I and II	5,929,000
(III) Working peasantry, including agricultural laborers .....	12,800,000
Landlords .....	1,000,000
Employers in agriculture (usually also landowners, but may be large tenant farmers)...	500,000
Total of III	14,300,000
(IV) Commercial employees .....	2,600,000
Employees of government and private offices and professions .....	1,800,000
Small independent commercial agents and professionals .....	1,500,000
Employers in industry, transport and commerce (whether factory or handicraft).....	1,800,000
Total of IV	7,700,000
Fishing .....	585,000
Domestic service .....	806,000

The above figures, which in their proportions had changed but slightly up to the outbreak of the Pacific war, tell their own story of the condition of Japanese economy. They show that only 7% of the occupied population work in factory industry. Still more revealing is the fact that the number of day laborers (qualified handicraft workers employed by a master artisan but paid by the day and working together with

young apprentices who are not included in the above figures) is almost equal to the number of factory workers. Their number, incidentally, includes workers in enterprises employing fewer than five persons and accordingly not classed as factories, also workers temporarily taken on in factory industry. If the master artisans are also considered, the total of non-factory industrial workers comes to over 3,000,000 as against some 2,000,000 in factories. The bourgeois economist Kamekichi Takahashi, writing in the 1936 issue of *Japanese Trade and Industry*, publication of the Mitsubishi Economic Research Bureau, gave a somewhat more conservative estimate of the extent of non-factory industrial labor when he stated that 46.1% of the total number of industrial workers were employed in establishments with five or fewer workers. At all events, here is a picture of extreme dispersal and atomization of a very large part of Japan's industry. The picture is sharpened when it is borne in mind that many of the enterprises classified as factories, i.e., those with more than five workers, use little or no power-driven machinery and in the general organization of production are at the stage of capitalist development known as "manufacture."

Nor are the tiny establishments of master craftsmen and apprentices found only in the small cities and villages. In Osaka, Japan's foremost industrial city, out of 19,000 industrial establishments in existence in 1924, some 13,000 or 68%, employed fewer than five workers. A comparison of the 1930 with the 1920 census figures shows that the number of persons in industry remained practically unchanged. Insofar as there was any change at all, it was reflected in a reduction of 9,688. Japan was not even able during those ten years to absorb as many workers into industry as during the boom which followed the first World War. For the annual population increase of some 900,000, industry affords no opening. Yet between 1920 and 1930 the occupied population increased from 27,378,000 to 29,320,000. Where did the increase of 1,942,000 go? It did not remain in agriculture, for according to the census the number of persons engaged in agriculture remained at 14,000,000. The only categories where the numbers showed large increase were commerce, the civil service and the liberal professions. The number engaged in commerce increased by nearly 1,500,000 in the decade, and those in the public service and liberal professions by nearly 400,000.

Important to note in the 1930 census figures is the unusually large proportion of the population engaged in commerce and the tremendous increase between 1920 and 1930—a period when industry with respect to employment remained practically static. Actually those engaged in commerce merge with those engaged in manufacture, since the master craftsman usually sells his own products in a store which consists of his workroom. Nevertheless, such artisans are included under the heading of industry, not commerce. But even if this fact is left out of consideration, the primitive nature of Japan's industrial organization, with all the wastefulness that it entails, is clearly revealed in the indication that there are nearly as many persons engaged in commerce, government service and the professions as there are in industry, namely 4.4 millions in the former against 5.2 millions in the latter. This means that 15% of the occupied population are engaged in the former group of categories as against 18% in industry. And if we add to that group the 1,500,000 small independent commercial agents and professionals, we get a total of 5,500,000 in commerce, government service and the professions as against only 5,200,000 in industry. Many of those engaged in commerce are agents or jobbers who form the large class of middlemen between the merchant houses, or the larger manufacturers, and the multi-

tude of tiny commodity producers. They travel around giving out raw materials and collecting the finished products from the artisans, from the small "factories," and from the homes of the peasants and other households. Industry has not been able since 1920 to absorb the surplus population of the village. Insofar as this surplus population has found an occupation at all, it has been in petty trading, speculation and usury. It is of value to compare the percentage of Japan's population engaged in industry and commerce, respectively, with figures for other countries. The following table from the 1926 *Statistical Year Book of the League of Nations* tells the story of Japan's backwardness:

Country	Percentage of population in industry	Percentage in commerce
Japan .....	19.4	15.1
Switzerland .....	44.1	11.7
Britain .....	39.7	13.9
Holland .....	36.1	11.7
Germany .....	35.8	8.7
France .....	33.9	10.4
Czechoslovakia .....	33.8	6.0

Where extremely small-scale enterprise occupies such a large place in the national economy, the store and factory are often one. The large number of small stores, in which the employees work anything from 15 to 19 hours a day, seven days a week, is one of the most striking visible signs of the huge wastage of energy and time in Japan. In Tokyo in 1929, according to official statistics, there was one retail store to every 9.5 houses and every 43 inhabitants. These figures are typical of Japan as a whole. A vast number of these stores can never hope to serve more than a bare half dozen customers in the course of a day.

## Types of Industrial Plant

This brief survey of the structure of Japanese industry would not be at all complete without an examination of the types of industrial plant in which the country's 2,000,000 odd factory workers are employed. More than half of the total of 50,000 factories employ between five and nine workers, and the number of establishments employing more than 100 workers constitutes only 5% of the total. Large-scale plants—if we thus designate places employing 500 workers or more—employ only 35% of Japan's total force of industrial workers. As against this, the smallest factories, employing five to nine workers, employ 10% of the total and accounted for 56% of the total number of factories in 1936.

In the years during and after World War I, when Japan experienced her greatest industrial expansion, there was no tendency toward diminution, either absolutely or relatively, of the number of small industrial enterprises. On the contrary, this sector of the country's economy underwent a tremendous growth. The percentage of factories employing five to nine workers rose from 46.2 in 1914 to 56 in 1936, but the percentage of total factory workers employed therein was roughly the same at both dates, indicating a tendency toward further atomization and dispersal of industry.

The number of industries to which large-scale production methods and modern technique have been extensively applied is very small and consists mainly of those which have worked largely for export (like the cotton and rayon industries); the flour, sugar, brewing and canning industries; metallurgical enterprises mainly engaged in armament manufacture and shipbuilding, and the heavy chemical industry. These did not exist in the pre-modern era and are necessarily large undertakings

involving huge capital expenditures and large labor forces. In the industries which supply the consumption needs of the Japanese population there is hardly any large-scale production in modern factories. Here one encounters the familiar figure of the master craftsman with his apprentices and one or two journeymen. It is easy to distinguish the production of goods for export from those intended for home consumption, because the latter are peculiar Japanese goods designed to a standard and a mode of life which have hardly changed since feudal times. Just as the apprentices "live in" and receive payment only in kind as in the feudal period, so do the customers sleep on the same *tatami* (rush matting), wear the same clothing and the same wooden footgear, eat the same food, shiver in winter in the same flimsy wood and paper houses inadequately heated by stone charcoal braziers, and in general live much the same spartan life as in the bygone days of the *Samurai* (feudal warrior caste).

As regards numbers employed, the very small factory and handicraft production far outweigh modern large-scale industry. But as regards capital invested, the big enterprises account for a tremendously disproportionate share and there is extreme centralization of capital. More than 65% of Japanese capital is invested in 1.5% of the total number of companies, while only 2.1% is invested in 60% of all the industrial and commercial companies of Japan. Moreover, some 83% of invested capital is under the control of companies with a capital of a million *yen* or more, while less than 4% is held by those working on a capital of less than 100,000 *yen*.

And, in line with the statistical evidence given above, showing the important place occupied by merchandising in the national economy, we naturally expect to find a corresponding situation in the field of capital investment. In 1929, out of a total capital of 13,790,758,000 *yen* invested, 42.7% was found in commerce and banking as against 44.7% in manufacturing industry and mining. Transport accounted for a little more than 10% and the insignificant remainder was in agriculture and fishing. The extreme concentration of capital in industry is of course most striking in heavy industry. In engineering, for instance, out of a total paid-up capital of 87,000,000 *yen* in large enterprises, four trusts—Mitsui, Mitsubishi, Okura and Furukawa—control the whole.

## Tell-tale Income Tax Figures

Income tax statistics tell their own story of the concentration of capital in a few hands. Although all incomes above 1,200 *yen*\* a year are taxable, there were only 804,419 income tax payers in 1926; 690,000 in 1927 and 569,046 in 1931. In the capital city of Tokyo with its 2,000,000 inhabitants, there were only 76,668 income tax payers in 1927. The average income of income tax payers was then only 1,630 *yen*. Of the 569,046 income tax payers in 1931, only 20,524 had incomes of 10,000 *yen* or more. At the same time, the figures show the existence of some very large and a few colossal fortunes. According to calculations based on the income tax returns made by Prof. Shiomi of the Kyoto Imperial University, there were in 1931 a hundred men with incomes of 200,000 *yen* to 500,000 *yen*, and twenty with over 500,000 *yen* a year. Of these latter twenty, nine had between 1,000,000 and 2,000,000 *yen* a year and one 3,000,000 *yen*. In 1935-36, Baron Hisaya Iwasaki of the Mitsubishi combine, paid income tax on an income of 2,300,000 *yen*, another member of the Iwasaki family had an income only slightly smaller, while Baron Mitsui had an income of about

1,500,000 *yen*. A year previously, however, his income had been nearly 4,000,000 *yen*. Such fortunes as these would be remarkable in any country, but in Japan, where the per capita national income is only 165 *yen*, they show an almost unparalleled centralization of capital. A breakdown of business tax statistics reveals a similar contrast of tremendous wealth and poverty.

There are quite a few millionaires in Japan and almost all move in the orbit of Mitsui and Mitsubishi who dominate the entire economic life of the country. The one is an old house dating from feudal times when the Mitsui were first silk drapers and armorers and then general merchants, rice speculators and bankers to the *Shogun* (ruling feudal chieftain), whilst the other is a new house founded after the Meiji Restoration by the chief steward or business agent of the Tosa clan. The latter, Iwasaki Yataro by name, was able to lay the foundations of his house's wealth by making a corner in steamships and holding up the new Imperial Government when troops had to be transported to Formosa in 1873. This he was able to do because the ex-Lord of Tosa was one of the few possessors of steamships at the time, having as many as eight of them. Subsequently he got a monopoly of coastwise shipping and branched out into ocean shipping, shipbuilding, insurance, discounting bills of lading, banking and warehousing. At a later date, the house of Mitsubishi took up mining, iron and steel and machinery production, power supply, fertilizer and chemical manufacture, deep sea fishing and canning. It may be noted that Mitsubishi owed their original wealth to quite modern and Western methods of defrauding the state and to this day they retain a relatively more Western, "democratic" and industrial coloring than the more feudal and aristocratic Mitsui.

## Mitsubishi and Mitsui

Mitsubishi is more involved in large-scale industrial production and somewhat less in the financing of domestic industry and the sale of its products than Mitsui, although Mitsui has greatly increased its interests in heavy industry since 1931. Mitsui derived a large part of their profits from silk and from other domestic industries and from the importation of raw materials, in particular cotton. They sold most of Japan's silk in the U.S.A. and imported most of the cotton bought there by Japan. They are big speculators in rice, silk and foreign exchange. As merchants and bankers through their subsidiaries, and through the agents of those subsidiaries, they finance, organize and control the greater part of Japan's domestic industry and small-scale factory industry. Accordingly, a large part of their profits is derived from financing the small commodity producers of town and village. It is for the house of Mitsui that the small silk filature owner works his girls 14 hours a day in the busy season, for Mitsui that the peasant women work night and day feeding the silkworms at the breeding season; it is for the ultimate profit of Mitsui that the local bank provides the silk reellers with working capital at excessively high rates of interest.

The tentacles of the big trusts reach out in all directions to suck in the profit from the small industrial and agricultural producers by their control of raw materials and of the banks, and even of the producers' associations or "guilds." The government forces all the small producers and traders to unite in guilds and associations under government supervision and a very large number of them have Mitsui or Mitsubishi nominees at their head. Out of 212 guilds of small manufacturers, 114 are connected with Mitsui and 68 with Mitsubishi. These "guilds" force their members to have their goods inspected, to buy raw ma-

\*The *yen* equals about 50 cents at par.

terials jointly, and to adopt standard specifications, thus facilitating marketing, especially export, for the big merchant firms, in particular Mitsui. By reason of their political power, formerly exercised through both the political parties (though these no longer exist) and through their financial and family connections with the high bureaucrats and court circles, the giant business houses can and do arrange the country's financial policy to suit their needs and juggle with its currency. By causing extreme fluctuations in price, and uncertainty, they are able periodically to skim the cream from the nation's industrial activity. After small businesses have sprung up like mushrooms under the rain of inflation, rising prices and relative prosperity, there ensues a slump, whether natural or engineered by a change of financial policy, and Mitsui and Mitsubishi gather into their control the enterprises created by the small men.

There are actually four great family trusts in Japan of the very largest size: Mitsui, Mitsubishi, Sumitomo and Yasuda. Kuhara, Fujita and Furukawa giants of the second rank—are all financially controlled by Mitsui, and Sumitomo is allied by marriage with Mitsui. The Mitsui holding company (Mitsui Gomei Kaisha) has its capital of 300,000,000 *yen* subscribed by the members of the eleven Mitsui families, and the family council controls and directs the policies of all the subsidiary companies in the "Mitsui Kingdom." The main subsidiaries are the Mitsui Bank, the Mitsui Trust, the Mitsui Life Insurance, the Mitsui Bussan Kaisha (a tremendous general trading concern), and the Toyo Menka, largest cotton importing company. Then there are the Mitsui coal mines in Kyushu and elsewhere, which produce 50% of the coal mined in Japan; its warehouse business and its iron and steel works, its dyeworks and chemical fertilizer factories and flour mills; its paper and celluloid factories. Mitsui also controls the famous Kanagafuchi model cotton mills and some others, rayon factories and a huge department store, not to speak of two of Japan's few large electric power companies. There is hardly an industrial or trading activity in which the Mitsui are not interested either as merchants, or factory owners or bankers. As bankers or export merchants, or suppliers of machinery or power or raw materials they suck profits from the small and the great—from the peasant, the artisan, the individual manufacturer and the small corporation. Their commercial transactions alone in 1930 (when then *yen* was at par) were valued at the huge total of 1,700,000,000 *yen*, a sum larger than Japan's state revenue. They own practically all the sugar plantations in Formosa, and until the present war had concessions in Abyssinia and Mexico. Fin-

ally, together with the Japanese government, and in partnership with Mitsubishi, Sumitomo, Yasuda and Okura, they control all the railways, mines and industrial enterprises in Manchuria, including the South Manchuria Railway, largest enterprise of all.

Mitsubishi, second only to Mitsui in wealth and power, is freer of feudal entanglements, i.e., of connection with domestic and artisan industry. It is more interested in heavy industry and somewhat less in usury, speculation and the export trade. Its central organ, Mitsubishi Gomei Kaisha, holds an absolute majority of shares in all the other main Mitsubishi enterprises; the Mitsubishi bank, trust and insurance companies, shipbuilding and shipping (including the famous Nippon Yusen Kaisha line), warehousing, coal mining, iron works, automobile manufacture, electrical equipment, chemical fertilizers, glass factories, sugar refineries, canneries and fisheries. It also has a heavy interest in airplane building, has a monopoly of the marine insurance business, and indirectly controls many other companies engaged in insurance, harbor work, sugar refining, lumbering, etc., etc. Its commercial transactions exceeded a billion *yen* in 1930.

Though rivals at times, Mitsui and Mitsubishi are nevertheless connected and linked up with one another in various ways. Mitsui's iron works were amalgamated in 1934 with the State works at Yawata and with the four Mitsubishi iron and steel companies to form the Japan Iron Company. And Sumitomo is allied by marriage or adoption with Mitsubishi as well as with Mitsui. These two great family houses, whose capital resources equal those of big American trusts and whose activities and interests are far more diverse, are very much interlocked. There are some lesser houses of magnitude, but the only ones recognized as being in the same "class" with Mitsui and Mitsubishi are Sumitomo (bankers, copper mine owners, electric wire manufacturers, insurance, trading, etc.) and Yasuda (almost exclusively banking capital). Okura, one of the second rank giants (army contractors, owners of large chemical plants and of metallurgical enterprises in China) is financed by Yasuda. Additionally there are Kuhara, Asano and a few others, which in times of relative prosperity may achieve some independence of the "Big Four," but which at all other times are subservient to the latter's control.

Japan is in the grip of an oligarchy just as much as in the days of Meiji, which was the beginning of modern Japan. But today's oligarchy is offspring of the marriage of feudal and capitalist elements, of the clan oligarchs with the oligarchs of finance and industry—to which subject we shall return later.

## Leon Sedov

By JOHN G. WRIGHT

Six years ago, on February 16, 1938, Leon Sedov, the oldest son of Natalia Sedov Trotsky and Leon Trotsky, died in a Parisian hospital where he had undergone an operation for appendicitis.

Leon Sedov belonged to a great and heroic generation of the revolutionary youth to whom the world is incalculably indebted. He was a true child of the Russian revolution. He was born on February 24, 1906. His father, Leon Trotsky received the news of his son's birth in a Czarist prison where he had been incarcerated for his leading role as Chairman of the Petersburg Soviet in the 1905 revolution. Thirteen months later, Trotsky escaped from Siberia and together with his family

spent the next ten years in exile abroad.

Leon's childhood years were the years of Czarist reaction, of imperialist preparation for war, and the actual outbreak of the first world slaughter. When Czarism was overthrown in Russia in February 1917, he was only 12 years old. He returned with his parents to revolutionary Petrograd. Thenceforth his entire conscious life became inextricably bound up with the greatest liberationist movement in the history of mankind. Sedov never faltered in his loyalty to the principles and program of October.

Too young to fight in the front lines during the civil war of 1918-1921, he found his place in the ranks of the *Komsomol*

(the Russian Young Communist League) which he joined in 1919, becoming one of its outstanding activists.

In 1923 when Lenin was already on his deathbed, the struggle began against the bureaucratic degeneration of the Bolshevik party which ultimately led to the destruction of the Communist International. If the degeneration and collapse of the Communist (Third) International did not catch the world vanguard unprepared, it was above all due to the heroic struggle of the young Soviet workers who constituted the overwhelming majority of the Russian Left Opposition, and one of whose outstanding leaders was Leon Sedov. The struggle of the Russian Left Opposition preserved the continuity of the revolutionary socialist movement, and made possible the timely reconstitution of the world movement in the Fourth International.

At the same time this struggle profoundly influenced the course of events in the Soviet Union. The bureaucratic degeneration of the workers' state stemmed, externally, from the defeats of the proletarian revolution in western Europe, and the consequent isolation of the USSR. Internally, it stemmed from the country's backwardness, inherited from Czarism, and the devastation of the years of imperialist and civil war. Under these conditions the state apparatus infiltrated with tens of thousands of former Czarist functionaries began to progressively degenerate, and this process was transmitted into the ranks of the governing Russian party.

### What They Contributed

The only force that opposed this reactionary development was the Russian Left Opposition, under Trotsky's leadership. From the outset Leon Sedov took his place in its ranks. Future historians alone will be able to appraise fully the meaning and importance of this five years' struggle (from 1923 to 1928) against unprecedented odds waged by the isolated proletarian vanguard in Soviet Russia. But it is already clear today that the credit for the introduction of planned economy and the subsequent industrialization of the USSR belongs first and foremost to the Russian Left Opposition. Stalin found himself compelled to adopt its program of industrialization. It was applied with monstrous bureaucratic distortions. But this does not invalidate the great contribution of the Russian Left Opposition; on the contrary, it serves only to underscore the vast possibilities that planned economy opens up for mankind. The unprecedented economic successes of backward Russia under Stalinist misleadership are the harbingers of what the advanced workers of Europe and America will be able to achieve under a regime of genuine workers' democracy. In paying tribute to the memory of Leon Sedov we are at the same time taking cognizance of what we owe to the entire generation of the young proletarian fighters of the Russian Left Opposition.

Throughout this epic struggle, Sedov remained at Trotsky's side, carrying out manifold tasks. When Trotsky was exiled to Alma Ata in 1928, Sedov followed him unhesitatingly, breaking with his young family. "He acted," wrote Leon Trotsky, "not only as a son but above all as a cothinker: It was necessary at all costs to maintain our connections with Moscow." Sedov played an irreplaceable role in this period, assisting in the work, maintaining connections, serving in place of the secretariat of which Trotsky had been deprived by Stalin.

When Trotsky was exiled to Turkey in 1929, Sedov again accompanied him without hesitation. Collaboration demanded a rigorous division of labor. Sedov, now a man of outstanding talents and independent stature, subordinated himself selflessly and consciously to the task at hand. He wrote little in his own name. That was not because he lacked the ability or talents, but be-

cause of the pressure of other work. The few things he did write belong among the most valuable contributions of the Trotskyist movement.

Of his writings only one has been translated into English. This is his exposure of Stalinist falsifications of the history of the Red Army. This brilliant article is included under the name of N. Markin in Leon Trotsky's "The Stalin School of Falsification." Sedov's other two major contributions deal with an analysis of Stakhanovism, and with an exposure of the Moscow frameup trials. The latter was the first public answer to the Stalinist criminals. For at that time the Norwegian authorities submitted to the pressure of the Kremlin and prevented Trotsky from making any public reply by keeping him as a virtual prisoner and then deporting him to Mexico. Sedov's book, *The Moscow Trial*, was mistakenly assumed by the capitalist press to have been written by Trotsky.

### Son, Friend, Fighter

In summing up this period of collaboration with Sedov, Trotsky wrote:

"This collaboration was made possible only because our ideological solidarity had entered into our very blood and marrow. Beginning with 1928 his name ought to be rightfully placed alongside of mine on almost all the books I have written since 1928." (*Leon Sedov—Son, Friend, Fighter*, by Leon Trotsky.)

From July 1929 until the day he died, Sedov served as the editor of the *Bulletin of the Russian Opposition*, the only Russian organ of genuine Bolshevism since Lenin's death.

The last years of his life Sedov spent working in Berlin and Paris. He remained in Germany for several weeks after Hitler came to power. In Paris he worked under the continual surveillance of the GPU.

The criminals and traitors in the Kremlin never for a moment underestimated the role and importance of Leon Sedov. Stalin spared no efforts to besmirch his name. GPU spies and assassins dogged his every step. They laid trap after trap to kill him. In the infamous Moscow frameups, Sedov's name invariably figured side by side with that of Leon Trotsky. Stalin's "judges" condemned both of them *in absentia* to death. Stalin's assassins carried out this assignment. They murdered Sedov in Paris in 1938.

He died in the flower of his manhood, deprived of the opportunity to play the great role that was destined to be his in the decisive battles of our generation. His name, his memory and the great tradition he symbolizes remain indelibly inscribed on the spotless banner of the Fourth International which he did so much to found and build.

SUBSCRIPTION BLANK	
FOURTH INTERNATIONAL	
116 UNIVERSITY PLACE	
NEW YORK 3, N.Y.	
I am enclosing \$..... Send me	
FOURTH INTERNATIONAL	
for	
( ) 6 months.....	\$1.00
( ) 1 year.....	\$2.00
Name.....	
Address.....	
City.....	

# New Trends In Nationalist Thought On The European Problems

By J. B. STUART

MY NATIVE LAND—By Louis Adamic. New York, 1943. Published by Harper & Brothers. Price \$3.75.

\* \* \*

One of the central problems of European politics today presents a paradox: While national *consciousness* has been raised to unprecedented heights in the wake of unparalleled imperialist oppression, national *liberation* is less than ever possible on a *national* plane.

The Nazi technique of "depopulation" has at one and the same time carried grist to the mills of nationalism and swept the various nationalities together into a community fighting an *international* struggle. In the course of the experiences of the various nationalities themselves, the concept of national freedom has been transformed into an element of a policy whose application overflows and even obliterates the old national divisions and frontiers of Europe.

In *My Native Land*, Louis Adamic undertakes to demonstrate how this process unfolded in practice. He starts with a premise and concludes with an evaluation that is thoroughly nationalistic. It is well to bear this in mind. For, drawing in the main on the twists and turns of the struggle in Yugoslavia, Adamic deals with developments which have much wider ramifications. Sensing this, the author even ventures to speculate:

"The Loyalist-Franco war in Spain had been defined as a rehearsal for World War II; was there not danger of Yugoslavia's becoming to World War III what Spain was to World War II?" (Page 18.)

Adamic's opening chapters take as their point of departure the simple, yet deep national griefs and aspirations of Slovenian folk, one of the several component nationalities of pre-war Yugoslavia. With evident approval if not in self-identification, the Americanized Slovenian writer quotes Bozha, a girl com-patriot whom he befriended on a visit to his homeland in 1932:

"We are not the way we ought to be, the way we could be, we Slovenians," says Bozha, "Our land is beautiful; so far as I know there is no lovelier place on earth—but it's a trap. We live here, a small people surrounded by stranger nations, and we are trapped . . . We have a thousand years of foreign misrule and oppression behind us. Right now four hundred thousand Slovenians are under Fascist rule in Italy. Our men have had to fight in dozens of wars through centuries, not for themselves, but for people they had nothing in common with and for a long time there hasn't been enough to go around. There hasn't been enough to eat and many Slovenians have gone away to North and South America . . . Yes, I know that this is pretty much true of all Europeans, probably of people everywhere, but it is more perhaps true to us Slovenians, of us Yugoslavs. There are so few of us, we can least afford it." (Page 9.)

The same theme, translated into the language of theory, is treated in Adamic's paraphrase of *Kulturne Problemi Slovenstva*, a pamphlet written by Josip Vidmar, one of the intellectual lights of tiny Slovenia. Vidmar's pamphlet is a polemic published in 1930 against Pan-Serbian politicians and a group of Slovenians who were in favor of declaring the native language as a dialect of the Serbo-Croatian tongue, arguing

that Slovenians would in this way cease to be a paltry nation of two million and become part of a large people of fifteen million. It is worth quoting the central idea from the paraphrase.

"Vidmar assembled historic facts proving that good things come in small packages. The as yet unsurpassed culture of the Old Greeks was the product of a few hundred thousand people. Christianity was a gift of the small and despised Hebrew group. Italian culture was higher in the days of small republics (Dante) than after the unification of Italy. The same was true of Germany, which after unification, followed by centralization, produced no figure comparable with Goethe . . ." (Page 133.)

In other words, according to Vidmar Slovenia's real future lay in remaining "little Slovenia." Politically, the pre-war program summarizing the feelings of the Bozhas and the thoughts of the Vidmars was equally narrow in its horizons.

"We Slovenians," Adamic quotes Vidmar as saying as late as 1939, "are now in three countries—a million three hundred thousand of us in Yugoslavia, a half million under Italy because Britain and France sold them out in their secret treaty with Italy in 1915, and close to a hundred thousand in Austria, part of the Third Reich, because Versailles did not honestly adhere to Wilson's principles of self-determination of nations. At any rate we're all chopped up as a people. And this fact plays the devil with us in all sorts of ways . . . Before we can have a possible future we must *all of us* attain political oneness and freedom and independence in a state of our own. This state must be accorded membership in the council of nations on the basis of equality. *Then*, as soon as we attain oneness and our freedom and independence, we shall be ready and eager to get together with the free Croats, free Serbs and free Bulgarians and work out with them a fair and honest agreement for a federation of national states with broad autonomies."

A few months later Hitler invaded Poland and World War II got into swing. Two years later Yugoslavia was invaded by the Axis. The conquerors began to meet with resistance. To cope with this resistance the Nazis granted "national independence" to the Croats, another of the component nationalities of former Yugoslavia. The "depopulation" technique began its work of destruction. The Croat "state" of Ante Pavelich organized wild slaughter campaigns against the Serbs, the dominant national group in the old South Slav set-up. Pan-Serbs in the refugee Yugoslav pro-Allied government boosted the resistance movement headed by Drazha Mikhailovich and encouraged, with Anglo-American backing, the counter-slaughter of Croats engaged in by Mikhailovich's "Chetnik" forces.

By 1942 the name "Partisans" began to grow in the public mind as still another resistance movement, locked in unrelenting battle not only with the Axis and the Ustashi detachment of Pavelich's Croat "state," but also with Mikhailovich's Chetniks. The Partisan military forces and their civilian counterpart—known as the "Liberation Front"—have been denounced from all sides as "Red," "Communist," etc.

This has not prevented them from gradually gaining universal recognition as the strongest fighting force among the nationals of former Yugoslavia. Nor from winning over the



"Croatian Air Force" organized for Pavelich by the Nazis. (A.P. dispatch December 15, 1943). Nor from penetrating and inundating, under the very noses of the Allied command, the "token army" of Yugoslavia, kept in the Middle East. (A.P. dispatch January 5).

Adamic reports that Bozha, the little nationalist girl, fell as a medical officer in the service of the Partisans. Vidmar is Chairman of the Liberation Front of Slovenia, a section of the movement headed by Tito and at present composed not only of Serbs, Croats and Slovenians, but Bulgars, Rumanians and even Italians!

If we quoted at length the words of Bozha and of Vidmar, it was with the intention of underlining their ultimate fate. For much more than their fate as individuals is involved here. Bozha and Vidmar, as Adamic rightfully points out, are symbols for the nationalities that intermingle and clash in the maze of present-day Europe. Starting out with the limited, rather formal outlook of pre-war nationalism they, like the vast mass of their countrymen, wound up in the international movement of Partisans that is sweeping Southeastern Europe.

What makes this Partisan movement tick? What is its program? Its origin? Its course of development? What logic forced the Bozhas and Vidmars in their million-headed mass to join in this international phenomenon, departing as they did from a nationalist base?

That is what the author undertakes to find out. Adamic is not a Marxist and doesn't pretend to be. But his investigation, even as far as it goes—and for Marxists it naturally does not go far enough—provides sufficient material to understand the revolutionary import of this development; and to evaluate it scientifically as it affects European politics in general.

What is the program of the Partisan movement? Adamic writes:

"The Partisan movement was a year and a half old before any part of its political program was written down. But an unwritten program formulated itself in fighting action, in talk between battles, in physical and spiritual agony. It was very simple:

"1. South Slavic unity on the basis of equality and mutual respect for all national groups and all religions.

"2. Fight against the domination of one nation over others.

"3. *Down with Chauvinism.*

"4. Economic and social advances for the masses of people—the common man after the war." (Page 84.)

"Down with Chauvinism!" A curious slogan to use in a "national" struggle! Yet it is beyond doubt that its use—from the first—guaranteed the success of the Partisans. For it was under the banner of "Down with Chauvinism" that the Partisans won over not only the mass of the common people, but even elements hitherto identified with "ultra" Croat and "Pan-Serb" ideologies, the Croat air force and the "token army" of King Peter—events recorded after the publication of *My Native Land*. So attractive has this slogan proved to be that it has brought detachments of Bulgars, Rumanians and even Italians under the Partisan tent, the Italians being remnants of the regular Fascist army in Dalmatia.

The author gives a sample experience to illustrate the attractive power of the Partisan policy.

"In normal times the city of Focha, in eastern Bosnia, was about half Serbian and half Croatian. In May 1941, the Ustashi came there and killed all the Serbians who had not got away. Five or six months later a Partisan unit, made up of both Serbians and Croats, seized Focha. They tried and executed all the Ustashi they caught—in punishment for the crime of killing the Serbians. They did not touch any Croatian because he was Croatian. Then the Chetniks defeated the Partisans and captur-

ing the town, killed every Croatian who had not escaped into the mountains. They killed them because they were Croats. The people, just people, Serbians and Croats, naturally went over to the Partisans." (Page 84.)

It does not require extraordinary powers of the imagination to envisage how swiftly the Partisan slogan "Down with Chauvinism" could, under favorable circumstances, spread far beyond the confines of the Balkans, from Bulgars to Rumanians, to Hungarians, Czechs, Poles . . . Yes, even to Germans and—Soviet Russians.

## "Down With Chauvinism!"

"Down with Chauvinism"—the answer to the national question in its most burning aspect—is however only one phase of *Partisanstvo* (the Partisan movement). The program cited above contains also [Point 4]. "*Economic and social advances for the masses of the people—the common man—after the war.*" It would be somewhat pedantic to lay stress on this last phrase, "after the war," or to assume that it has anything in common with the "after the war" promises of the imperialist demagogues. For, insofar as the conditions of seesawing warfare permit, the Partisans are already carrying out "economic and social advances for the masses of the people."

Adamic recites instance upon instance of temporary seizures and distribution of land among the peasants, the capture and communal operation of mines, the re-nationalization of forests previously handed out as private grants to foreign lumber interests, the confiscation of banks, not to speak of "food from army stores captured by guerillas . . . distributed to the needy population . . . Flour distributed among starving peasants . . . Peasants (receiving) lumber for building without charge." (Page 180.) The author sums this phase of the program up as follows:

"This was resistance against occupation, but also something else—revolutionary activity clearly aimed at the traitors to the people, at those who collaborated with the enemy and its Quislings, including the Chetniks, and less clearly, but just as surely, at the economic system of pre-war and war-time Yugoslavia which allowed huge individual holdings in the face of mass poverty and permitted the vast raw resources of the country, particularly mines and forests, to be exploited by foreign capital and its native servants and by the hierarchy of the church." (Page 178.)

If point 3 of the "program" answered the strictly national question, then point 4—as worked out in practice—is beginning to answer the agrarian problem and is even approaching the broader economic solution—nationalization. The latter is somewhat obscured, or rather, relegated to the background in these predominantly agricultural South Slav areas. The far greater emphasis that this aspect of the program would take on with the spread of the movement into industrialized sectors of Europe is self-evident.

Another phase of Partisan policy, not treated in the "program" quoted above, is that dealing with the regime, the political organization of the state. A document, introduced by the author as evidence of the repeated attempts of the Partisans to come to terms with the Chetniks and establish at least a patched-up national unity against the foreign oppressor, sheds light on this phase.

One point in this document, which forms the backbone of the contention, so to speak, and on the basis of which negotiations broke down irremediably, reads as follows:

"6. A provisioning authority which would feed the population, oversee the economy, supply the means of warfare, and organize public safety and order (should be set up). In our

opinion it would be a grave mistake if in the present liberation struggle any of these functions should remain in the hands of the old county commissioners, communal executives, gendarmes, etc. To rally the population for the struggle against the occupation it is necessary to install public officers who . . . would be personally close to the people and therefore in position to assume responsibility. The old gendarmes, police and county apparatus as well as the old community officials do not answer the need. The old personnel has been in the service of the occupation and is infested with enemy elements and influences. It does not enjoy the people's confidence and is unsuitable for this critical period. We believe the national liberation committees which the people themselves have begun to establish are currently the most appropriate public representation . . . These national liberation committees should be elected by the people regardless of political beliefs. In places where it is impossible to hold elections, committees should be appointed by representatives of all political groups which favor the fight for liberation. We also consider it essential to create a Central National Liberation Committee for all freed territories; and in order to maintain public order and safety we propose the organization of a people's guard in towns and villages." (Page 68-69.)

As is well known, this proposal—rejected by Mikhailovich's Chetniks—has since been put into practice by the Partisans themselves, who now directly challenge the authority of the "regular" refugee Yugoslav government and demand recognition in its place. What we have here is no longer just dual power but an actual reorganization of the whole state apparatus on a new social base. In other words, a *revolution*.

What kind of revolution? The word *Soviet* remains, to be sure, unmentioned. But, if this reorganization of the state is taken in context with the rest of the program of the Partisans can there be any doubt that it represents a sector of the coming proletarian revolution in Europe already in its initial stages in predominantly agrarian territory?

From fragmentary news reports, Soviet-sponsored broadcasts, smuggled documents and private letters, Adamic has pieced together a picture of Partisan program and policy that is, if not ideally, yet adequately clear. Adamic's picture of the origin of the movement is neither precise, nor well-documented. He quotes a former career official who escaped from Belgrade in 1942:

"The Communists were the only people in position to exploit the chaos which ensued upon the enemy's arrival. They forthwith spread among the people numerous capable men and women, who were especially effective in Serbia where, devoting themselves to entire counties, they mobilized the peasantry . . ." (Page 123.)

"Communists" is not a very precise designation. Bourgeois press reports, referring to the first evidences of Partisan resistance in 1941 spoke of "Trotskyist" Communists and "Stalinist" Communists as well as of left Socialists, anarchists, etc., among the political forces participating in its organization. Adamic does not even mention these reports. If the "Communists" referred to in the Belgrade official's story were Stalinists, then the question arises: how is it that Yugoslav Stalinists organized fighting resistance against the Nazis at a time when their French fellows, for instance, were still trying to collaborate in one way or another with the German occupation authorities? The Kremlin was still resting complacently on the laurels of its pact with Hitler. The Comintern—if that could be considered a factor in the situation—had not yet been dissolved.

The exact facts are still shrouded in obscurity by the war-time censorship. And even so competent an investigator as the author of the volume under review has not yet been able to penetrate it. There is, of course, the possibility—indicated by

Adamic's silence about the early reports of "Trotskyist" Partisans—that he may in this instance, be lending support to the general obscurity.

But, even if we assume that the "Communists" who organized the *Partisanstvo* were indeed only Stalinists, it is hardly likely that they simply acted under Kremlin orders. More probably, cut off at the moment of invasion from direct Kremlin control, they entered into independent activity and—under the impress of actual struggle—developed a position more closely reminiscent of their early training in the Leninist International than the later corruption under Stalinism.

At any rate, up to the summer of 1942, by Adamic's records, neither the Soviet broadcasts nor the *Daily Worker* in New York had made any notable mention of the Partisans. Presumably like Adamic himself they had "fallen victim to the Mikhailovich legend\* along with everybody else." (Page 65.)

## Effects of Soviet Victories

The actual inter-relation between what later transpired in Soviet Russia and the subsequent development of the Partisan movement is described as follows by the Belgrade career-official already quoted:

"Russia's entrance into the war followed by Hitler's failure to destroy the Red Army, gave the Partisans an enormous plus in the eyes of the people, to the detriment of all other guerrilla forces . . . Russia's martial successes became Partisan successes. Their propaganda said that the Partisans were the *new* movement, the bearers of a *new* idea whose immediate aim was liberation. And God knows that most of our people—the great majority—were tired of the old and had longed for something new . . . Soon Partisan units began to score victories of their own . . . Russia's successful winter offensive added new prestige to the Partisans . . . I must admit that as I got out of Yugoslavia (May 1942) the trend was strongly Red . . . Large sections of the *natsionalni elementi* have ceased to count on Mikhailovich. They doubt that help can come soon enough from England and America to stop the roll of the Red wave . . ." (Pages 125-126.)

The program of the Partisans became more popular with the growing power displayed by the Red Army. The masses identified the two. Partisan victories began to appear as extensions of the Red Army's victories. While Mikhailovich's Chetniks made pacts with the Italian occupation authorities and the Nazi Quislings, the *natsionalni elementi*—the nationalist popular movement—went over en masse to the Partisans, attracted by this snow-balling power which has its roots in the October revolution of 1917.

Adamic devotes quite a number of pages—among the best writings in this book—tracing the mental metamorphosis of the pre-war nationalists who turned Partisan. He takes the case of Vidmar as a prism.

The reader will recall that on the eve of the war, the present Chairman of the Slovenian Liberation Front demanded the creation of an independent Slovenian state—"political oneness"—as a prerequisite for any further Slovenian interest in Balkan (or European) affairs. Here is how Adamic describes Vidmar's further evolution. It is worth quoting at length:

"One nation's demand for certain boundaries may be completely reasonable from its angle, but unreasonable from that of a neighboring country, or impossible in a wider international view. It may be that in 1939 or later, Josip Vidmar the na-

\*Adamic describes in detail how this "legend" was manufactured and fostered by Allied intelligence and propaganda agencies (pp. 39-46); and continually refers to its misuse in efforts to combat the rise and popularity of *Partisanstvo*. But Adamic slurs over the role of the Stalinists in Moscow and abroad who themselves aided at the time in spreading the "Mikhailovich legend."

nationalist came to this same impasse in his own thinking." (Page 142.)

What should Slovenians do? Become "Pan-Slovenians" as the Serbians had become "Pan-Serbs"? The danger here was in arousing counter-actions among the neighboring nationalities. The danger was that like other chauvinists, Slovenians would begin to seek boundaries for economic rather than "ethnic" reasons, that they would themselves go in for the predatory politics Vidmar detested.

"At what point did a nation's struggle for survival shift from the cultural to the . . . predatory? Vidmar's thoughts must have retraced this vicious circle. Wherein then lay the answer to Slovenia's problem, the problem of the small nation? Time and again his thoughts must have turned to the Soviet Union . . ."

" . . . Perhaps the basis for a sound approach to the problem of small nations was really through economics, through some big economic-political upheaval like the Russian revolution . . ."

The inter-relation between economics and national culture began to appear to Vidmar in a new light.

" . . . Perhaps big, rich, well-developed countries like Britain and the United States could afford capitalism indefinitely . . . Their great resources and techniques had given them the jump on backward parts of the world . . . No overwhelming outside power could interfere with what the British or American industrialist wanted to do, nothing except their own cut-throat rivalry or the objection of their countrymen would frustrate them.

"This was not the case with small countries . . . A small-nation capitalist was utterly dependent on foreign capital and on 'contracts' with foreign agents and international racketeers-financiers; and his government, on which he also depended, was usually under foreign influence or control. The interlocking pyramid forced him, for his own survival, to support the regime in power in Belgrade or Sofia or Bucharest or Athens or Warsaw; and since the national and international set-up worked only for its own aggrandizement, his own interests inevitably worked against the interests of the people of his country. He had to share the corruption of everything in and around the small nation's government. He had to help in the deepening of cleavages, the stirring up of chauvinism, Pan-Serbianism, ultra-Croatianism." (Page 144.)

Adamic has here traced not only the mental processes of a thoughtful nationalist. He has laid bare to the roots the whole process of the bourgeois betrayal of national interests. A process which could just as easily be traced in the recent history of France, or of Italy, as well as Yugoslavia.

Where *could* the South Slavs turn? According to Adamic, Vidmar answers as follows:

"Naturally the Western countries would be loath to give up the advantages that accrued from the exploitable set-up of small nations. The finance-power people in those countries would fight to keep the set-up or restore it after the war. The peoples of the big democracies would be inclined to back them, naively believing that restoration would be the democratic course. But for the small nations a return to the *status quo ante* was out of the question. Where to turn then? Russia, no matter what her deficiencies, had in her multi-national organization the sole answer that could possibly interest them. The Soviet Union was the only country strong enough, should they come within her sphere of interest and influence to check a return to the prewar pattern." (Page 145.)

The consistent nationalist, who sees his aspirations betrayed by the whole interplay of Western monopoly capitalist economics, turns to the Soviet East for a solution. Undoubtedly both the Red Army's unprecedented victories, and the frightful result of chauvinist politics at home, helped in practice to put the finishing touches to his inevitable decision. And that decision, in turn, means for him: Joining forces with the revolution in *action*, the proletarian revolution in Europe.

It doesn't matter whether Adamic's analysis of what went on in Vidmar's mind during this metamorphosis is actually true. For Adamic speaks for himself as well. And Adamic is sufficiently immersed in the problems of European politics, to serve as well as any one else as an example of what motivates the mass of the people on that unhappy continent.

As a nationalist, Adamic has of course made a tremendous advance in choosing Sovietization and the USSR, even in its degenerate form under Stalin, in preference to Anglo-American imperialism. But as a social analyst he is too backward, too inconsistent, to be taken seriously.

The same Adamic who so murderously exposes the whole scheme of Anglo-American exploitation of the nationalism of Europe's small countries winds up this book "thanking heaven" for Churchill and imploring Willkie, Wallace and Roosevelt to give leadership in an American foreign policy which will "mean victory" in "Bikhach, Bosnia"!

This student of European politics who realizes that the "finance-power people" in the Western countries will fight to keep or restore the old Balkan set-up, nevertheless, hopes and thinks it possible that they will tolerate an East European federation that "would go Left socially and economically and would follow the Soviet multi-national cultural policy."

Perhaps Adamic has been so deeply engrossed with events in Yugoslavia that he has had no opportunity to follow Amgot's policy in North Africa and Italy, where American and British "democrats" have already provided us with a few samples of what they intend for the rest of Europe.

Moreover, Adamic omits to mention just how he reconciles the Partisans' "Down with Chauvinism" with the Stalinist campaign of chauvinism which accompanies the Red Armies in their advance against the German military machine.

He speaks of the example of the Soviet multi-national policy, but what thoughts does he have on the Stalinist "abolition" of the Volga German republics, the alleged Siberian settlement of several million Poles, not to speak of the Stalin-Hitler pact that violated the national independence of Poland and gave a weapon to Polish chauvinists? Or the manner in which the Kremlin conducted war against Finland in 1940 and presented all the imperialists with the pretext for posing as champions of small nations? Of all this there is no mention in his book. And yet, the very onward march of the Red Armies will soon raise all these questions in Europe as burning issues, on which sides will be taken and answers made.

However, Adamic is not, for all of his pro-Soviet—more correctly pro-Stalinist—orientation, altogether at ease with the prospect of the future development of Kremlin policy. He says:

"No one knows how strong Russia will actually be after the war. If she is not strong enough to challenge the reactionary forces in Britain and America if they push their way to the top, as they well might, then she may be forced into reaction herself. Back on her defensive, she may try to become a little like the western powers—in anything but the best sense. I think that Joseph E. Davies and other big capitalist-industrialists who are making up to Russia have this in mind. I think Churchill is hoping that Stalin will become one of the boys." (Page 471-472.)

But, Adamic does not attempt to go beyond these conjectures, into a political analysis of the Stalin regime. As a matter of fact, he has become one of the pillars of the Stalinist front organizations in this country. No matter what his own personal future may be, Adamic's *My Native Land* does tell the story of the Partisans. And this story indicates the road of the European revolution in the making.

For Marxists this story is a striking affirmation of the correctness of the slogan, "Socialist United States of Europe" as the central rallying cry in that revolution. That slogan implies that the solution of the national question in Europe must be sought, first and foremost, along internationalist lines, in an intimate tie-up with a thorough-going class-struggle policy.

"For National Independence!" is an empty slogan which demagogues can fill with a false and even dangerous content. Democratic demands, the demand for constituent assemblies, for elections, for parliamentary government may or may not play an important role in the development of the revolution. Revolutionists will of course support and raise these demands when and where they can become pivots of the struggle against imperialism. But the slogan of "Socialist United States of Europe," with its inherent support of the right of self-determination of peoples and the demand for power to Workers

Councils will and must be raised by revolutionists *from the first*. This slogan serves not only to distinguish the Marxists from the nationalist fakers of all shades, but also to express the deep-rooted aspirations, both national and social, of the masses of the continent as they face the declining power of the Nazi occupation and the rising might of Yankee imperialism.

In the end, the insurgent European masses rallying to this struggle will overpower not only these two colossal oppressors. They will also, by the very logic of their development overcome the Stalinist attempt to corrode and corrupt the revolution from within. As this movement spreads and takes on its positive form, reaching the heart of the continent, it will sound the death knell not only of imperialism in Europe, but of Stalinism in the Soviet Union as well.

## From the Arsenal of Marxism

# Military Doctrine or Pseudo-Military Doctrinairism

By LEON TROTSKY

Continuing the publication of Leon Trotsky's theoretical-military writings in connection with the building and modernization of the Red Army after the Civil War, we print the first section of his outstanding, military pamphlet, *Military Doctrine or Pseudo-Military Doctrinairism*, which was originally issued in the Soviet Union in 1921 by the Supreme Military Council of the USSR, and later reprinted by this same highest military body in its three volume edition of Leon Trotsky's *How the Revolution Armed Itself* (Moscow, 1925. Vol. III, Book II, pp. 210-240). The pamphlet was originally written in Moscow, November 22-December 5, 1921. This is the first time the text appears in English. The translation from the Russian original is by John G. Wright.—Ed.

\* \* \*

### 1. OUR METHOD OF ORIENTATION

"In the practical arts the theoretical leaves and blossoms must not be allowed to grow too high, but must be kept close to experience, their proper soil."—Carl von Clausewitz, *On War* (Theory of Strategy).

A quickening of military thought and a heightening of interest in theoretical problems is unquestionably to be observed in the Red Army. For more than three years we fought and built under fire, then we demobilized and distributed the troops in quarters. This process still remains unfinished to this very day, but the Army is already close to a high degree of organizational definitiveness and has acquired a certain stability. Within it is felt a growing and increasingly urgent need of surveying the road already travelled, drafting the balance sheet, drawing the most necessary theoretical and practical conclusions in order to be better shod for the morrow.

And what will tomorrow bring? New eruptions of civil war

fed from without? Or an open attack upon us by bourgeois states? Which ones will strike? How should resistance be prepared? All these questions demand an orientation that is international-political, domestic-political and military-political in character. The situation is constantly changing and, in consequence, the orientation likewise changes. It changes not in principle but in practice. Up to now we have successfully coped with the military tasks imposed upon us by the international and domestic position of Soviet Russia. Our orientation proved to be more correct, more farsighted and deeper-going than the orientation of the mightiest imperialist powers who have sought individually and collectively to bring us down, but who burned their fingers in the attempt. Our superiority lies in possessing the irreplaceable scientific method of orientation—Marxism. It is the most powerful and at the same time subtle instrument—to use it is not as easy as shelling peas. One must learn how to operate with it. Our party's past has taught us through long and hard experience just how to apply the methods of Marxism to the most complex combination of factors and forces during the historical epoch of sharpest breaks. We likewise employ the instrument of Marxism in order to define the basis for our military construction.

It is quite otherwise with our enemies. If the advanced bourgeoisie has banished inertia, routinism and superstition from the domain of productive technology, and has sought to build each enterprise on the precise foundations of scientific methods; then in the field of social orientation the bourgeoisie has proved impotent, because of its class position, to rise to the heights of scientific method. Our class enemies are empiricists, that is, they operate from one occasion to the next, guided not by the analysis of historical development, but by practical experience, routinism, rule of the thumb, and instinct.

Assuredly, on the basis of empiricism the English imperialist caste has set an example of wide-flung predatory usurpation, provided us with a model of triumphant far-sightedness and class firmness. Not for nothing has it been said of the English imperialists that they do their thinking in terms of centuries and continents. This habit of weighing and appraising practically the most important factors and forces has been acquired by the ruling British clique thanks to the superiority of its position, from its insular vantage point and under the conditions of a relatively gradual and planful accumulation of capitalist power.

## English Empiricists

Parliamentarian methods of personal combinations, of bribery, eloquence and deception, and colonial methods of sanguinary oppression and hypocrisy, along with every other form of vileness have entered equally into the rich arsenal of the ruling clique of the world's greatest empire. The experience of the struggle of English reaction against the Great French Revolution has given the greatest subtlety to the methods of British imperialism, endowed it with utmost flexibility, armed it most diversely, and, in consequence, rendered it more secure against historical surprises.

Nevertheless the exceedingly potent class dexterity of the world-ruling English bourgeoisie is proving inadequate—more and more so with each passing year—in the epoch of the present volcanic convulsions of the bourgeois regime. While they continue to tack and veer with great skill, the British empiricists of the period of decline—whose finished expression is Lloyd George—will inescapably break their necks.

German imperialism rose up as the antipode of British imperialism. The feverish development of German capitalism provided the ruling classes of Germany with an opportunity to accumulate a great deal more in the way of material-technical values than in the way of habits of international and military-political orientation. German imperialism appeared on the world arena as an upstart, plunged ahead too far and came crashing into the dust. And yet not so very long ago at Brest-Litovsk the representatives of German imperialism looked upon us as visionaries, accidentally and temporarily thrust to the top . . .

The art of all-sided orientation has been learned by our party step by step, from the first underground circles through the entire subsequent development, with its interminable theoretical discussions, with its practical measures and failures, attacks and retreats, tactical disputes and turns. Russian emigre garrets in London, Paris and Geneva turned out in the final analysis to be watchtowers of great historical importance. Revolutionary impatience learned to discipline itself through the scientific analysis of the historical process. The will to action became conjoined with restraint and firmness. Our party learned to apply the Marxist method by thinking and doing. And this method serves our party in good stead today . . .

If it may be said of the most far-sighted empiricists of English imperialism that they have a key-ring with a considerable variety of keys good for *many* typical historical situations, then we hold in our hands a universal key which does us service in *all* situations. And while the entire supply of keys inherited by Lloyd George, Churchill and the others is obviously no good for opening a way out of the revolutionary epoch, our Marxist key is predestined above all for this purpose. We are not afraid to speak aloud about this, our greatest advantage over our adversaries, for they are impotent to acquire or to counterfeit our Marxist key.

We foresaw the inevitability of the imperialist war as the prologue to the epoch of proletarian revolution. With this as our starting point we then kept following the course of the war, the methods employed in it, the shifts in the groupings of class forces and on the basis of our observations there crystallized much more directly—if one were to employ a pompous style—the “doctrine” of the Soviet system and the Red Army. From the scientific foresight of the further course of events we gained unconquerable confidence that history is working in our favor. And this optimistic confidence has been and remains the foundation of all our activity.

Marxism does not supply ready-made prescriptions, least of all in the sphere of military construction. But here, too, it provided us with the method. For if it is correct that war is a continuation of politics by other means, then it follows that the army, with bayonets held ready, is the continuation and the capstone of the entire social-state structure.

Our approach to military questions proceeds not from any “military doctrine” as a sum-total of dogmatic postulates; we proceed from the Marxist analysis of what the requirements are for the self-defense of the working class that has taken power into its own hands; the working class that must arm itself after having disarmed the bourgeoisie; that must fight to maintain its power; that must lead the peasants against the landlords; that must not permit the *kulak* democracy to arm the peasants against the workers' state; that must create a reliable commanding staff in the Army, etc., etc.

In building the Red Army we utilized Red Guard detachments as well as the old statutes as well as peasant *atamans* and former Czarist generals. This, of course, might be designated as the absence of “unified doctrine” in the sphere of forming the army and its commanding staff. But such an appraisal would be pedantically banal. Assuredly, we did not take a dogmatic “doctrine” as our starting point. We actually created the army from the historical material ready at hand, unifying all this work from the standpoint of a workers' state fighting to preserve, intrench and extend itself. Those who can't get along without the metaphysically compromised word, doctrine, might say that in creating the Red Army, the armed power on a new class foundation, we thereby built a new military doctrine, inasmuch as despite the diversity of practical measures and the multiplicity of ways and means employed in our military construction, there could not be nor was there either empiricism, barren of ideas, or subjective arbitrariness in the entire work which from beginning to end was fused together by the unity of the class revolutionary goal, by the unity of the will directed to this end, by the unity of the Marxist method of orientation.

## 2. WITH A DOCTRINE OR WITHOUT?

Attempts have been made and frequently repeated to take the actual work of building the Red Army as a premise for the proletarian “military doctrine.” As far back as 1917 the absolute maneuverist principle was counterposed to the “imperialist” principle of positional warfare. The organizational form of the army itself was declared to be subordinate to the revolutionary maneuverist strategy. The corps, the division, even the brigade were proclaimed to be units much too ponderous: The heralds of proletarian “military doctrine” proposed to reduce the entire armed strength of the republic to individual combined detachments or regiments. In essence, this was the ideology of partisan warfare, only slicked up a bit. On the extreme “left,” partisan warfare was openly defended. A holy war was declared against statutes, against the old

statutes because they were the expression of an out-lived military doctrine; against the new—because they resembled the old too much. True enough, even at that time the adherents of the new doctrine not only failed to provide a draft of new statutes but they did not even present a single article submitting our statutes to any kind of serious principled or rational criticism. Our utilization of the old officers, all the more so their appointment to commanding posts, was proclaimed to be incompatible with the application of the revolutionary military doctrine. And so on and so forth.

As a matter of fact, the noisy innovators were themselves wholly captives of the old military doctrine: The only difference was that they sought to put a minus sign wherever previously there was a plus. All their independent thinking came down to just that. However, the actual work of creating the armed forces of the workers' state proceeded along an altogether different path. We tried—especially in the beginning—to make the greatest possible use of the habits, usages, knowledge and means retained from the past; and we were absolutely unconcerned about whether the new army would differ greatly from the old in the formally organizational and technical sense, or on the other hand, how much resemblance it would bear to the latter. We built the army with the human and technical material ready at hand, seeking always and everywhere to render secure the domination of the proletarian vanguard in the organization of the army, that is, in the army's personnel, its leading staff, its consciousness and in its moods. The institution of commissars is not some kind of dogma derived from Marxism. Neither is it an integral part of the proletarian "military doctrine." Under specific conditions it simply proved to be an indispensable instrument of proletarian control, proletarian leadership and political education of the army, and for this reason it acquired an enormous importance in the life of the armed forces of the Soviet Republic. The old commanding staff we combined with the new one; and only in this way were we able to achieve the necessary result: The army proved capable of fighting in the service of the working class. In its aims, in the class composition of its commander-commissar corps, in its spirit and its entire political morale, the Red Army differs radically from all other armies in the world and stands hostilely opposed to them. As the Red Army continues to develop, it has grown and keeps growing less and less similar to them in the formal-organizational and technical fields. Mere exertions to say something new in this field will not suffice.

### Doctrinaire Prejudices

The Red Army is the military expression of the proletarian dictatorship. Those who require a more solemn formula might say that the Red Army is the military embodiment of the "doctrine" of proletarian dictatorship; in the first place, because the proletarian dictatorship is rendered secure by the Red Army; secondly, because the dictatorship of the proletariat would be impossible without the Red Army.

The misfortune, however, lies in this, that the awakening of military-theoretical interests engendered in the beginning a revival of certain doctrinaire prejudices of the first period of building the Red Army—prejudices which, to be sure, have been invested with certain new formulations, but nowise improved thereby. Certain perspicacious innovators have suddenly discovered that *we are living, or rather not living at all but simply vegetating without military doctrine*, just like the king in Anderson's fairy tale who used to go naked without knowing it. There are some who say: "It is high time we created the doctrine of the Red Army." Others sing in chorus: "We haven't

been able to find the correct road on all practical questions of military construction for the lack of answers up to the present time to such fundamental questions of military doctrine as: What is the Red Army? What are the historical tasks before us? Will the Red Army have to wage defensive or offensive revolutionary wars? And so on and so forth."

From the way things are put, it turns out that we were able to create the Red Army and, furthermore, a victorious Red Army, but, you see, we failed to supply it with a military doctrine. And this Red Army continues to thrive unregenerate. To the point-blank question of what the doctrine of the Red Army should be, we get the following answer: It must comprise the sum total of the elementary principles of building, educating and applying our armed forces. But this is a purely formal answer. The existing Red Army, too, has its own principles of "building, educating and applying." But under discussion is what kind of doctrine *are we lacking?* That is, what are these *new* principles, which must enter into the program of military construction, and just what is their content? And it is precisely here that the most incredible kind of muddling begins. One individual makes the sensational discovery that the Red Army is a *class* army, the army of proletarian dictatorship. Another one adds to this that inasmuch as the Red Army is a revolutionary, internationalist army, it must be an offensive army. A third proposes in behalf of the spirit of the offensive that we pay special attention to cavalry and aviation. And, finally, a fourth proposes that we don't forget to apply Makhno's hand carts. Around the world in a hand cart—there is a doctrine for the Red Army! It must be said, however, that in all these discoveries any kernel of healthy, not new but correct, ideas is absolutely lost in the husk of idle chatter.

### 3. WHAT IS MILITARY DOCTRINE?

It is useless to seek for general logical definitions because these will hardly in and by themselves bring us out of the difficulty.\* We shall do much better if we approach the question historically. According to the traditional point of view, the foundations of military science are eternal and common to all times and all peoples. But in their concrete refraction these eternal truths assume a national character. Hence are derived: the German military doctrine, the French military doctrine, the Russian military doctrine, and so forth and so on. But if we check the inventory of the eternal truths of military science we obtain little from them beyond a few logical axioms and Euclidian postulates. The flanks must be defended; the means of communication and retreat must be secured; the blow must be directed at the opponent's least defended point., etc., etc. In their essence all these truths, in this all-embracing formulation, transcend far beyond the limits of military art. A donkey in pilfering oats from a torn sack (the opponent's least defended point) and at the same time in turning its rump vigil-

\*Comrade Frunze writes: "One may offer a following definition of 'unified military doctrine': It is a unified set of teachings, accepted by an army of a given state, which fix the form of constructing the armed forces of that country, and the methods of training and directing the troops (militarily) on the basis of those views which predominate in the given state concerning the character of those military tasks which confront this state and on the basis of the methods of solving them which flow from the class essence of the state and the level of development of its productive forces." (*Krasnaya Nov*, No. 2, page 94. Article of M. Frunze entitled, "Unified Military Doctrine and the Red Army.")

This definition, too, can be accepted conditionally. But as Comrade Frunze's entire article testifies the conclusions drawn from the above-cited definition in no way enrich the ideological arsenal of the Red Army. However, we shall deal with this in greater detail further on.—L. T.

antly away from the side from which danger may threaten, acts on the basis of the eternal principles of military science. Meanwhile, it is unquestionable that this donkey munching oats has never read Clausewitz.

War, the subject of our discussion, is a social and historical phenomenon which arises, develops, changes its forms and must eventually disappear. For this reason alone war cannot have any eternal laws. The subject of war is man who possesses certain stable anatomical and psychical traits from which flow certain usages and habits. Man operates in a specific and relatively stable geographical milieu. Thus in all wars, during all times and among all peoples there have obtained certain common, relatively stable (but by no means absolute) traits. Based on these traits there has developed historically a military art. Its methods and usages undergo change together with the social conditions which determine it (technology, class structure, forms of state power).

The term "national military doctrine" implied a comparatively stable but nevertheless temporary complex (combination) of military calculation, methods, usages, habits, slogans, moods—corresponding to the entire structure of a given society and, first and foremost, the character of its ruling class.

For example, what is the military doctrine of England? Into its composition there evidently enters (or used to enter): the recognition of the urgent need of naval hegemony; a negative attitude toward a regular land army and toward military conscription; or, still more precisely, the recognition of England's need to possess a fleet stronger than the combined fleets of any two other countries and, flowing from this, England's being enabled to maintain a small army on a volunteer basis. Combined with this was the maintenance of such an order in Europe as would not allow a single land power to obtain a decisive preponderance on the continent.

It is incontestable that this English "doctrine" used to be the most stable of military doctrines. Its stability and definitive form were determined by the prolonged, planful, uninterrupted growth of Great Britain's power in the absence of events and shocks that would have radically altered the relationship of forces in the world (or in Europe, which used to signify the selfsame thing *in the past*). At the present time, however, this situation has been completely disrupted. England dealt her "doctrine" the biggest blow when during the war she was compelled to build her army on the basis of compulsory military service. On the continent of Europe, the "equilibrium" has been disrupted. Nobody has confidence in the stability of the new relationship of forces. The power of the United States excludes the possibility for any longer maintaining automatically the rule of the British fleet. It is too early now to forecast the outcome of the Washington Conference.

But it is quite self-evident that after the imperialist war Great Britain's "military doctrine" has become inadequate, impotent and utterly worthless. It has not yet been replaced by a new one. And it is very doubtful that there will ever be a new one, for the epoch of military and revolutionary convulsions and of radical regroupment of world forces leaves very narrow limits for military doctrine in the sense in which we have defined it above with respect to England: *A military "doctrine" presupposes a relative stability of the domestic and foreign situation.*

If we turn to the countries on the continent of Europe, even during the previous epoch, then we find that military doctrine assumes a far less definitive and stable character. What comprised—even during the brief interval of time between the Franco-Prussian war of 1870-71 and the imperialist war of 1914—the content of the military doctrine of France? Recog-

niton that Germany is a traditional irreconcilable foe; the idea of revenge; educating the army and the new generation in the spirit of this idea; cultivating an alliance with Russia and worshipping the military might of Czarism; and, finally, upholding with none too great assurance the Bonapartist military tradition of bold offensive. The protracted era of armed peace (from 1871 to 1914) nevertheless invested the military-political orientation of France with a relative stability. But the French doctrine was very meager with regard to purely military elements. The war subjected the doctrine of offensive to a cruel test. After the very first few weeks the French army dug into the earth; but although the genuinely French generals and the genuinely French press did not stop reiterating throughout the first period of the war that subterranean trench warfare was a cheap German invention, not at all in harmony with the heroic spirit of the French warrior, the entire war unfolded as a positional struggle of attrition. At the present time the doctrine of the pure offensive, although it has been incorporated into the new French statutes, is being, as we shall see, sharply opposed in France herself.

The military doctrine of post-Bismarck Germany was much more aggressive in its essence, in correspondence with the country's politics, but much more cautious in its strategic formulations. "Principles of strategy never transcend common sense," was one of the mottoes of the German highest military school for commanders. However, the rapid growth of capitalist wealth and population lifted the ruling circles of Germany, particularly her noble-officer caste to ever greater heights. Germany's ruling classes lacked the experience of operating on a world scale; they failed to take forces and resources properly into account, and invested their diplomacy and strategy with a super-aggressive character, far removed from "common sense." German militarism fell victim to its own unbridled aggressiveness.

What follows from this? It follows that the term, national doctrine, implied during the last epoch a complex of stable, guiding diplomatic and military-political ideas and of strategic directives more or less bound up with the former. In addition, the so-called military doctrine—the formula for the military orientation of a ruling class of a given country in international conditions—attains greater definitiveness of form the more definitive, stable and planful is the domestic and international position of the country throughout its development.

The imperialist war and the resulting epoch of greatest instability have in all fields absolutely cut the ground from under national-military doctrines, and have placed on the order of the day the necessity of swiftly taking the changing situation into account, with its new groupings and new combinations, with its "unprincipled" tacking and veering under the sign of the current troubles and alarms. In this connection the Washington Conference provides a very instructive picture. It is absolutely incontestable that today after the test to which the old military doctrines have been submitted by the imperialist war, not a single country has retained principles and ideas stable enough to be designated as a national military doctrine.

One might, it is true, venture to presuppose that national military doctrines will once again take shape as soon as a new world relationship of forces is established, together with the corresponding position of each particular state. This presupposes, however, that the revolutionary epoch of shocks and convulsions will be liquidated and then replaced by an epoch of organic development. But there is no ground whatever for such a supposition.

(Second part of this pamphlet will appear in the next issue. —Ed.)

# Aid the Eighteen Class-War Prisoners And Their Families

Fourth International,  
116 University Place  
New York 3, N. Y.

Dear Editors:

You have written editorials in your magazine upon the unjust imprisonment of the 18 leaders and members of the Socialist Workers Party and of Local 544-CIO Truckdrivers Union, who are now behind bars in three Federal penitentiaries.

These 18 Minneapolis Case prisoners were tried and convicted under the Smith "Gag" Act, not for anything they did, but for their socialist ideas and opinions. Three times the U. S. Supreme Court refused to review the case which would have tested for the first time the constitutionality of this viciously anti-labor act. Thus by these imprisonments, people can now be deprived of their freedom to think and speak—in defiance of our guarantees under the Bill of Rights.

You can help our Committee, which is the authorized representative of the 18. We need funds to carry on our national campaign to secure pardon for the 18 and to fight for the repeal of the Smith "Gag" Law. We also need funds to provide relief for the wives and children of the 18 prisoners while they are incarcerated. In some of the families there are babies and children of school age who need food, clothing, medical care.

You can help us by asking your readers to aid in this important campaign by contributing to the Minneapolis Prisoners Pardon & Relief Fund. Checks should be sent to the Civil Rights Defense Committee, 160 Fifth Avenue, New York, 10, N. Y.

(Signed)

JAMES T. FARRELL, Chairman

**JAMES T. FARRELL, Chairman**  
**CIVIL RIGHTS DEFENSE COMMITTEE**  
160 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK CITY 10, N. Y.

Here is my contribution of \$..... to  
the Minneapolis Prisoners Pardon and Relief Fund.

NAME .....

ADDRESS .....

CITY and STATE .....