

# Fourth International

## **Labor and the War Drive**

### **Union Leaders' Walkout**

*-- Joseph Andrews*

### **Economic Roots of Labor Crisis**

*-- Arne Swabeck*

### **The "Great Debate"**

*-- John Saunders*

### **Foreign Policy and the Workers**

*-- Paul G. Stevens*

*From the Arsenal of Marxism*

**LEON TROTSKY:  
If America Should Go Communist**

**Manager's Column**

Reports from a number of Socialist Workers Party branch literature agents show that consciously putting forward the **Fourth International** in party literature sales brings gratifying results. Comrade Bert writes as follows about the experience of the **Chicago Branch** in selling the **FI** during their recent aldermanic campaign.

"Although our election campaign is over, I think it's important that mention is made of our conscious use of the **FI** during the course of the campaign. We attempted to test out the possibilities of broader sales of the theoretical magazine much in the same manner as we have done with **The Militant**. The attempt was successful to the point of constituting one of the high spots of the campaign. For example, at two campus meetings alone we sold 16 copies. This has convinced us that steady sales of the **FI** are feasible and we intend to do with the **FI** what we have already done with **The Militant**."

Literature agent Cathy informs us that New York has

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organized several distributions of back issues of the **FI** mainly at schools. Sample copies were given out as a prelude to future sales. Later when

comrades returned with the current issue they found that they were able to make many more sales than they had before.

Seattle increased their **FI** bundle and ordered extra copies of the Jan.-Feb. issue, reporting that "the **FI**'s are really selling—on the newsstands, at union meetings, on the campuses, and in the shops."

Los Angeles, Flint, and San Francisco also ordered extra copies, and Newark found that their regular bundle was not enough to take care of increasing sales.

Letters from new readers illustrate the need for a magazine analyzing political developments with the Marxist understanding and thorough accuracy of the **FI**. **E.M.** writes from Chicago that he is a "relatively recent reader of **Fourth International**, in my opinion the finest theoretical magazine on Marxism in the U.S. What a rewarding experience to read a periodical of this caliber after imbibing that watery broth ladled out by the C.P., S.P., S.L.P., etc."

An "Old Age Pensioner" in Vancouver, Canada, writes: "I have just read for the first time the **Fourth International**. The Nov.-Dec. issue is wonderful reading." And he asks for more such issues as the one on "American Labor Leaders."

**STATEMENT OF THE OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, AND CIRCULATION REQUIRED BY THE ACT OF CONGRESS OF AUGUST 24, 1912, AS AMENDED BY THE ACTS OF MARCH 3, 1933, AND JULY 2, 1946 (Title 39, United States Code, Section 233)**

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# FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

VOLUME XII

MARCH-APRIL 1951

NUMBER 2

## Labor Faces the War Drive

# Foreign Policy and the Workers

By PAUL G. STEVENS

The Korean war, for all of its present indecisive military aspects, has already shaken up American society more than any development since the 1929 economic crash. At that time the collapse of the myth of permanent prosperity, so assiduously cultivated by the capitalists among the people, gave rise to a new level of class consciousness in the working class. This was translated from 1934 to 1937 into the stormy *trade union* struggles that established the CIO.

Today the deflation of confidence in American omnipotence on the world arena, as a result of the test of arms undertaken by the imperialists against the erstwhile colonial peoples, has led to repercussions at home and abroad which lay the ground for a further maturing of the workers' class consciousness.

This new stage is bound to be translated into *political* struggles no less vehement than the preceding trade union struggles, and to extend the horizon of our labor movement to the entire international scene.

Korea is only the opening chapter in the social crisis unfolding in the United States, whose historical significance was set forth in broad outline in our January-February issue. The indicated general perspectives are already beginning to take on more concrete shapes and in this issue several articles take note of the most important developments in this regard. The overall picture of the maturing crisis is marked by a number of features, which disclose its great depth as well as its limits at the present stage.

### Crisis in Ruling Circles

1. *The conflict in the ruling class* — dramatized by the "Great Debate" between the Truman administration plus the Dewey-Dulles wing of "internationalist" Republicans on the one side and the dissident powerful Taft-Hoover wing of the Republican party on the other — continues unabated. The latter denounce the Truman line of preparation for *all-out* war with the USSR, its partners and satellites as leading to bankruptcy and suicide. The former denounce as "isolationist" the Hoover line of *limited* air and naval warfare by retrenchment to a "Western Hemisphere Gibraltar" and reject it, above all, as leading to economic self-strangulation. The arguments of each side in this debate are equally effective in demolishing the proposals of the other, because each argument is grounded in un-

answerable realities. Both sides disclose the two horns of the dilemma of U.S. imperialism for which there is no foreseeable solution. Debilitation in war or the convulsions of economic collapse are the twin nightmares permanently haunting American capitalism and churning discord among its leading circles.

This conflict of opinion is compounded by the clash between the Executive branch and the Legislative branch over control of practical measures in war policy (allocation of troops, conscription, military commitments). This, as Taft has stressed, logically leads to a constitutional crisis.

Finally, there is continued dissension among the military leaders, the latest being over the extent and significance of operations in Korea itself. MacArthur presses for extending the war to China's mainland, by publicly declaring that the best to hope for is a "stalemate," while Ridgeway, the Pentagon's field commander, speaks of a "victory" in assessing the possibility of stabilizing a front along the 38th parallel.

### Labor Collides With Big Business

Where the ruling class remains united is on that main phase of its economic policy which aims to shift the entire burden of the war outlay onto the laboring population. It stands firm on a soak-the-poor tax program, on a wage freeze, on fake price controls and, above all, on stringent control of manpower with the whole Economic Mobilization set-up in the hands of Big Business. But here the ruling class as a whole comes into collision with organized labor; and the Truman administration collides with the union officialdom which, on other issues, particularly on foreign policy, serves as one of its main props.

2. *The Labor crisis*, marked by the decision of the United Labor Policy Committee to withdraw all union representatives from government defense agencies, is the first resounding announcement of mass resistance to the war program on the home front. When Truman tries to dismiss the walk-out of the labor leaders as a mere "disagreement" he is either whistling in the dark or displaying lightmindedness unusual even for him.

While the AFL and CIO leaders are, to be sure, concerned first of all about their own bureaucratic powers and privileges — threatened by the projected manpower controls — their whole existence depends upon retaining

hold of the unions. The union ranks, as first indicated by the wild-cat strike of the railmen, were stirring into action to resist the ruthless onslaught on their living conditions implicit in the economic mobilization program. The leaders, who only a few months ago were prepared to offer the administration a no-strike pledge, as a sign of their complete subservience to the rulers in the war effort, felt compelled to take a step which, with increased tension, could readily detonate strike struggles that would rock the whole war program.

The union officialdom is no doubt prepared to cooperate with the government in adopting conciliatory formulas to allay the tension already created, and some such compromise may be worked out. Meanwhile, the labor leaders are spelling out in the open what the working masses have been only feeling vaguely. In the February 28 statement issued by the United Labor Policy Committee, the defense set-up is castigated as completely controlled by Big Business and directed exclusively against the working people. Despite themselves, the class collaborationist labor leaders have thus helped to throw into the glaring limelight the anti-labor character of the government and its war program, and thereby help to raise the consciousness of the workers a notch higher. No matter how the "disagreement" between the union officialdom and the administration may be patched up in the coming period, this exposure will help further the development of the social crisis in the United States.

While working class resistance has assumed a distinct and very sharp character; on the bread and butter questions arising from the war preparations, the same *does not* yet hold true for the foreign policy which is paving the road for World War III. Most workers certainly do not share the views of the labor leadership, which on this score goes along with the Truman administration without a murmur of serious criticism. In January the AFL Executive Council meeting in Miami adopted a "ten point" program which included support of Chiang Kai-shek and made no mention of Washington's projected deal with Franco Spain! The present attitude of the workers is still rather passive and perplexed on the whole. But changes are taking place in this respect as well.

### The Crisis of Confidence

3. *The mass of the people have lost confidence in the Trumanite leadership of the nation and its conduct of international affairs.* The public opinion polls, the newspaper surveys, and the letters to Congressmen show that the Truman administration no longer has support from the masses who voted it back into office in 1948. This is true particularly on foreign policy.

In the absence of opposition from the labor leadership, the "Great Debate" has channelized much of this mass discontent into support for the Hoover line. But this support is not accorded to the long-range "positive" proposals in that line — the "Western Hemisphere Gibraltar," the limited air and naval warfare, the concentration on building up a huge navy and air force as against ground forces — so much as to the "negative" immediate ones: no all-out war preparations; withdrawal of troops from Korea;

send no troops to Europe. The polls estimate that more than two-thirds of the people favor these last two propositions and that public sentiment is running equally strong against the draft of the 18-year olds and against universal military training. On other aspects of foreign policy, the pollsters either refrain from putting questions or else show inconclusive results — most of the people just answer "don't know."

Clearly the laboring masses have not had the opportunity to put two and two together as yet in calculating the domestic and foreign policies of the ruling class. But they are apprehensive and far from enthusiastic about military adventures of any sort.

While true of public opinion generally, a sharper and clearer conception of international politics is developing among the young workers and farmers who have donned the serviceman's uniform. They are facing or are about to face the question of life and death on the battlefield. And they react to war strategy and foreign policy with as keen an awareness as the workers on the home front react to the policy of economic stabilization, to the labor-draft, etc.

### The "Low Morale"

4. *Among the servicemen the loss of confidence in the Trumanite leadership is most pronounced, doubts about the war aims of the rulers most widespread and the aspiration for an independent line of action by the American people in world affairs most ardent.* In a sense this development is the most important feature of the current situation. For the moods in the armed forces, in critical periods, reflect most sharply the social currents in a nation, often anticipating civilian developments. And the soldiers have been among the first to realize that the "police action" in Korea was a full-scale war.

The mood in the army — its "low morale" — has been the subject of innumerable dispatches from the front in the daily press since the inception of the conflict in Korea. It was epitomized in the now famous letter of Marine Corporal John B. Moullette which Secretary of State Dean Acheson has publicized for reasons of his own. Moullette's letter is worth studying as a highly important document illuminating this whole question and we shall return to it presently. But first let us turn to one other feature of the developing crisis.

5. *It is becoming increasingly clear to the masses of American people that the policy of the ruling class has isolated the United States from other nations, even those where Stalinist influence is weakest and the dread of the totalitarian bureaucracy is strongest.* The widely watched proceedings in the United Nations on the issue of a Korean cease-fire revealed India and the Arab nations openly bucking Washington by sponsoring a negotiated peace with China, while Great Britain, France and even Canada swung into line behind the U.S. State Department only with great reluctance and after terrific pressure. The emergency trip of British Prime Minister Attlee to confer with Truman after the latter's threat to use the A-bomb has not failed to leave its impression, either.

These actions by other governments have served to emphasize for American public opinion the even stronger

sentiments of the peoples abroad against the swashbuckling war course of the U.S. ruling class. There is a growing feeling that, as represented by their present leaders, the American people are out of step with the rest of the world. This vague feeling is preparing the ground for the clearer realization that the capitalist rulers of the USA are in league with darkest reaction in every country and that a common cause with the peoples throughout the world can be established only in joint opposition and struggle against the imperialists.

Most striking of the above features is undoubtedly the open break between the official labor movement and the government over the economic mobilization set-up. This is the most pointed warning that the laboring masses of America will not be beasts of burden in a war of world conquest for the benefit of Wall Street. They will not countenance a "defense" of America that is run lock, stock and barrel by Big Business. But both the inner logic of this incipient struggle at home as well as the lack of confidence still vaguely expressed in the government's conduct of affairs abroad must inevitably lead to the question: *What is the object of this "defense"?* What is the cause at stake in this war for which Big Business seizes so completely the reins of economic mobilization on the home front? Can this government dominated by Big Business have more progressive aims in other lands when its policy at home is directed so sweepingly against the working people?

### Unrest Among the Masses

All these questions are even now being linked up in the consciousness of the workers by the experiences of their sons and brothers in the armed forces. The industrial unrest at home has its counterpart in the political unrest among the youth in uniform. As these two phenomena unfold and fuse, the United States will be swept full force into the social crisis that has unsettled the rest of the capitalist world since the end of the last war. A preview of what is entailed was given in the GI "send us home" demonstrations that coincided with the opening of the postwar strike waves in 1945. At that time a critical turn of events was averted by rapid demobilization and by several rounds of wage boosts. But American capitalism's objectives do not allow for similar concessions in the future.

There is a deep-going connection between the moods among the fighting forces and the class struggles in Detroit, Pittsburgh or Chicago. For that reason they deserve particular attention in assessing the perspectives of the developing crisis. Virtually from the beginning of the war in Korea, observant correspondents have reported that the morale of the GI's has been low. More thoughtful reporters have adduced a variety of reasons for this. First this was ascribed to inadequate military equipment and quartermaster's supplies, as well as to the numerical superiority of the opposing forces. As long as the "U.S.-UN" forces were held to the Pusan beach-head these superficial explanations had some currency. But they were completely dissipated when the September 1950 offensive that began with the Inchon landings revealed what a powerful build-up had actually been attained by MacArthur, not only on land

but at sea and in the air as well, against a relatively primitive fighting force.

More serious explanations then stressed the guerrillas who struck from the rear and appeared to be everywhere. The atrocities organized under a "scorched earth" policy, with whole villages put to the flame and whole columns of refugees shot down in cold blood — let alone the bombings which left the U.S. air force without further "worthwhile" objectives — were presumably undertaken to neutralize this factor of guerrilla warfare. There was certainly widespread distaste among the GI's for the atrocities before their eyes and an empty feeling when their victorious advances captured ruin upon ruin, but that alone could not account for low morale among soldiers, for whom the cruelties and bestialities of war become taken for granted. One *N. Y. Times* correspondent finally came up with a report which hit the nail on the head:

"The discovery that their superiority in weapons, transport, medical treatment, rations and a myriad of modern war devices," wrote Richard J. H. Johnston from Tokyo on December 9, 1950 when the Chinese troops began rolling, "was no guarantee of victory has struck a hard blow at the morale of the United States troops fighting in Korea . . . the GI's faith in his weapons suffered a sharp deflation."

They had found, the writer went on, "That the best they had in the way of equipment was not good enough to halt a foe willing and determined to drive forward. . . This has raised a question in the GI's mind that has yet to be answered." There was no elaboration in this dispatch as to what that question was, but it is clear enough.

As long as it could be taken for granted that the vast superiority of the machine in the hands of America's rulers could crush any resistance in the world like a steamroller, there was little need for serious thinking. The job would be done in this or that field of "police action" and then, except for the relatively few unlucky ones left behind, the draftees would return to their homes to take up once more the strands of familiar existence. But if the vaunted machine is not adequate to the task, if the men on the other side have a will and a determination that overcomes the superiority of the most modern equipment of destruction, then a situation arises that requires serious thought from every soldier. He must fight *man to man*. That means he has to ask himself: what is the cause that gives the foe such a will and determination? And from what cause can I summon resources to pit myself against him? This is the question in the GI's mind that "has yet to be answered."

### "Fed Up With the Administration"

For the explanations given him about Russian "puppets" and "zombies" do not fit the picture before him. He knows that the men opposing him have made a revolution and taken over a huge country. This inexorably leads to a reconsideration of the whole past outlook and to a re-evaluation of ideas and policies formerly accepted without question from the leaders. Thus the GI's criticism of weapons becomes transformed into a weapon of criticism.

The clearest expression of such criticism to date is the Moullette letter referred to earlier. This is an authentic paraphrase of the GI's thought at the present time. Referring

to the informal discussions among the men in their "slophute" or beer hall at Camp Pendleton, California, the Marine corporal stresses that "not one or two, but the majority, were complaining about the way we were tricked into this. . ." that is, the "police action" in Korea.

Moulette's letter first of all confirms the more general state of mind in the country we have already dealt with: "the American people, Democrat and Republican alike, are fed up with the administration and its foreign policy," he says. And then puts his finger on one of the main immediate worries: "The way Truman is appropriating money (for war) is outrageous. . . At present he is asking \$71.5 billion which would cost each American \$468."

Moulette's letter expresses the common view on the constitutional controversy which spotlights the present stage of distrust of the leadership: "I thought that only Congress could declare war." And touching on the "Great Debate" Moulette reflects the confused groping for some tangible solution associated with a known name. He speaks vaguely as millions of others do today of the need "to adopt something similar to what Hoover suggests," without specifying any single proposition.

When Moulette writes what his fellow soldiers think along the lines of positive action, he voices more radical thoughts which appear to have trickled into the California camp from the battlefronts across the Pacific, just as the vague dissatisfaction elsewhere in the letter obviously echoes public opinion outside the camp gates at home. He asks: "What right have we to refuse Red China entry into the United Nations?" And he insists: "I think she has a right to voice her opinions about what is to take place in the Far East." Here are views that have nothing in common with anything Hoover proposes, and certainly not with Truman and Acheson. They reveal the beginnings of independent thought on foreign policy arising in the depths of the people.

To be sure, these ideas are mixed with a good deal of unclarity and misunderstanding. "The only thing I can see is being proven in Korea," Moulette says, "is 'Might over what might be right,' Red China being the 'might'." He feels, "The needless waste of life in Korea on both sides is shameful to the human race." But he is sure about the future: "Fighting won't settle anything. . . The problem of Red China vs. the world, or the best part of it, has to be settled at the round table, and eventually it will be."

### "Disfavorable Thoughts"

This line of reasoning represents a break with the policies of all segments of the ruling class. It has found as yet no sponsors in official public opinion in this country. It more nearly resembles the prevailing policy in India, Great Britain, Europe, where mass anti-war sentiment is far more advanced and revolutionary ferment so close to the surface that the governments in control must reckon with it. This is the result of personal experience with the problems of counter-revolutionary war and of the social upsurge which up to now only the soldiers of America have confronted in common with the peoples of Europe and Asia.

There are isolated publicists and remnants of atomized American liberalism who share this view of a need to make

peace with revolutionary China. But they are not prepared to do a thing about it. Matters are different when similar sentiments are expressed by men in uniform. This becomes particularly evident in the Moulette letter, which, after describing the "disfavorable thoughts" on foreign policy, goes on to say:

"These men aren't afraid to fight; it's just that they have no cause to fight. If ordered to, we will, but only because of the obligation we have to each other." But their solidarity with each other, this "form of brotherly love," as the writer of the letter calls it, seeks broader scope. "Our only hope," he concludes, "is that our age throughout the world feel the same way and will state so to their leaders. By rebellion or other ways. I believe that the people of our level want only peace but that the leaders (including Truman) are afraid to admit they are wrong and are ashamed to admit it for fear they will lose face."

In his own groping way, the young soldier adumbrates a whole program of action for an independent foreign policy of the laboring masses of America. Whether because overwhelmed by the publicity accorded to his simple letter, or for other reasons Moulette has nevertheless quickly stated to the press that Acheson's reply, which evaded every single basic issue, "convinced" him. But it is not Moulette's alleged or real change of heart that is decisive. He was conveying the doubts and thoughts not alone of the soldiers around him, but also of their people back home. And these doubts, these thoughts, these searchings remain unanswered and cannot be answered convincingly by Acheson or any other capitalist spokesman. The aspirations of the people cannot be reconciled with those of America's ruling class. They can only follow their course to fuller fruition in a rising political consciousness of that other America — the America of labor, of the toiling farmers, of all the poor. How far the official labor leadership now lags behind the thinking of the awakening masses on international politics can be gauged, for instance, by comparing the "ten point" program on foreign policy recently adopted by the AFL Executive Council with the views in the Moulette letter.

### Reasons for Political Confusion

On the issue of China and the Korean war point 6 of the AFL "program" says: "Brand Communist dictatorship over China an aggressor; impose economic sanctions, and deny it a seat in the United Nations;" and point 7: "Generous moral and material support . . . to the Chinese Nationalist government now in Formosa." In other words, the AFL officialdom repeats word for word the views of the most reactionary imperialist elements in the government as well as in the Republican opposition. Not even the mildest criticism of administration foreign policy is voiced by these mossbacks at a time when this whole policy is being patently discredited with the ranks of labor. Not a shred of an independent proposal is put forward by them at a time when the thinking elements in the population are so obviously striving for an alternative to the foreign policy of the ruling class. The stand of the CIO leaders has little to distinguish it from that of the AFL.

The conservatism and subservience of the trade union bureaucracy on international affairs stands in sharp con-



trast at present to the unaccustomed boldness of its clash with the administration on the home front. This contrast reflects, in the first place, the uneven development of the struggle of the masses. The soaring living costs, the wage freeze, and a threatened labor draft are issues which directly affect their daily lives. Here the anti-labor character of these Big Business measures is easily recognizable; the trade union organizations to combat them are at hand and known to be powerful. The rank and file of labor have shown a readiness to use them with or despite their leaders — a fact highlighted by the railroad strike. Here the heat is on the officialdom from the ranks and this accounts in the main for the unaccustomed militancy of Green, Murray and their colleagues on the home front.

On foreign policy, the issues are not yet so directly or acutely felt by the labor ranks. And moreover, the decisive instrument for action on both the domestic and foreign fields — the independent political party of labor — has still to be built. The trade union bureaucracy itself has done everything it could to prevent the rise of a labor party precisely to avoid such lines of action. For while it has one foot in the working class, which gives it its unique position of power in the social system, the labor bureaucracy has the other foot in the capitalist system from which it derives its privileges. This likewise accounts for another disparity between AFL-CIO domestic and foreign policy.

Economic mobilization in the U.S. which gives exclusive manpower control to the capitalist representatives in the government impinges directly on the source of the bureaucrats' power. Domination by American capitalism abroad, on the other hand, opens up new sources of privileges for the bureaucracy. To mention but one recent example, there are the many fat, if subordinate, posts opened up for "labor advisers" in the world-wide Marshall Plan organization.

And finally, the privileged position of the labor bureaucracy, gives it a common ideology with capitalism to which it clings with characteristic narrow-mindedness and which it constantly strives to infuse into the whole labor movement.

According to a labor columnist of one New York daily, William Green complained to Truman that the wage freeze and the labor draft at home would make it very difficult to sell the European workers on the progressive role of the U.S. in combatting "Soviet propaganda." This incredibly insipid "argument," reportedly made at a White House conference shortly before the "walk-out" of the labor leaders, has a familiar ring. For the past few years the stock-in-trade of these people has been palming off imperialist policy under the pretext of fighting Stalinist totalitarianism.

### **They Play Into Stalin's Hands**

The American workers do not have much use for Stalinism and are unquestionably prepared to fight totalitarianism anywhere, especially here at home where the danger emanates not from Moscow but from Washington. But their own experiences as well as international events will teach them that the labor officialdom's way of "fight-

ing" Stalinist totalitarianism — by supporting the imperialist policy of the ruling capitalist class — can only play into the hands of the Kremlin despots and never undermine them. They have already seen some examples which must have impressed them.

If China has gone Stalinist, as their leaders claim, that was not prevented by the billions of dollars Washington poured into the coffers of Chiang Kai-shek's corrupt and brutal dictatorship. If, as some say, the Chinese Communist Party seems to have the confidence of the Chinese people and strives to be independent of Moscow, then how can its independence from Stalinism be possibly promoted by further "generous aid" to the discredited Chiang gang of grafters, usurers and militarists whom the Chinese people have driven out? Isn't this whole policy, coupled with support to the no less reactionary regime of Syngman Rhee in Korea, responsible for the current war — which Washington alone pursues aggressively amid opposition from the masses everywhere, and with continued pleas for restraint from its allies in London, Paris, New Delhi, etc.?

The results of this kind of "fighting Stalinist totalitarianism" continue to multiply before the eyes of the American people as they begin to recognize the meaning and importance of international politics. They have seen the resumption of diplomatic relations with Dictator Franco in Spain — against which not a word has been uttered by the labor leaders — at the very time when, in the face of Fascist repressions, the workers of Barcelona, fighting inflation, spontaneously walk out in a heroic general strike. The American people are watching the campaign to rearm Germany and the freeing of the Nazi industrialists, including Hitler's biggest backer Krupp — again without protest from the labor officialdom — at a time when the revived German trade unions declare their unyielding opposition to a new course of armaments and wrest from their government an agreement to their demand for an equal voice in management of industry ("codetermination") by the threat of a general strike.

### **Labor Needs Policy of Its Own**

From many places on the globe these examples keep coming daily. And each brings proof that in every land Washington is making common cause with the oppressors of the people. Each living example adds to the mounting evidence that the absence of an independent policy by American labor is turning the masses abroad not only against the imperialist U.S. rulers but also against the American people. So long as labor offers no foreign policy of its own, this acts only to turn the masses by default toward Moscow; instead of fighting Stalinism, it aids the Kremlin.

Event after event has made it clear that the policies of the administration abroad not only parallel but actually are extensions of the policies of Big Business at home. What the American workers have still to learn is that their struggle in the United States likewise parallels the resistance of the international working class to the foreign policy of Big Business; and that the struggle against the anti-labor gang on the home front is, in the final analysis, likewise an extension of this world-wide anti-imperialist

struggle. American labor needs an independent policy for foreign affairs just as imperiously as it does for the defense of its welfare at home.

From every point of view and in an increasing measure, the world crisis of American capitalism is increasing the pressures which make the class collaborationist, pro-imperialist policy of the AFL and CIO leadership less tenable.

Precisely because the collision with Big Business at home coincides with the expanding crisis in foreign policy, the working class is being impelled on the road to building its own labor party. An independent labor party could not only rally the people of the United States to wrest

control of governmental power from Big Business. The party of the American working class could also tackle the task of welding together the struggles of the masses everywhere for the abolition of the entire system of capitalist oppression and for the socialist reorganization of the world. Every step on that road would genuinely deal a mortal blow against the monstrous totalitarian Kremlin bureaucracy, shake off the retarding hold of the parasitic trade union officialdom and raise U.S. labor to the level of its historic role: that of taking the lead in transforming the world from the capitalist hell with its threat of atomic destruction into the free socialist society of peace and plenty.

# The Union Leaders' Walkout

By JOSEPH ANDREWS

Hard on the heels of the political crisis precipitated by the "Great Debate" among the ruling circles over U.S. foreign policy, comes the crisis over domestic policy, dramatized by the walkout on February 28 of all labor representatives from war mobilization posts.

Thus, at the very start of their all-out offensive for world domination, the American imperialists are confronted with social and political problems of the first magnitude both at home and abroad.

Both sides of this crisis of capitalist policy spring from the same source: the resistance of the peoples to the total war program of Washington.

Only strong pressures from the union membership could have produced a public statement so sharp as that issued by the United Labor Policy Committee (the U.L.P.C.) on the occasion of its break with the administration set-up. The bitter attack in their statement diverges completely in tone from their normal subservience. Here is the principal part of the text:

On February 16 we announced that we had become thoroughly disillusioned with the conduct of the defense mobilization program. We made the deliberate charge that big business was dominating the program. . .

Since then we have spelled out our indictment in detail to the President of the United States and to the heads of agencies under him. We have talked and we have listened. After full and complete exchanges of information, our original convictions have been more than confirmed.

What does this mean but that after talking with Truman the labor officials were doubly convinced that Big Business was firmly in the saddle? The statement then enumerates the major grievances of the workers:

1. We are today confronted with a price order (issued by price administrator Eric Johnston) which amounts to a legalized robbery of every American consumer, together with a wage order which denies justice and fair play to every American who works for wages. . . Wages and salaries of all Americans are now bound under the most rigid controls in the history of our country.

2. The door has been slammed in our faces on the vital problem of manpower, which directly affects the workers we represent. . . So long as the control of manpower rests in the Office of Defense Mobilization (Charles E. Wilson)

no wage or salary earner may feel safe that the Big Business clique in control of that agency may not seek to achieve a compulsory draft of the nation's workers.

3. There has been no affirmative action to meet our basic position that equality of sacrifice must be the guiding and indispensable principle in the defense program.

4. We have also arrived at the inescapable conclusion that such representation which already has been accorded to labor. . . and such further representation as is now offered are merely for the purpose of window dressing. . . Mr. Wilson. . . would now accept window dressing, supplied by labor, to cover the back-room activities of the leaders of industry who staff the ODM. He will get no such window dressing from the men and women of American labor.

5. We have, however, publicly stated, and we now reiterate, that we are prepared to participate in a reconstituted tripartite Wage Stabilization and Disputes Board which would administer a fair and equitable policy.

The ULPC followed this action by announcing a national conference of 700 union representatives from local central bodies, to be held in Washington March 20. This conference, say its sponsors, will rally all American consumers against the attack on their living standards. Labor spokesmen state they will organize unionists, housewives, farmers and small businessmen against the Big Business steal.

It can be seen from their statement and subsequent steps, that although the labor officials carefully leave the door open for a compromise, the coalition with the Democratic administration is beginning to fall apart and threatens to be permanently ruptured.

The Democrat-labor coalition which began with Roosevelt's NRA ("New Deal") matured during and after the rise of the CIO. It was strengthened during World War II, although it required skillful skating on thin ice by Roosevelt and the labor fakers to skim over the cracks created by the four wartime strikes of the United Mine Workers and the great 1945 rubber strike.

The coalition began to crack with the nation-wide strike wave in 1945-46, which was met by Truman's open strike-breaking attacks. Seriously threatened in 1947, it was



patched up during Truman's demagogically radical presidential campaign on the "Fair Deal" platform of 1948. These postwar developments indicated that the old equilibrium between the classes in the U.S. was being disrupted beyond easy repair.

The July 1946 issue of our magazine predicted that the American capitalists would seek to use the "same forceful and barbaric measures against the workers as were employed by its European counterparts to rescue their decayed rule." The Taft-Hartley Law, the red-baiting drive and witch-hunt, and now threats to the living standards are part of this process, and a confirmation of our prediction.

The President has attempted to dismiss the action of the labor leaders in splitting with administration policy as a mere "disagreement." However, even the fawning pro-administration *New York Post* observed that "Mr. Truman can't lightly brush it off or pretend that nothing has happened. . . It climaxes a long chapter of history. The New Deal (under Roosevelt) was never a labor government. But it was a government in which labor's voice was heard and respected."

The labor leaders have echoed these complaints, indicating a desire to return to the "good old Roosevelt" days by calling for a Wage Board on the model of the War Labor Board of World War II.

There is, it is true, marked difference between Truman's labor relations policy and that of Roosevelt. But the difference is not alone in the personalities of the two capitalist politicians. It goes much deeper and flows from the profoundly altered needs and circumstances of U.S. capitalism today.

### Roosevelt-Labor Coalition

In the years preparatory to and during World War II, it was possible for the union bureaucracy to maintain their coalition with Roosevelt without too much friction, for several reasons:

1. The war mobilization and production program began with a big section of the industrial apparatus idle and with a large surplus of labor available (10 million unemployed). The addition of new members to the wage-earning group in many cases increased family income. Long hours of work and overtime pay enabled workers to maintain and in some cases even to increase take-home pay. The economy was not under as heavy a burden of public debt and price and credit inflation.

2. The war itself had a quite different appearance to the eyes of the American workers. A genuine fear of Nazism engendered a willingness to accept militarism, to fight and even sacrifice.

3. The U.S. economy did not have to shoulder the task of propping up the rest of world capitalism.

These and other factors made it possible for Roosevelt to gain and keep labor support and, by this token to conduct the war with a minimum of resistance from organized labor.

The Truman regime prepares for all-out war under drastically changed conditions. The economy groans under the strains of the first attempts to superimpose military production upon already full-scale civilian production.

There is no large army of unemployed. On the contrary, there is a growing dearth of labor and man power. Prices are already inflated to the highest levels on record as a result of domestic and international conditions inherited from the Second World War. This inflation responds to the arms boom like a thermometer plunged into live steam.

### The New Situation

Washington must finance the armament of all its "allies" as well as inject constant economic aid into their sick economies. Consequently, workers' real wages have already been slashed since the outbreak of the Korean war.

There is strong opposition today to the counter-revolutionary military actions of U.S. imperialism in Asia and to plans for further military actions in Europe. Instead of accepting militarism, there is a growing mass anti-war sentiment.

This mood is shared by the middle classes. The fixed income groups, especially the war and old-age pensioners, the ex-GI's and their families, are now suffering the severest economic blows. They have no organizations of their own for struggle. Little concern is shown in Washington to hold small business as an ally of the monopoly-controlled administration. When questioned about setting up a "small-business commission" to arrange military orders for small enterprise, Wilson dismissed the proposal with an impatient reference to the "lack of time" for such trivial matters. There is already a marked increase in bankruptcies among small businesses; they will grow as raw materials are choked off by priorities.

This distress among large sections of the middle class presents organized labor with an opportunity. Independent struggle led by labor would quickly be joined by all unorganized workers as well as those middle class elements who correctly see the monopolists as their main enemy.

The labor leaders who castigated the war mobilization set-up as big business-controlled were thus voicing not only the discontent of the working class but of broad masses of the petty bourgeoisie.

One of the major difficulties confronting Truman and the Pentagon in preparing for all-out war is the freshness of the experience with the last war. The workers retain bitter memories of the fraudulent "equality of sacrifice" program, the wage freeze and the job freeze; they remember the broken promises to control prices and check profiteering.

Even more important, the workers have been through an extended experience with the repressions and stalling tactics of government agencies. Added to this is the fact that a large section of the industrial proletariat is composed of World War II veterans who want no part of another war.

Not the least among Truman's difficulties in mobilizing the American people for war is the growing crisis of confidence in his own ability to lead. There is not much faith in administration leadership and policies even among the ruling circles. In the ranks of the workers Truman and his government coterie are in low repute.

Truman's demagogy in the 1948 presidential campaign, which rallied the workers' support, was followed by betrayal

of all his promises, a betrayal which arouses only further bitterness and distrust. This, coupled with Truman's personal traits as an inept small-time political hack, lessen his chances of winning mass sympathy. Not since Harding has an occupant of the White House been so distrusted. This contrasts sharply with Roosevelt's position as *de-facto* leader of labor.

Contributing to the unsettlement of the Labor-Democratic coalition is the example given by the United Mine Workers led by John L. Lewis. Many commentators observed that the labor leaders were looking "over their shoulders" at Lewis when they broke with the government boards.

During the Second World War the workers responded with mixed emotions to Lewis's break with Roosevelt and the defiant strikes of the miners. While the most militant workers admired the courage of the miners and their leaders, patriotic feelings interfered at the time with their own wishes to emulate the coal diggers.

But since the war one miners' victory after another, despite Truman's vicious injunction rule and use of the federal courts against Lewis and the mineworkers' union, has piled up evidence that independence from government pays off. Collaboration with Truman did not. The American workers, especially in the CIO, cannot help but contrast the policies of their leaders with those of John L. Lewis. The balance sheet, weighed in the practical minds of the workers, puts the policy of dependence upon a coalition with Truman on the deficit side, while the militantly self-reliant dependence upon their own economic strength puts the miner's policy heavily on the credit side. In this respect the workers are accurate accountants.

The CIO and AFL leaders, while calling upon Truman to help rescind Taft-Hartley, told the workers that they would meanwhile have to "live with it" and abide by the law. Defiance, they warned, would break the union treasuries and eventually the unions themselves. But the UMW defied Taft-Hartley, won the welfare fund, made bigger wage gains than any section of organized labor, and has emerged with a solid organization and one of the biggest union treasuries.

### Workers Generalize Experiences

The workers are now generalizing from the experience of the mine workers' struggles since the captive mine strike of 1941 to the recent wage increase of 20c. an hour.

The march by the labor movement toward independence from the capitalist government will tend to deepen and extend the miners' experience. When the CIO workers break their bonds with the capitalist politicians, and begin to struggle over economic issues in the manner of the miners, they will inescapably come into sharp political collision with the capitalist state and its parties. However, what the miners were able to do as a restricted segment of the labor movement cannot be done by the whole labor movement without a fundamental break with its previous political ties.

The miners' challenge could be met with concessions because the capitalist government felt that any other course would infect the rest of the union movement with their militancy. The labor leaders feared such a turn of

events as much as the government, and the Democratic administrations could count on their subservience. A similar challenge by the entire labor movement, with the labor-Democrat coalition broken, means nothing less than a showdown.

When John L. Lewis commended the United Labor Policy Committee for "superb courage" in breaking with the wage board, he probably chuckled over the irony of his own remark. For, it was not so much courage as fear that prompted their action. In the face of mass resentment to Truman's military and economic program, the labor leaders were forced to resist or risk losing their prestige and positions. And nothing is dearer to a bureaucrat than his job.

### What the Labor Leaders Fear

Besides, the union representatives fear not only upheavals by their rank and file, but also the attacks of the big capitalists. The scorn and contempt shown by economic Czar Wilson in his sessions with them have been described in the press. The corporation chief who has so many times tried to break the CIO Electrical Workers Union, and has treated its leader, James B. Carey, as though he were a dangerous radical, now shows the same class hatred toward Carey and the rest of the union negotiators when they meet as government "collaborators" in Washington. Wilson's approach is that of the arrogant Big Business negotiator: "We meet because we must, we'll give as little as possible, and we'll break you if we can! There is no semblance in Washington of "labor-management cooperation" because the Wall Street representatives are not in a cooperating mood.

Thus squeezed between a restless, discontented rank and file, and government-Big Business representatives who give them no leeway or protective cover, the labor leaders had to act. The pressure from below can best be seen at work among the rail workers. The "sick report" walkout of the operating Brotherhoods was a rebellion which swept over the heads of its conservative leaders. They could not restrain the workers who in 20 years had dropped from third highest paid to thirtieth. Repeated run-arounds by the government mediation board under the Railway Labor Act transformed the railroad ranks from the most conservative to among the most militant.

Reports have already come of a new independent industrial union movement among the rails which began in the West and shows signs of spreading nationally. It is no exaggeration to say that the jobs of the craft-union railroad bureaucrats are in jeopardy.

The actions of the rail workers were followed by the Textile Workers strike, and strike threats by the packing-house and auto workers. Clearly, the union officials must either go along with these battles or be swept aside. That the UAW, immediately after resigning from government posts, won a temporary order loosening the wage freeze, making possible 5c. cost-of-living adjustments under the terms of their escalator clause contracts, strengthens the independent mood of the union membership.

Thus, the example of the miners was followed by the railroad revolt, in which the workers were trying to emu-

late the militant struggles and gains of the UMW. The rebellious railroad walkouts were followed by a textile strike, and a general angry demand from the CIO workers for wage increases. The labor officials see the process, and ask themselves, "If the formerly staid enginemen and trainmen revolt, what will happen when the same repercussions hit the CIO?" They could not afford to take responsibility for the Truman-Wilson policies which were so manifestly unjust.

### Big Business Offensive

The leaders have reason also to fear the U.S. plutocracy. Big Business launched in 1945 a determined offensive to undermine unionism through a strikebreaking campaign. Failure of this campaign was followed by passage of T-H Law, the police-state measures abrogating civil liberties and the fierce red-baiting barrage. Truman's use of federal injunctions in his strike-breaking forays against the mine workers and rail workers fit into this Big Business offensive. The union heads went along with some of these anti-labor actions, like the "red purges," and only mildly protested against others. But the policies of Truman's Wage Stabilization Board could not be tolerated because they menaced the special interests of the union bureaucrats, and struck at the foundations of the union structure.

One of the most revealing disputes between the union heads and Truman involves the security of the union organizations as such — a point which illustrates the crux of the difference between the Roosevelt-labor coalition and the present situation.

The press has commented very little about the sharp cleavage in the WSB over a key demand by the labor representatives: namely, that the board be empowered to handle not only economic matters, but also *contractual relations*. Truman's decree setting up the board limited its jurisdiction to questions involving wages, pensions, welfare funds and similar matters.

During the Roosevelt administration, the War Labor Board, empowered to handle all basic questions in labor-management contracts, guaranteed the stability of the unions by authorizing the maintenance of membership and dues check-off. This was the pay-off to the labor officials in World War II for the no-strike pledge. The existence of the unions was guaranteed; big union treasuries were assured; opportunities for union growth were left open.

Today, the industry members of the WSB have flatly announced that if Truman authorizes the Board to handle matters other than income, *they* will resign in a bloc. On this point they are absolutely firm. They want to be free, completely unrestrained by board rulings or jurisdictions, to conduct their warfare against the unions.

For their part, the union officials correctly see in this limited jurisdiction of the WSB a threat to their own basis.

The AFL has a special axe to grind in this respect. The fact that Wilson has taken over manpower controls and plans to decree universal labor conscription is a direct threat to their own incomes and privileges, as well as to the freedom of the workers from whom their strength is derived.

If the AFL craft unions were deprived of their hiring halls — their lucrative dues-take would be sharply reduced. AFL control of a large part of the skilled labor market during World War II made it possible to increase their membership appreciably, with big initiation fees swelling their treasuries. As a side-line, many a lush private deal with contractors was made by individual bureaucrats to supply labor.

This feeding trough of the AFL bureaucracy is now threatened by the projected conscription of labor. What the old hands of the AFL do not understand is that U.S. capitalism feels it can no longer afford the luxury of free unions, independent hiring halls, nor the bureaucrats who thrive on them.

The central contradiction in the situation of U.S. capitalism is this: As they strain to meet the demands of their world program, the American imperialists face the roadblock of a still untamed labor movement. Unlike Germany where the ruling class embarked upon its campaign of conquest under Hitler, the workers' organizations in the U.S. have not been destroyed, nor for that matter, even substantially weakened.

### What Lies Ahead

This contradiction will not diminish as the military program unfolds. To carry through their drive for world domination requires heavy attacks against the living and working standards and traditional freedoms of the American workers. Walter Lippmann, in a recent column, discussed the consequences of the administration plans for militarization as follows:

It would require the prolonged conscription of our young men and the levying of a terrible toll upon their education and hopes. It would require an austerity of life by our people which they have never approached in this century. It would require an iron regimentation of all their affairs and a harsh intolerance of dissent.

*The New York Times* editorial column put the situation bluntly, "If defense is to become our major industry, we need less butter and more guns." This authoritative capitalist organ sees no alternative except to grasp Hitler's central slogan. But Hitler had no independent unions to contend with.

What is more, this perspective of guns as against butter does not take into consideration the revolutionary potential contained in the high standard of living in the United States. Far from being a conservatizing force under present conditions, this privileged position of U.S. labor will prove to be a highly radicalizing factor.

Workers will fight hard to maintain what they've already got. Labor history in this country shows that while depressed conditions often discourage militant actions, full employment generates confidence. The inevitable attempts to reduce the standards of American labor will not be met with passivity.

Moreover, there is not so much leeway as commonly believed, for reduction of American living standards. The Bureau of the Census reports that two-thirds of the American people have incomes of less than \$4,000 a year. The Department of Labor insists that \$4,000 is the minimum

required for a decent living standard. Most of the American people do not have this. Therefore should real wages be substantially slashed, mass reactions would be not long delayed.

The truth of this can be seen from the fact that the labor crisis has been precipitated by the very first impact of inflation and the THREAT of a further reduction in living standards, before the arms program has made its full effects felt.

However, the ruling class cannot avoid trying to make further inroads upon workers' real incomes, not if they intend, as they do, to carry out their world program. That is what makes columnists like Lippmann so pessimistic. Britain maintained its world empire on the basis of a working class at home which had a privileged world position based upon its domination of the world market and its exploitation of a world colonial empire. But when these conditions began to be undermined, the British working class broke with capitalist politics — and brought the Labor Party to power.

In America, there is no chance to maintain the living standards of the working class by means of more intensive exploitation of the rest of the world at *this* stage. U.S. imperialism must load the whole burden of an attempt to stabilize the world system upon the back of its workers.

The walkout of the labor leaders, tantamount to a vote of no-confidence in the administration, is essentially a political act. But it is a political act without labor's having a political organization of its own.

The labor crisis is a sign of the underlying instability of labor-capital relations in this country. It portends a maturing social crisis in the stronghold of capitalism.

How can this crisis be resolved? No doubt both the

labor leadership and the Truman administration will seek a compromise on the domestic disputes. Labor officials still see eye-to-eye with the administration on foreign policy and retain their posts on the State Department agencies operating abroad. But even if they succeed in patching up their split, conditions will provoke new and deeper crises.

The only progressive solution to the antagonism between the interests of labor and the needs of U.S. imperialism is a complete break by all labor organizations with the Truman administration. That is the first necessary step toward the full independence of the workers from capitalist politics.

Anything else, any compromise, will only continue the union "window dressing" of U.S. Big Business offensive against labor at home and abroad.

If the labor leaders do not break with the administration, the workers will seek a new leadership, and sweep aside those who stand in their way. American labor is fast coming of age.

The crisis now unfolding was predicted by the Socialist Workers Party in 1946. "In this crisis," declared the *Theses on the Coming American Revolution* adopted by the Twelfth National Convention of the party, "it is realistic to expect that the American workers, who attained trade union consciousness and organization within a single decade, will pass through another great transformation in their mentality, attaining political consciousness and organization. If in the course of this dynamic development a mass labor party based on the trade unions is formed, it will not represent a detour into reformist stagnation and futility, as happened in England and elsewhere in the period of capitalist ascent. From all indications, it will rather represent a preliminary stage in the political radicalization of the American workers. . ."

## The "Great Debate"

By JOHN SAUNDERS

The "Great Debate" is no accident. It arises from the hopeless situation in which American imperialism finds itself. To survive and thrive even for a generation more the American colossus must turn back the clock and restore capitalist private property in the Soviet Union and its satellites. In addition it must arrest the developing revolution in China and prevent its further spread in the Orient as well as halt its contagious infection of the peoples of Europe, the Near East, Africa and South America. This is indeed a Herculean task. It is obvious that it can be achieved only by waging relentless counter-revolutionary war against the rising new order. It is equally obvious that such a war at this time will be of long duration, prohibitively costly in manpower, money and resources, bringing bankruptcy to the only capitalist power whose stability survived World War II.

It is natural that under these circumstances doubts should arise in the minds of a section of the American bourgeoisie. Was the American century only a dream after all? Can it ever be accomplished in real life? Or must the

situation be examined in the light of the new relationship of forces brought about by the great Chinese revolution? That is the crux of the question.

The "Great Debate" has encompassed the entire capitalist world. Every European and Asiatic power is re-examining its foreign policy in light of the weakness and vulnerability of the American colossus, revealed particularly in the Korean war. The hope of a "third force" is arising among the Western countries in Europe, in India and the Arab lands. The desire for survival, even if only for a few more years, is engulfing their bourgeoisies whose existence is endangered by the intransigence of American imperialism. The peoples of the world are demanding peace and forcing their rulers to seek the road of neutrality in World War III, if that is indeed possible.

### Truman Administration's Reasoning

For its part, the Truman administration, which heads the most influential section of the American capitalists, wants to continue on the course charted by Winston

Churchill in his 1946 Fulton speech. The Truman Doctrine, Washington reasons, has helped to contain the Soviet Union. The Marshall Plan has built up capitalist Europe industrially and readied it for the next step of military preparedness. General Eisenhower has been appointed head of the European army which must now be established in all the non-Communist countries of Europe. When that work is successfully accomplished the Pentagon can let loose its stockpile of atom bombs while the newly-formed European armies can hold back the onslaughts of the Soviet Army. Even if unsuccessful in halting the huge Soviet armies, the Eisenhower troops can fight a rearguard battle, resorting to a scorched earth policy while the cities of the Soviet Union are pulverized with bombs from European and Near East bases. The strength of the industrial potential of the American colossus is relied upon to wear down and finally conquer the Soviet Union and its satellites.

Whatever might be the final outcome of this projected war one thing is clear, as Eisenhower reminded Congress after his tour of Europe: if the Soviet Army obtains possession of the Ruhr with its industrial potential intact there is slight hope of crushing the Soviet Union. Thus the Administration has never doubted that the main prize of the cold war is Western Germany. The U. S. might consider concessions elsewhere but it must concentrate its main effort on this battleground.

Despite this fact, Washington permitted itself to be sucked into the Korean theatre in a venture that was purposeless from the start. Only several months before the North Koreans struck, Acheson publicly acknowledged that this peninsula was not within the American defense zone. Under pressure from the most arrogant section of the American bourgeoisie Truman ran amuck and hurried troops to that vulnerable sector. He thought that an American commitment backed up by the docile United Nations, added to the bluster of American jingoism, would suffice to scare off the Soviet Union as well as revolutionary China from coming to the assistance of the embattled Koreans.

### Forces Behind the Contenders

There was little to gain from such a move under the best circumstances. But it proved to be the worst choice for American imperialism. The current weakness of its arms has been unmasked before the entire world. American prestige and leadership are seriously undermined. And worst of all for the State Department, the American masses are voicing their disapproval, thereby making new ventures doubly difficult. The opposition now justifiably accuses the administration of a lack of seriousness and stability in conducting its foreign policy.

The blasts of Hoover, Taft and Kennedy have had a profound effect on the American people. Mail to Congressmen from their constituents has been overwhelmingly—40 to 1, according to one *N. Y. Times* report—in favor of the opposition. Hoover estimates, moreover, that he has the full support of 68% of the press and partial support of another 6% as against 24% favoring the Truman policy.

Yet the Administration leaders seem more determined than ever to carry out the Churchill line of arming Western Europe, and especially Germany. For it is quite apparent that without German forces no serious effort can be made to stop the Red Army. The *New York Times*, the *Herald-Tribune* and what appears to be the most influential section of the press are urging the State Department to proceed with utmost speed on its designated course. The majority of the Senate and House refuses to deviate from established policy. One gathers from this that the Administration line will prevail despite the fact that the majority of the people and even of the press are opposed to this policy. It is hard to buck the international bankers who have set the tone for American imperialism since the days of World War I.

Yet a closer inspection of the faction supporting the Administration views reveals that it is not so homogeneous as it appears on the surface. From the speeches of the numerous protagonists as well as from editorial comment at least three different reasons can be deduced for support of Truman:

### Three Types of Truman Supporters

1. Some believe that a show of strength by the United States and the build-up of a European army will deter the Soviet Union and its satellites from following a bold course; that a better balance in the relationship of forces will be achieved, thereby preventing all-out war for a long period. This tendency feels that the Soviet Union, cowed by American superiority in atomic weapons, will confine its opposition to German rearmament to the writing of blistering diplomatic notes. If the Soviet Union or the troops of its East German satellite strike to forestall the rearmament of Western Germany, the misunderstanding of this tendency will come to light sharply and suddenly and throw it completely off balance. This element will either counsel retreat or remain silent in the face of cries for peace by the masses. Above all it fears war and realizes its dangers to American imperialism.

2. Others back up Truman because they feel that a build-up of a European army including German troops will so bolster the strength of the Atlantic Pact nations that the Western powers will be in a position to make a far better deal with the Soviet Union than they can now obtain. It appears that even Churchill, who fathered Truman's policy, belongs to this school of thought today. War is the last thing they desire. This is true of almost the entire European bourgeoisie. The same view is shared by an increasing number of American capitalists, both in Truman's camp and in the opposition. Faced with an unforeseen strong move on the part of the Soviet Union to forestall German rearmament these backers of Truman will likewise counsel retreat and urge a deal on the best possible terms to avoid war.

3. There is no doubt that the third element, the hard core of the State Department and the Pentagon, intends to go ahead come what may. They see the dangers ahead involved in their present policy but feel it is the only course to pursue. Although many hope to avoid war for

the present, they are fully resigned to it if the Soviet Union answers the aggression of German rearmament with the use of its own counter-forces. Dulles expressed their views when he exclaimed that they would rather die in battle than in bed. For these people are convinced that unless they can assure United States domination of Germany their cause is lost; that they might as well fight now before their fortunes are still further reduced. But the question nevertheless remains whether this tough nucleus will be able to swing the country in favor of war under such circumstances.

Will not a falling away of many of their staunch backers induce divided counsel in their ranks? Will not the pressure of the Hoover-Taft opposition, the phalanx of European capitalists, and the still greater outcries of the masses force the Administration to hesitate and perhaps paralyze it completely? That is not only possible but at this juncture would seem probable. The size and influence of the bourgeois supporters of State Department policy is largely an illusion.

### Allies Scared by U.S. Plans

Despite the almost limitless power of American imperialism to impose its will on its satellites in the North Atlantic Pact, the hopeless position of the European capitalists and the even more pitiful condition of the West European masses which would result from war will undoubtedly bring about repercussions that might well shatter the plans of General Eisenhower. The necessity of the North Atlantic Pact countries to remain united in the face of Soviet power is indeed real from the point of view of preserving and extending the capitalist system. But the West European bourgeoisie receives very little assurance from its arrogant masters on this side of the ocean. Eisenhower's battle plans call for a retreating and losing struggle in Western Europe that must lead to the total destruction of its industry. The blueprint for war as well as the propaganda of the American State and War Departments scares America's allies to death. Aside from a few compradors who can escape with a share of their loot to this country, the great bulk of the European bourgeoisie, not to mention the workers, face the kind of disaster which not even a successful reinvasion could repair.

Even if the unlikely prospect of building up a European army with German participation is achieved the difficulties ahead for Truman's policy are tremendous. The huge expense for rearming this country and Europe will bring about a spiraling inflation at home which must continue despite controls. The masses will not take kindly to regimentation especially when they have little faith in Administration policy and, in the light of the Korean events, little confidence in its success. As the dollar shrinks in value, the pound, franc, and lira will decline even more precipitately, reducing Europe's masses to desperation. The increased tempo of rearmament and spending, carried to a pitch for several war years, can only help bankrupt the capitalist system. The necessity for efficient prosecution of such a war will lead to cries for the nationalization of industry. Then there is a strong possibility that the

terrific impact of the atom bomb and the invasion by the Red Army might lead to revolution in Europe at the very outbreak of World War III. Finally, in this country the Administration must fight an unpopular war with the American working masses untamed, relying largely on the labor leaders to keep them in check.

### Class Character of Hoover Policy

Such a policy does not seem realistic to the Hoover-Taft-Kennedy faction. They are concerned foremost with saving and prolonging the capitalist system and are dismayed at the foolhardy plans of the State Department. Although they find themselves in a minority today, the so-called "retreatists" are all men who carry considerable weight with their class. They are proven class politicians who have contributed mightily in helping to prolong the life of the capitalist system in this country.

Hoover and Taft have always conducted their political campaigns along strictly ruling class lines. Hoover refused to give an inch of ground to the working class in the dark days of the depression. He saved the capitalist system several years of life by prolonging the depression to the bitter end at the expense of the workers. He insisted upon having the depression run its course though it meant starvation and hunger and ruined lives for millions. He had no qualms in calling upon General MacArthur to drive the veteran bonus marchers from Washington at the point of the bayonet. He continually fooled the people by his false statements that prosperity was around the corner though he, most of all, knew better. He encouraged his own class to resist the slightest demands of the workers while he placed the bankers on the dole of the Reconstruction Finance Corporation. He timed his false statements of optimism to coincide with the liquidation of securities on the stock exchange, thereby getting new suckers for Wall Street. He willingly took the rap and continued his ruthless course although he knew that the 1932 elections would go against him. In that way Hoover endeared himself to his own class although he became discredited with the workers and farmers.

### Hoover's Record

But Hoover was far from an isolationist with little knowledge or concern about the rest of the world. Hoover had been to every corner of the earth long before he became president. He ranks with Lloyd George, Wilson and Churchill in keeping the Russian Revolution from spreading to the rest of Europe. What the others accomplished by military means Hoover achieved with food control. As head of the American Relief Administration and European Children's Relief Fund after World War I, Hoover so manipulated the parceling of food to the hungry of Europe as to strangle the militant European labor movement. In so doing Hoover became an expert on world labor and revolutionary organizations and is perhaps better acquainted with counter-revolutionary techniques than any other living American. It might also be mentioned that



Hoover is no novice at evaluating and appraising military plans, having acquired considerable experience as president.

### Taft's Record

Taft is a worthy partner of Hoover. He obtained tremendous prestige in the last elections, winning the Ohio senatorial race by the largest majority yet obtained by any candidate for that office. He is the uncontested leader of the Republican party today and his own fortunes are so indissolubly bound to those of his party that he is known throughout the country as Mr. Republican. There is little doubt that if a parliamentary government existed in the U. S. new elections would have resulted from the gravest crisis this country experienced since the Civil War. And most likely Taft would have headed the new government.

Thus we are dealing with people who have much weight with their class and whose opinions should not be lightly discounted because they are not at present in the seats of power. The huge number of favorable letters received by the press in response to Hoover's speech opening the "Great Debate" are an indication that these politicians are capable of canalizing mass support in the days to come. If Taft appears more amenable to compromise than Hoover it is not that his line differs essentially. It is merely a stratagem due to his desire to become president at the head of a party which is divided on this issue.

First and foremost the Hoover-Taft forces stress economy. Without a healthy economic base all war plans are futile, they contend. The only stable capitalist power in the world must keep its own house in order lest it collapse and bring down the world capitalist system in ruins. Having undisguised contempt for the masses, this tendency has little objection to spending huge sums for armament, provided the workers are taxed sufficiently to balance the budget. This group realizes that there is little danger of a depression today with such huge outlays for the weapons of death. A gradual expansion of armaments as a replacement for the shrinking world market is essential to keep the economy in balance. But there is growing alarm at the recent rapid increase far beyond the needs of a "healthy" capitalist structure.

### What Hoover-Taft Fear and Want

The specter of unrestricted inflation haunts the Hoover-Taft forces. If there is no war immediately ahead and the pace of armaments can be somewhat reduced, they would prefer to take this course. They relish a certain amount of slack in employment to lessen the bargaining power of the workers and permit a thorough housebreaking of the unions in preparation for World War III. For Hoover and Taft place little reliance on the labor leaders to keep the workers from thwarting the plans of the imperialists. It is this blind spot on the part of these "realists" that will lead to their undoing. It was contempt for the Asiatic masses that helped produce the present crisis in Korea. Similarly, contempt for the American workers will lead to disaster for the industrialists at home. But that is a lesson for the future which these ruthless politicians will learn the hard way.

Even the military plans of the Hoover-Taft faction, in stressing naval and air power, conform much more to their urge for a stable economy than to a realistic appraisal of the military needs. Korea has shown that the air arm has been grossly overrated. Even though the U. S. has a strong superiority in battleships and other naval craft there is nevertheless little prospect that the combined imperialist naval and air force can effectively defend the outposts of Japan, Formosa and the Philippines against China and the Soviet Union with its huge submarine fleet. Hoover is interested in exacting a high toll of casualties for the invasion of these islands and he is not likely to be disappointed. But in any case the Hoover-Taft group knows that it is unrealistic to count on stopping the huge Russian and Chinese armies on land thousands of miles from these shores.

### The Military Strategy of Hoover-Taft

However, it would be a mistake to conclude from the Hoover-Taft speeches that they want this country to desert its allies and play a purely passive role except in the defense of this hemisphere. Hoover is fully aware that a revolution is raging in China, that it is spreading to southeast Asia and can embrace that whole continent. For that reason he is all the more anxious to crush this revolution and, if not fully successful, at least to grind it to a halt as soon as possible before its flames devour the remains of the capitalist system. The task of destroying the Soviet Union, he opines, can wait for a more opportune time.

Taft, in a quite correct analysis of Stalinism, maintains that the Kremlin does not want to expand unless it is forced to do so under terrific pressure from imperialism. Therefore, he concludes, why not confine the energies of this country and the capitalist world to smashing the *actual* revolutionary threat in Asia? Let imperialism utilize Chiang Kai-shek, Bao Dai and any other puppets who have control of armed forces to harass the Chinese revolution as much as possible. This is in line with the form of imperialist intervention undertaken against the Russian revolution after 1917. Even if it fails, he seems to speculate, it might so weaken the revolutionary forces, so tire out the masses through war and starvation, so decimate the best fighters for the new order that the counter-revolution might once again, as in Russia, raise its head from within and curb the ascendant revolution. A regime resulting from such a variant would make a deal with the U.S.A. more feasible, in his view.

Thus Taft is willing to unloose the American bombers and the naval armada to wear down the Asiatic masses. From all indications it is this *minority* policy toward Asia that is now being adopted by the Administration. The State Department seems determined to hold on to Formosa, although before the invasion of Korean Acheson was ready to keep hands off while Mao's forces were preparing to conquer it.

### Attitude Toward Germany

But most of the discussion in the debate centers around the European orientation of American imperialism with the arming of Western Germany as the key to the situation.

The Hoover-Taft group fears that Moscow is not bluffing when it states that it will not tolerate the rearmament of Germany. "Why not let well enough alone," says Taft in effect. "We are sitting pretty. We control the Ruhr today. We can utilize it for making a deal which will be to our advantage. If we don't make a deal we can still be in possession of the Ruhr if we play our cards right. If the Soviet Union moves to seize it she will appear as the aggressor and will have difficulty in rallying her people in support of such a war. But if we arm Germany we shall appear as the aggressors even if Stalin is the first to strike militarily. Why provoke the Soviet Union, especially when we know that we cannot stop its army?"

Hoover expects the rising revolutionary tide to embrace Europe soon and feels there is very little American arms can do to prevent it. Either the European bourgeoisie will be able to crush it with its own power, which is very unlikely, or the revolution will run its course and come into conflict with Stalinism. The Kremlin, both he and Taft assume, will encounter insurmountable difficulty in assimilating the powerful industrial proletariat of Western Germany and France. Either there will be strife on a broad scale or the Stalinist bureaucracy will crack from within. In other words, Hoover and Taft realize that the crisis of world capitalism is also the crisis of Stalinism. For that reason Hoover counsels watchful waiting: If the U.S. is well-armed, in complete control of the air and the seas, able to strike at a moment's notice, with its economy functioning smoothly and not overextended, the American spread-eagle can jump in for the kill. Here the dream of the American Century has a last spark of life.

Then there is always the possibility that like Hitler when he invaded the Soviet Union, Stalin might also pull a *faux pas*. The Kremlin in its haste to crush Tito might be tempted to undertake the risky venture of invading Yugoslavia, affording unpredictable opportunities for American imperialism.

In any case, realizing that only a short successful war can save capitalism, the Hoover-Taft faction is not yet ready to risk all on one throw of the dice.

### The Tactics of the Opposition

Hoover and Taft are serious politicians. They are resorting to every stratagem to have their point of view accepted because they realize that the stakes are high. Their main speeches were perfectly timed. Hoover opened up the debate while the Brussels conference of foreign ministers was in session. Taft delivered his talk in the Senate on the day Eisenhower departed for Europe. These master politicians spoke over the heads of the American capitalists, directly to the European bourgeoisie.

For this they were accused by Senator Connally, head of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, of shattering the confidence of the Europeans in American foreign policy. But it was precisely lack of confidence in Truman which impelled these capitalist statesmen to make their speeches. They told the foreign capitalists not to permit themselves to be trapped by the foolish and unrealistic plans of the Administration and the Pentagon. Taft went so far as to point out that acquiescence in the American blueprint for

arming Europe would lead to destruction of Europe's industrial plants. What he omitted was that his own policy would in the last analysis lead to the same results.

There is no gainsaying the fact that the addresses of Hoover and Taft have had a profound effect on the European bourgeoisie, especially the German, who might have been their allies in World War II had the policies of Hoover and Taft then prevailed. So, though in a minority at home they have already done much to impede the plans of the Administration. For, above all, they fear disaster, as Taft has repeated over and over again. Disaster in one of two ways: either immediate war for which they are quite unprepared, or retreat under pressure which would once and for all destroy the power and prestige of American imperialism. And fully sizing up their opponents, the Taft forces know the Administration is heading for such a debacle. Having completely committed itself the State Department will be pressured by forces beyond its control either toward war or humiliating retreat, thereby wrecking the very foundation of the system they are all so eager to preserve.

### The Factor of Mass Feelings

Fortunately for the Taft-Hoover group, at the moment the American masses as well as those of the entire world tend to their side in this dispute with Truman and his group. These crafty politicians have for a long time sought an issue with popular appeal. Now for the first time in more than two decades these Republican reactionaries can plump for their own class and at the same time get support from the masses who mistakenly think that their course leads away from war. In the absence of an independent labor party it is possible for Taft to channelize much of the mass discontent of the workers in this country against the headlong drive for war on the part of the Administration. All signs point to success unless the State Department by precipitate action has plunged this country into war before the next presidential elections.

As long as the American people are not able to prevent war with an independent leadership of their own, they will rally behind a section of the capitalist class that holds out promise of postponement of the war even for a short period. Despite the continuous campaign against appeasement and against a deal with Stalin, the American masses would be overjoyed if one were made. The bourgeoisie hesitates, knowing that Stalin has little control of the revolutionary forces that are buffeting both imperialism and Stalinism alike. Consequently the State Department fears the repercussions from the inevitable breakdown of any counter-revolutionary pact with the Kremlin. But deal or no deal, the people of this country in their present mood will overwhelmingly support any section of the capitalist class that seeks to stave off the dreaded catastrophe of war by shying away from unnecessarily provoking the Soviet Union.

This is the chief reason why Eisenhower's report of his European tour was so widely acclaimed. The general seems to have come up with the magic formula for building up a European army without provoking Moscow. In order to bolster confidence in the feasibility of his plan and sell it to the Atlantic Pact countries Eisenhower intends to send

some additional American troops abroad together with a huge supply of military equipment for the projected European army. A glimpse of fresh-faced G.I.'s and sparkling new materiel should imbue France and England with courage to set up additional divisions. Only after the Atlantic Pact allies will have gathered a sizeable army will they approach the German government on participation. With a better balance in the relationship of opposing forces there will be some possibility of convincing the German capitalists to take the risk. True, the plan calls for a delay in German rearmament but the time can be effectively used in laying a better political and economic groundwork for a western orientation on the part of the German capitalists. In the meantime it is hoped that the staging of atom bomb extravaganzas such as that in Nevada will cause the Kremlin to pause.

It is obvious that the danger to the Soviet Union is not immediate and the Kremlin will concentrate more on wooing the German capitalists by peaceful means rather

than by forcing the issue. Only in case of a breakdown in the projected four-power conference and of signs of a successful development of the Eisenhower plan for gradual armament will the alternative course be seriously weighed by Moscow. There is little likelihood, however, that Eisenhower will succeed in building an effective European fighting machine. The European masses will refuse to bear the burden of still larger armies and this in turn will have its repercussions on the people of this country, who are growing restive over the war plans of the Administration.

While the American statesmen argue for their points of view, it will be the world masses who will really decide the issues. It is far more likely, for example, that the reawakened and enlightened German proletariat will settle the question of German rearmament and the building of a West European army than either Truman, Hoover or Eisenhower, or any of their capitalist supporters. Nor, it must be remembered, has the American working class even begun to make its own voice heard in this "Great Debate."

# Economic Roots of the Labor Crisis

By ARNE SWABECK

American bourgeois economists tend to regard with contempt the Marxist analysis of the objective laws of capitalist production. They look upon it as antiquated, or, at any rate, as not applicable to economic developments in the United States. But an affirmation of the contrary is clearly indicated in such denials. And life itself furnishes us with a complete verification of Marxism. The unresolved and growing contradictions of American capitalism, above all, have impelled these sycophants of the ruling class to shy away from a scientific analysis of the present economic system of exploitation and to limit themselves to the mere presentation and classification of data, quite after the fashion of the Linnean botany.

With rare exceptions the method of thought in this field remains empirical and, at its worst, descends to downright deception and falsification. Bourgeois thinkers tend to obscure or deny the realities of class society in order to justify the established prerogatives of bourgeois private property and to disguise its predatory character. As a result economics, especially in the United States, has remained strangely outside the current of modern scientific advance.

## Essence of Marxist Analysis

Yet the actual process of our economic development, precisely because of the high technological level so amply illustrated by the empiric data submitted, offers the fullest confirmation of the analysis made by Marx. Nowhere else has this been so clearly demonstrated. Economic developments in the United States have become capitalism's most perfect expression.

The very heart of the analysis made by Marx is the labor theory of value which Marx elevated from its crude

beginnings under classical bourgeois political economy to the high plane of scientific precision. Wages, prices, rent, interest and profits center around this basic regulator of capitalist economy. Only the socially necessary labor-time can serve as the exact determinant of exchange values. All commodities produced by labor have one property in common: they are exchanged on the basis of the quantity of human labor expended upon them. Under capitalism, labor power itself becomes a commodity which is bought on the market by the owners of the means of production. Like all other commodities it is evaluated according to the quantity of labor invested in it, i.e., invested in the means of subsistence necessary to maintain the laborer and his family, and to reproduce his labor power.

But labor power, says Marx, is "a commodity whose use value possesses the peculiar property of being a source of value." In the process of production labor creates new values over and above what it receives for its own maintenance. This is the portion which Marx calls surplus value.

Capitalist profits are realized surplus value. Profits are at the disposal of capitalism, through its appropriation of the products of labor, for conversion into capital; and profits furnish the basis for the further accumulation of capital.

## Rise of U.S. Economy

Despite the interruptions of recurrent crises during past decades, the rapidly mounting capitalization of appropriated surplus values in the United States made possible an advance in a uniformly upward curve to constantly new and higher peaks of prosperity for the capitalists and there was even a limited trickling down of benefits to various

strata of the general population. This process permitted the rapid mechanization of old industries, the tapping of new raw material sources, the building of new industries and the industrialization of new regions, providing employment for an ever-growing labor force. In addition, surplus capital became available for investments abroad at a higher rate of profit. American capitalism found exceptional opportunities for its development on a virgin continent. A constantly growing and stable internal market favored the most colossal expansion of its productive apparatus. Dwarfish and circumscribed individual manufacture was transformed into the mighty social means of production so well illustrated by the modern assembly line.

However, while the means of production and production itself had in essence become social, they remained subject to the individual (capitalist) form of appropriation.

What is this development if not a graphic illustration of the process as it was analyzed by Marx? With the incentive of ever greater profits as its motivating force, capitalism strives incessantly to reduce the cost of labor by enlarging the scale of production. New and more modern factories appear equipped with the latest in labor-saving machinery. Constant capital (equipment, materials) grows at a more rapid rate than variable capital (labor, wages). The organic composition of capital becomes higher. This is what has secured for capitalism in the United States an exceptionally high labor productivity.

### Labor Productivity and Surplus Value

Thus from 1850 to 1929 it is estimated that labor productivity rose nearly 300 percent. More recent data, however, illustrate this upward curve more concretely. "Over the twelve years, 1929 to 1941, the nation's output per man-hour increased 34%," reports the U.S. Department of Commerce. This is an average annual increase of 3 percent. And, according to data of the President's Council of Economic Advisers, during the succeeding nine years, 1941 to 1950, labor productivity mounted another 34 percent, or as much as in the previous twelve years. This represents an average annual increase of almost 4 percent.

This growing labor productivity has permitted a constantly greater realization of surplus value. But it is notorious that statistical data made public by the major industrial concerns are not submitted in order to present a true picture of the status of capitalist production. Elements of political expediency have entered the realm of statistics as well as the realm of economic theory. Figures submitted tend to conceal more than they reveal. An accurate account of surplus value appropriated by the monopoly corporations might stimulate demands for higher taxes, or worse yet, demands for higher wages. Nevertheless, by using the method established by Lewis Corey in his important work, *The Decline of American Capitalism* — accepting surplus value as being roughly equal to total value of output less wages paid production workers, cost of raw materials and fuels, and depreciation of fixed capital — we arrive, by using source material contained in the *Statistical Abstract of the United States*, at the following approximation of the magnitude of surplus value realized by the manufacturers:

For the year 1914 surplus value amounted to \$5.4 billions; for the year 1929, the height of the pre-depression boom, \$18.7 billions; for 1933, the low point of the great depression, \$7.7 billions. For 1947 (the latest year for which complete figures are available, no record being available for the highest point in more recent "boom" years) realized surplus value reached the amount of \$41.8 billions!

Even allowing for the monetary depreciation during the period covered, the growing magnitude of surplus value is apparent. But the *rate* of surplus value, i.e., the ratio of surplus value to wages paid, records a decline over the same period, as could be expected. In 1914, the *rate* of surplus value was 142, in 1929 it was 172, in 1933 it was 157, and in 1947 it was 138.

### Basis of Ruling Class Policy

But the capitalist appropriation of surplus value is the root source of exploitation and inequality. It is the axis around which the class struggle unfolds. American history in this respect also brings verification of the analysis made by Marx. Every page of our history registers the impact of the antagonisms of class society and the dynamics of class conflicts. Nowhere else have the contradictions engendered by the socialization of the productive process and its bourgeois appropriation reached such titanic proportions. The explosions which are bound to ensue from this relationship were delayed by the exceptional opportunities available for American capitalism only to erupt later with so much greater volcanic force.

Rising labor productivity accounts for the wealth accumulated by past generations. While this wealth is being recklessly dissipated by its bourgeois custodians, the mounting labor productivity still remains a seemingly inexhaustible source to draw on. It is the prime factor which has up to now made it possible for American capitalism to maintain a relatively high standard of living at home and to embark on a "Welfare State" policy. In addition it provided an available surplus for the injection of a blood transfusion into the sclerotic veins of the decaying capitalist system in the rest of the world.

For the bourgeois demagogues the foreign "aid" program became a new weapon in their arsenal of deception to disguise the predatory character of American capitalism. "The United States has no imperialist designs anywhere in the world," they proclaim on every occasion. They want to make it appear that the motivating force for the export of capital is no longer to seek returns at a higher rate of profit by exploitation of cheap labor. Aid is furnished generously to capitalist competitors in the world market. Manifestly this would rule out any struggle for the redivision of the world. The great resources and the great accomplishments of American "free enterprise," reinforced by its magnanimity, would appear to supersede the fundamental ideas of both Marx and Lenin.

### Real Aim of U.S. Imperialism

But the real situation presents an entirely different picture. American imperialism arrived too late on the stage of world history to find ready-made markets for investment and exploitation. Colonial peoples were already

making it clear through large scale revolts that they would no longer accept the status of colonial exploitation. In addition, the capitalist economy was already suffering from acute paralysis and disintegration. This general crisis of the world market, the very decline and decay of the world capitalist system as a whole, compelled its American sector to utilize its resources of accumulated surplus capital, in the first instance, in an attempt to arrest this disintegration and paralysis. American capitalism found itself compelled to attempt to restore the shattered equilibrium of world economy. But it did so only to secure a beachhead in preparation for a more gigantic onslaught for complete and undisputed domination and exploitation of the whole world market — including, of course, the areas behind the so-called Iron Curtain. These are the real objectives of the Marshall Plan and its supplementary world rearmament plan. And no efforts have been spared to attempt to make the beneficiary nations completely subservient to the overall needs of this strategic objective.

All the essential imperialist characteristics of the North American colossus not only remain, but become constantly reinforced. Monopoly capitalism, resting on centralized command, has advanced to full maturity and supremacy. At this very moment the directors of the great industrial and financial corporations are extending their sway and their control over all the economic, political and military organs of the imperialist enterprise. And these pirates are firmly convinced that the overwhelming economic preponderance concentrated in their hands can find its full realization only through war. A normal, stable peacetime economy is now only a memory of the past.

The epoch of capitalist decline and decay is also the epoch of wars and revolutions. In face of the gigantic revolutionary upheavals in Asia the whole capitalist world economy is now being geared for war under American supervision and command. Economic, political and military strategic aims are integrated and merged into one single pattern. The struggle for capitalist survival rises to a higher stage. And this struggle manifests itself most acutely in the United States precisely because of the enormity of the contradictions generated by its highly developed productive apparatus.

### **The Insoluble Problem**

Constant expansion is a prime necessity for the continuation of capitalist survival. But the American bourgeoisie faces this dilemma: the constant rise in labor productivity takes place in the face of a declining rate of capitalist expansion.

Approximately at the time of the first world war this rate of expansion began its downward curve. It was worldwide in character and it accounted in no small measure for the severity of the great depression. That depression was never really liquidated. It was overcome, however, by the great spurt in production linked to the requirements of World War II. Total industrial capacity expanded almost fifty percent; and, as already noted, the growing productivity of labor was further accelerated. Productive capacity was estimated in a survey made by the Twentieth Century Fund, Inc., to be two-thirds above that of the banner year

of 1929. But during the war period, production for war accounted for as much as about forty-five percent of total output. This did not serve as an element of capital expansion capable of absorbing, on a permanent basis, a new and growing labor force — as had been the case during the earlier decades of economic advance in the United States. Nor did it provide for new industrialization anywhere else in the capitalist world.

The problem of finding new, adequate and lasting markets for the gigantic productive capacity thus built up remained unresolved. Moreover, there has been no significant capital expansion since. Consequently, after the immediate post-war period of catching up with accumulated consumers' shortages the latent elements of crisis assumed a more malignant form.

### **Government Intervention: the "Welfare State"**

Government intervention had to come to the rescue of private capitalism to generate and set into motion the forces that overcame the great depression of the Thirties, at first in the form of the New Deal program and later through the war drive. Private capitalism had exhausted entirely its progressive qualities. Government intervention has remained a necessity ever since. Moreover, the basic contradiction of capitalism — between social production and private (bourgeois) appropriation — has become so deep as to alter the entire course of the American economy.

After the end of the second world war, government intervention appeared in a new garb — the policy of the "Welfare State." Farm subsidies were upheld; insurance to mortgage brokers intended to stimulate construction was extended; "social security" was expanded and benefits increased. Imposing plans for large-scale public works expenditures such as national superhighway construction, flood controls, water works, schools and hospitals, in order to maintain production at full capacity, received considerable attention. The *U.S. News and World Report* said at that time: "Official planners estimate that a shelf of needed public works at this time could total as much as 127 billion dollars." Government intervention set patterns for wage increases and appeared to encourage social welfare and pension plans, ostensibly in an effort to maintain the level of purchasing power of the masses.

Labor made some actual gains; but these gains appear in inverse ratio to the promises emanating from the "Welfare State" policy. The more paltry the present gains the more glittering the promises for the future. Thus, President Truman forecast, in his Message to Congress in 1950, a trillion dollar economy by the year 2000, out of which the average American family could expect an annual income of about \$12,000. Of course, the President made a slight miscalculation in assuming that the fruits of a trillion dollar economy would be distributed equally. The President went on, apparently in all seriousness, to forecast a gain of about \$1,000 in income per family by 1955 which "would go far," he said, toward "the complete elimination of poverty." It only remains for the President to explain how his wage freeze of 1951 will speed up this process. . .

The "Welfare State" policy embodies the most sanguine dreams of bourgeois liberals, middle class intellectuals,

Social Democrats and labor bureaucrats alike — at least to the extent that such people are capable of sanguine dreams. It embodies their hope of a more balanced distribution of national income and a consequent softening of class contradictions. But these hopes fly in the face of reality.

### Declining Rate of Consumption

The analysis made by Marx, that capitalism develops the forces of production more rapidly than the forces of consumption, was long ago proved to be correct. The latter are subject to different laws of development. Surplus value created by labor in the process of production represents nothing else but unpaid labor. This surplus value is appropriated by the owners of the means of production in the form of profits, and largely converted into capital. Only actual wages received by the workers serve as purchasing power to satisfy their needs as consumers. This disproportionate growth of constant capital relative to variable capital imposes limitations on the purchasing power. Wages always lag behind profits and wages always fall relative to output and profits. Consumer income rises at a slower rate than investment income. This measurably restricts the growth of the market. Even under the most favorable circumstances consumption of necessity lags behind production. Concretely this is expressed in the fact that in 1929, personal consumption expenditures were 75.9 percent of the gross national product, against 69.8 percent in 1948.

Ominous portents for American economy are implicit in these figures. The internal market, the primary sustaining factor of capitalist expansion in the past, is now definitely declining. Consumers of houses, automobiles and the variety of necessities of life can buy only a constantly diminishing part of all that the huge industrial capacity is equipped to produce. A declining *rate* of consuming ability correspondingly reduces the need for output of capital goods. The tendency toward excess industrial capacity in relation to the declining market, so pronounced during the Twenties and Thirties and measurably increased by the huge addition of plant during World War II, now appears as the basic critical factor. These are the elements of crisis of overproduction of capital so thoroughly analyzed by Marx.

"The last cause of all crises," he said, "always remains the poverty and restricted consumption of the masses as compared to the tendency of capitalist production to develop the productive forces in such a way that only the absolute power of consumption of the entire society would be their limit."

### "Welfare State" Becomes "War State"

However, to develop such a power of consumption was not at all the real objective of the "Welfare State" policy. As early as 1948-49 elements of a crisis of overproduction reappeared. Only a stepping up of armament outlays, stimulated by the demands of the cold war, postponed a confrontation of the problem. The American bourgeoisie had no intention of submitting to the slightest curtailment of its lion's share of the fruits of the economic system. It remained hostile to all of the ideas of the "Welfare State" policy, particularly its social features. Spokesmen for the bourgeoisie denounced it as "creeping socialism."

So when the political crisis arising from the military disaster in Korea began to unfold, monopoly capitalism forced a complete turn of the rudder.

This did not invalidate the essence of government intervention — the effort to maintain full production. Only the character of the intervention changed quickly in response to the new turn. The grandiose projects and plans of the "Welfare State" were superseded by the program of armaments production. What else does this prove but the fact that in the final analysis relations of production are summed up in class relations?

The materialization of plans for public works projects and all the features of "creeping socialism" would tend to strengthen the labor movement and correspondingly weaken monopoly capitalism. An armaments economy, on the other hand, strengthens capitalism at labor's expense. Monopoly capitalism has no objection to government intervention. The only question of serious account in its calculations is: for the benefit of which class does this intervention occur? Aside from exceptionally lush profits, the armaments economy aids the further concentration of wealth in the hands of the monopoly capitalists. Above all, it is the one important prerequisite for the imperialist aim of world conquest which can find its full realization only through war.

Truly the only alternatives offered by the capitalist system of production are now clearly posed as depression or war. This is the supreme expression of its decadence.

### Class Nature of War Program

The program of armaments production, rising to ever higher levels of expenditures in utter disregard of the burdens imposed on present and future generations, may tend to postpone the actual manifestations of the crisis of overproduction. But it cannot provide the qualitative expansion necessary to sustain the future economic equilibrium. It produces no use-values that contribute to the wealth of the nation. On the contrary, the measures required to carry through this program must of necessity impose further limitations on the internal market. The basis will be laid for a crisis of more devastating proportions.

What the above-mentioned measures are to be, the predatory monopoly capitalists have already decided. They are determined to exert new and greater pressure to increase not only the magnitude but also the rate of surplus value extracted from labor. An important part of labor's purchasing power is needed to finance the armaments program of the bourgeoisie. A drastic reduction in the standard of living of the working class flows inevitably from this premise.

President Truman's emergency proclamation paved the way for the many direct and indirect measures projected to reduce the standard of living, such as the wage-freeze, extension of the work-week without overtime pay, job-freeze, higher taxes and the austerity of scarcities in consumer goods. The armaments program itself implies further credit expansion by bank loans that create money out of thin air which flows into the economic structure unmatched by the products of labor which are destined for armaments — in other words, mounting inflation. By the realization of



these measures the trick will have been performed. Labor's share of the productive process will experience a further drop in relation to its total output. Conversely, what labor produces over and above what it receives for its own maintenance, will have been increased. The proportion of unpaid labor rises, the proportion of paid labor falls. The rate of surplus value is increased.

For the development of the armaments program the tasks of government intervention are thus clearly defined. The Marxist evaluation of the role and function of the state in relation to conflicting class interests within bourgeois society is fully confirmed. "The modern state," said Engels, "whatever its form, is an essentially capitalist machine, the ideal collective body of all capitalists." If anything needs to be added today, it is only the fact that direct control of the state by monopoly capitalism is now more complete.

### **Perspective of Social Struggles**

The directors of the monopoly concerns, in their desperate choice of a war program, leave nothing to chance. From Charles E. Wilson, the head of General Electric, and now Mobilization Director, all the way down the line, they have taken complete charge of the execution of the program. They have done so, conscious of the fact that the struggle for capitalist survival permits less and less concessions on the home front.

All of these factors will combine to exert a terrific pressure on the working class that must inevitably explode in widespread resistance. On the other hand, the acute character of the present economic, political and military conjuncture will thrust the American bourgeoisie into attempts to deprive the working class of all possibility of initiative and independence of action by limiting, if not destroying, its concrete democratic rights. Militarization of the economy and the Garrison State with forced labor drafts, are already clearly indicated. The serious reverses inflicted on its position of world dominance will impel the American bourgeoisie toward greater ruthlessness at home. Above all, the increasing pressure of its own contradictions leaves the capitalist class no other way out than to attempt to defeat working class resistance and make the workers submit to all the consequences of the war program.

We can remain confident that the American workers will fight; they will fight most fiercely to maintain conditions and rights gained as a result of long and severe struggles. It is precisely the attempt to lower their standard of living and to curtail their democratic rights which becomes the greatest spur to resistance.

### **Role of Labor Bureaucracy in Economy**

The realities of this whole situation lead to the conclusion that developments are now definitely reaching a turning point which will be reflected, above all, in sharpened class relations at home carrying the impact of deep repercussions within the trade union movement. America is entering a stage of profound social crisis.

The more or less stable equilibrium of class relations, which American capitalism has been able to maintain up to now, was sustained by its ability to give concessions to labor. We leave aside here the question of major inter-

ruptions, such as the great upheaval out of which the CIO emerged. During these interruptions the equilibrium was shattered for a time, only to reappear on a new basis, the capitalists having to deal with large and powerful new mass organizations. Unquestionably the role of the labor leadership became an important factor in this long continued relative stability. The union leadership grew fat and capitalist-minded on concessions gained and became transformed into a bureaucracy concerned above all with its own vested interests in capitalist enterprise. Exceptions to this rule occurred on the part of certain leaders only in regard to the degree and tempo of this transformation. On the whole the labor bureaucracy, in the course of its sway and development, assumed the characteristics of an intermediary historic force serving to impede the progress of labor toward consciousness of its class position. Objectively and subjectively it became a force of retrogression. It became a great burden of overhead expenses upon the working class. In the final analysis the existence of a labor bureaucracy is therefore itself an outgrowth of capitalist relations of production.

Because of their vested interest in the capitalist enterprise, the labor bureaucrats are incapable of an independent militant policy of class action. They accept consciously in theory and practice the policy of class collaboration. Only on this basis is it possible to understand their dull-witted, craven and mediocre character. Currently the policy of class collaboration is expressed on the highest political level in more or less complete reliance on the capitalist state to set the patterns of strictly limited wage increases, social welfare and pension plans in return for the bureaucracy's support of all major bourgeois world enterprises such as the Marshall Plan, Truman Doctrine, Atlantic Pact, and rearmament. And it is this policy of class collaboration which has up to now constituted one of the greatest deterrents to working class political development.

### **Labor Crisis Reflects Crisis of System**

The conclusion is inescapable: the capitalist onslaught at home will unleash the forces of class struggle which will set this deterrent aside. The ensuing struggles will strike terrific blows against the class collaboration policy at its most vulnerable point. As the working class moves forward in resistance against the onslaught on its standard of living and its democratic rights, the labor bureaucracy faces the alternative: to break its reliance upon and support of the bourgeois state, or to rupture relations with its own rank and file membership.

Whatever its decision may be, one thing remains assured: the social impact of this bureaucracy on the further development of class relations will henceforth be greatly impaired. Up to now it had drawn whatever strength and power it possessed essentially from the conditions that made it possible for capitalism to give concessions to labor. The dilemma now confronting this bureaucracy is thus a reflection of the crisis of capitalism itself. However, a power and strength stemming essentially from capitalist con-

cessions can by no means be maintained, let alone reinforced, when the decline and decay of capitalism compels the rulers to turn toward more ruthless exploitation of labor and toward the destruction of labor's democratic rights.

The projected capitalist onslaught poses the task before the organized workers of replacing this leadership with one which is thoroughly conscious of the interests of the working class and thinks and acts accordingly. The perspective before the labor movement does not provide a substantial or lasting middle ground. Only a new, class conscious leadership will provide the necessary corollary to the turning point in American economic development. The great quantitative growth of the labor movement will

really begin to take on new, qualitative characteristics. The labor movement will rise to a new and higher stage.

Every action of the government to reduce the working class standard of living and to curtail its democratic rights will of necessity intensify already deep-seated dissatisfaction with the American imperialist adventure in Korea, and growing distrust of the present foreign policy. Every move of the ruling class will provide evidence of the fact that the capitalist system has failed to justify its further existence. The ground will thus be prepared for the coming working class battle for control of the political state. That battle will be the beginning of the fundamental, socialist transformation of society the world over.

*From the Arsenal of Marxism*

## If America Should Go Communist

By **LEON TROTSKY**

**The campaign against Marxist ideas sponsored by the capitalist witchhunters today aims to implant the false impression that Communism is completely alien to American life and opposed to the welfare of the American people. In the Thirties, during the rapid spread of anti-capitalist feelings following the Great Depression, there was considerable popular interest in the prospects of a Communist America. On this account the editors of Liberty Magazine turned to Leon Trotsky for a bird's-eye view of what the Communist future holds for the United States.**

**Trotsky's contribution, addressed to a broad public infected with anti-Communist prejudices and repelled by Stalinism, sought to show what far-reaching avenues of progress would be opened up by a victorious socialist revolution in the world's most advanced country. This article, published in the March 23, 1935 Liberty Magazine, called forth much debate in the press at that time.**

\* \* \*

Should America go Communist as a result of the difficulties and problems which your capitalist social order is unable to solve, it will discover that Communism, far from being an intolerable bureaucratic tyranny and individual regimentation, will be the means of greater individual liberty and shared abundance.

At present most Americans regard Communism solely in the light of the experience of the Soviet Union. They fear lest Sovietism in America would produce the same material results as it has brought for the culturally backward peoples of the Soviet Union.

They fear lest Communism should try to fit them to a bed of Procrustes, and point to the bulwark of Anglo-Saxon conservatism as an insuperable obstacle even to possibly desirable reforms. They argue that Great Britain and Japan would undertake military intervention against the American Soviets. They shudder lest Americans be regimented in their habits of dress and diet; be compelled to subsist on famine rations; read stereotyped official propaganda in the newspapers; serve as rubber stamps for decisions arrived at without their active participation; keep

their thoughts to themselves and loudly praise their Soviet leaders in public, through fear of imprisonment and exile.

They fear monetary inflation, bureaucratic tyranny, and intolerable red tape in obtaining the necessities of life. They fear soulless standardization in the arts and sciences, as well as in the daily necessities of life. They fear that all political spontaneity and the presumed freedom of the press will be destroyed by the dictatorship of a monstrous bureaucracy. And they shudder at the thought of being forced into an uncomprehended glibness in Marxian dialectic and disciplined social philosophies. They fear, in a word, that Soviet America will become the counterpart of what they have been told Soviet Russia looks like.

Actually American Soviets will be as different from the Russian Soviets as the United States of President Roosevelt differs from the Russian Empire of Czar Nicholas II. Yet Communism can come in America only through revolution, just as independence and democracy came in America. The American temperament is energetic and violent, and it will insist on breaking a good many dishes and upsetting a good many apple carts before Communism is firmly established. Americans are enthusiasts and sportsmen before they are specialists and statesmen, and it would be contrary to the American tradition to make a major change without choosing sides and cracking heads.

### **Billionaires Will Force Showdown**

However, the American Communist Revolution will be insignificant compared to the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia, in terms of your national wealth and population, no matter how great its comparative cost. That is because civil war of a revolutionary nature isn't fought by the handful of men at the top — the 5 or 10 percent who own nine-tenths of American wealth: this handful could recruit its counter-revolutionary armies only from among the lower middle classes. Even so, the revolution could easily attract

them to its banner by showing that support of the Soviets alone offers them the prospect of salvation.

Everybody below this group is already economically prepared for Communism. The depression has ravaged your working class and has dealt a crushing blow to the farmers, who had already been injured by the long agricultural decline of the postwar decade. There is no reason why these groups should oppose determined resistance to the revolution; they have nothing to lose, providing, of course, that the revolutionary leaders adopt a farsighted and moderate policy toward them.

Who else will fight against Communism? Your corporal's guard of billionaires and multimillionaires? Your Mellons, Morgans, Fords, and Rockefellers? They will cease struggling as soon as they fail to find other people to fight for them.

The American Soviet Government will take firm possession of the commanding heights of your business system: the banks, the key industries, and the transportation and communication systems. It will then give the farmers, the small tradespeople and business men a good long time to think things over and see how well the nationalized section of industry is working.

Here is where the American Soviets can produce real miracles. "Technocracy" can come true only under Communism, when the dead hands of private property rights and private profits are lifted from your industrial system. The most daring proposals of the Hoover commission on standardization and rationalization will seem childish compared to the new possibilities let loose by American Communism.

National industry will be organized along the line of the conveyor belt in your modern continuous-production automotive factories. Scientific planning can be lifted out of the individual factory and applied to your entire economic system. The results will be stupendous.

Costs of production will be cut to 20 percent, or less, of their present figure. This in turn would rapidly increase your farmers' purchasing power.

To be sure, the American Soviets would establish their own gigantic farm enterprises, as schools of voluntary collectivization. Your farmers could easily calculate whether it was to their individual advantage to remain as isolated links or to join the public chain.

The same method would be used to draw small businesses and industries into the national organization of industry. By Soviet control of raw materials, credits, and quotas of orders, these secondary industries could be kept solvent until they were gradually and without compulsion sucked into the socialized business system.

Without compulsion! The American Soviets would not need to resort to the drastic measures which circumstances have often imposed upon the Russians. In the United States, through the science of publicity and advertising, you have means for winning the support of your middle class which were beyond the reach of the Soviets of backward Russia with its vast majority of pauperized and illiterate peasants. This, in addition to your technical equipment and your wealth, is the greatest asset of your coming Communist

Revolution. Your revolution will be smoother in character than ours; you will not waste your energies and resources in costly social conflicts after the main issues have been decided; and you will move ahead so much the more rapidly in consequence.

Even the intensity and devotion of religious sentiment in America will not prove an obstacle to the revolution. If one assumes the perspective of Soviets in America, none of the psychological brakes will prove firm enough to retard the pressure of the social crisis. This has been demonstrated more than once in history. Besides, it should not be forgotten that the Gospels themselves contain some pretty explosive aphorisms.

As to the comparatively few opponents of the Soviet Revolution, one can trust to American inventive genius. It may well be that you will take your unconvinced millionaires and send them to some picturesque island, rent-free for life, where they can do as they please.

You can do this safely, for you will not need to fear foreign interventions. Japan, Great Britain, and the other capitalistic countries which intervened in Russia couldn't do anything but take American Communism lying down. As a matter of fact the victory of Communism in America—the stronghold of capitalism—will cause Communism to spread to other countries. Japan will probably have joined the Communistic ranks even before the establishment of the American Soviets. The same is true of Great Britain.

In any case, it would be a crazy idea to send His Britannic Majesty's fleet against Soviet America, even as a raid against the southern and more conservative half of your continent. It would be hopeless and would never get any farther than a second-rate military escapade.

Within a few weeks or months of the establishment of the American Soviets, Pan-Americanism would be a political reality.

The governments of Central and South America would be pulled into your federation like iron filings to a magnet. So would Canada. The popular movements in these countries would be so strong that they would force this great unifying process within a short period and at insignificant costs. I am ready to bet that the first anniversary of the American Soviets would find the Western Hemisphere transformed into the Soviet United States of North, Central, and South America, with its capital at Panama. Thus for the first time the Monroe Doctrine would have a complete and positive meaning in world affairs, although not the one foreseen by its author.

In spite of the complaints of some of your arch-conservatives, Roosevelt is not preparing for a Soviet transformation of the United States.

The NRA aims not to destroy but to strengthen the foundations of American capitalism, by overcoming your business difficulties. Not the Blue Eagle but the difficulties which the Blue Eagle is powerless to overcome will bring about Communism in America. The "radical" professors of your Brain Trust are not revolutionists: they are only frightened conservatives. Your President abhors "systems" and "generalities." But a Soviet government

is the greatest of all possible systems, a gigantic generality in action.

The average man doesn't like systems or generalities, either. It is the task of your Communist statesmen to make the system deliver the concrete goods which the average man desires: his food, cigars, amusements, his freedom to choose his own neckties, his own house, and his own automobile. It will be easy to give him these comforts in Soviet America.

Most Americans have been misled by the fact that in USSR we had to build whole new basic industries from the ground up. Such a thing could not happen in America, where you are already compelled to cut down on your farm area and to reduce your industrial production. As a matter of fact your tremendous technological equipment has been paralyzed by the crisis and already clamors to be put to use. You will be able to make a rapid step-up of consumption by your people the starting point of your economic revival.

You are prepared to do this as is no other country. Nowhere else has the study of the internal market reached such intensity as in the United States. It has been done by your banks, trusts, individual business men, merchants, traveling salesmen, and farmers as part of their stock in trade. Your Soviet Government will simply abolish all trade secrets, will combine all the findings of these researches for individual profit, and will transform them into a scientific system of economic planning. In this your government will be helped by the existence of a large class of cultured and critical consumers. By combining the nationalized key industries, your private businesses and democratic consumer co-operation, you will quickly develop a highly flexible system for serving the needs of your population.

This system will be made to work, not by bureaucracy and not by policemen, but by hard cold cash.

Your almighty dollar will play a principal part in making your new Soviet system work. It is a great mistake to try to mix a "planned economy" with a "managed currency." Your money must act as regulator with which to measure the success or failure of your planning.

Your "radical" professors are dead wrong in their devotion to "managed money." It is an academic idea which could easily wreck your entire system of distribution and production. That is the great lesson to be derived from the Soviet Union, where bitter necessity has been converted into official virtue in the monetary realm.

There the lack of a stable gold ruble is one of the main causes of our many economic troubles and catastrophes. It is impossible to regulate wages, prices, and quality of goods without a firm monetary system. An unstable ruble in a Soviet system is like having variable molds in a conveyor-belt factory. It won't work.

Only when Socialism succeeds in substituting administrative control for money will it be possible to abandon a stable gold currency. Then money will become ordinary paper slips, like trolley or theater tickets. As Socialism advances these slips will also disappear, and control over

individual consumption—whether by money or administration—will no longer be necessary when there is more than enough of everything for everybody!

Such a time has not yet come, though America will certainly reach it before any other country. Until then, the only way to reach such a state of development is to retain an effective regulator and measure for the working of your system. As a matter of fact, during the first few years a planned economy needs sound money even more than did old-fashioned capitalism. The professor who regulates the monetary unit with the aim of regulating the whole business system is like the man who tried to lift both his feet off the ground at the same time.

Soviet America will possess supplies of gold big enough to stabilize the dollar—a priceless asset. In Russia we have been expanding our industrial plant by 20 and 30 percent a year; but—owing to a weak ruble—we have not been able to distribute this increase effectively. This is partly because we have allowed our bureaucracy to subject our monetary system to administrative one-sidedness. You will be spared this evil. As a result you will greatly surpass us both in increased production and distribution, leading to a rapid advance in the comfort and welfare of your population.

In all this you will not need to imitate our standardized production for our pitiable mass consumers. We have taken over from Czarist Russia a pauper's heritage, a culturally undeveloped peasantry with a low standard of living. We had to build our factories and dams at the expense of our consumers. We have had continual monetary inflation and a monstrous bureaucracy.

Soviet America will not have to imitate our bureaucratic methods. Among us the lack of the bare necessities has caused an intense scramble for an extra loaf of bread, an extra yard of cloth by every one. In this struggle our bureaucracy steps forward as a conciliator, as an all-powerful court of arbitration. You, on the other hand, are much wealthier and would have little difficulty in supplying all of your people with all of the necessities of life. Moreover, your needs, tastes, and habits would never permit your bureaucracy to divide the national income. Instead, when you organize your society to produce for human needs rather than private profits, your entire population will group itself around new trends and groups, which will struggle with one another and prevent an overweening bureaucracy from imposing itself upon them.

You can thus avoid growth of bureaucratism by the practice of soviets—that is to say, democracy: the most flexible form of government yet developed. Soviet organization cannot achieve miracles but must simply reflect the will of the people. With us the Soviets have been bureaucratized as a result of the political monopoly of a single party, which has itself become a bureaucracy. This situation resulted from the exceptional difficulties of Socialist pioneering in a poor and backward country.

The American Soviets will be full-blooded and vigorous, without need or opportunity for such measures as circumstances imposed upon Russia. Your unregenerate capitalists will, of course, find no place for themselves in the

new setup. It is hard to imagine Henry Ford as the head of the Detroit Soviet.

Yet a wide struggle between interests, groups, and ideas is not only conceivable—it is inevitable. One-year, five-year, ten-year plans of business development; schemes for national education; construction of new basic lines of transportation; the transformation of the farms; the program for improving the technological and cultural equipment of Latin America; a program for stratosphere communication; eugenics—all of these will arouse controversy, vigorous electoral struggle, and passionate debate in the newspapers and at public meetings.

For Soviet America will not imitate the monopoly of the press by the heads of Soviet Russia's bureaucracy. While Soviet America would nationalize all printing plants, paper mills, and means of distribution, this would be a purely negative measure. It would simply mean that private capital will no longer be allowed to decide what publications should be established, whether they should be progressive or reactionary, "wet" or "dry," puritanical or pornographic. Soviet America will have to find a new solution for the question of how the power of the press is to function in a Socialist regime. It might be done on the basis of proportional representation for the votes in each Soviet election.

Thus the right of each group of citizens to use the power of the press would depend on their numerical strength—the same principle being applied to the use of meeting halls, allotment of time on the air, and so forth.

Thus the management and policy of publications would be decided not by individual checkbooks but by group ideas. This may take little account of numerically small but important groups, but it simply means that each new idea will be compelled, as throughout history, to prove its right to existence.

Rich Soviet America can set aside vast funds for research and invention, discoveries and experiments in every field. You won't neglect your bold architects and sculptors, your unconventional poets and audacious philosophers.

In fact, the Soviet Yankees of the future will give a lead to Europe in those very fields where Europe has hitherto been your master. Europeans have little conception of the power of technology to influence human

destiny and have adopted an attitude of sneering superiority toward "Americanism," particularly since the crisis. Yet Americanism marks the true dividing line between the Middle Ages and the modern world.

Hitherto America's conquest of nature has been so violent and passionate that you have had no time to modernize your philosophies or to develop your own artistic forms. Hence you have been hostile to the doctrines of Hegel, Marx and Darwin. The burning of Darwin's works by the Baptists of Tennessee is only a clumsy reflection of the American dislike for the doctrines of evolution. This attitude is not confined to your pulpits. It is still part of your general mental make-up.

Your atheists as well as your Quakers are determined rationalists. And your rationalism itself is weakened by empiricism and moralism. It has none of the merciless vitality of the great European rationalists. So your philosophical method is even more antiquated than your economic system and your political institutions.

Today, quite unprepared, you are being forced to face those social contradictions which grow up unsuspected in every society. You have conquered nature by means of the tools which your inventive genius has created, only to find that your tools have all but destroyed you. Contrary to all your hopes and desires, your unheard-of wealth has produced unheard-of misfortunes. You have discovered that social development does not follow a simple formula. Hence you have been thrust into the school of the dialectic—to stay.

There is no turning back from it to the mode of thinking and acting prevalent in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries.

While the romantic numskulls of Nazi Germany are dreaming of restoring the old race of Europe's Dark Forest to its original purity, or rather its original filth, you Americans, after taking a firm grip on your economic machinery and your culture, will apply genuine scientific methods to the problem of eugenics. Within a century, out of your melting pot of races there will come a new breed of men—the first worthy of the name of Man.

One final prophecy: In the third year of Soviet rule in America you will no longer chew gum!

## The Lysenko Case

By R. H. MONROE and JOSEPH HANSEN

(Continued from last issue)

### IV.

How do new varieties arise? How do they transmit their new organs and functions to their young? This has been the central problem of evolution since Darwin's *Origin of Species* appeared in 1859, the same year as Karl Marx's *Critique of Political Economy*.

Gregor Mendel, an Austrian monk and part-time mathematician and plant experimenter, made the first real

advance. Though his results, showing that different characteristics do not "blend" in heredity, were published in 1866 in an obscure journal, they did not become known in the world of science until 1900.

Meanwhile biology had made other important advances. The "cell" whose discovery had been popularized by Schleiden and Schwann in the 1830's, quickened interest in microscopic work. Everything that could be sliced was

carefully scrutinized. With parallel progress in physics and chemistry, new biological sciences were born or received fresh impetus, as biochemistry and physiology (the study of function).

The rediscovery of Mendel's experiments opened a fertile field. The study of the cell (cytology) had shown that when each cell divides in the process of growth or reproduction, certain filaments in the nucleus also divide. These mysterious filaments which were easily observable because they turned dark when the cell was stained were named "chromosomes."

Another important discovery was the fact that only one male sex cell (the sperm) will fertilize the female egg. Later it was found that on forming in the sex organs, both sperm and egg contain chromosomes. The number, size and shape of these filaments proved to be highly regular for all members of a species.

However, it soon turned out that Mendel's experiments had created more questions than they could answer. If hereditary characteristics are carried by material structures (genes) and these structures do not blend, "consume" each other as Lysenko believes, then the genes of each individual are more like a hand of cards in a poker game than a bowl of paste in which the heredity raw material is thoroughly fused. Discontinuous particles appear to carry the continuity of heredity. After each reshuffling of the deck that constitutes a new generation, the same cards turn up in all the new hands constituting the gene structure of individuals of the new generation. But here was a real mystery. Why is it that certain poker hands (combinations of characteristics) keep turning up with such regularity that the whole deck appears to be stacked? Why are certain combinations repeated? This became a burning question: What stacks the deck?

### Morgan's Experiments

The answer to it was found by T. H. Morgan, an American biologist working at Columbia University. He and his students showed by many experiments, mainly on the *Drosophila* fly, that the chromosomes of the sex cells are the carriers of the cards (genes). For a simplified picture, you can imagine the chromosome as a necklace from which the beads (genes) break off in groups between knots in the string. When the cells divide to form sperm or eggs, the genes between breaking points on the chromosome enter the shuffle as groups carrying definite hereditary characteristics. And it is these groups that are the poker hands. But the broken groups don't enter the new sex cell just any which way. They first recombine to form new chromosomes which are outwardly *exact replicas* of the chromosomes that first divided. The shuffle is therefore between groups of genes. However, each *sex* cell gets only *half* the number of chromosomes present in other cells of the species. On combining with an opposite sex cell of the same species (fertilization) the normal number of chromosomes is restored. A normal embryo starts out life with a

full load of the genes that will determine its development, half from each parent.

This gives us a glimpse of the great complexities involved at this level of life, all of which is dismissed by Lysenko as a "reactionary" view.

Morgan's discoveries could account for *combinations* of characteristics. Still to be answered were the questions: How do new characteristics arise in the first place? And precisely what is this mysterious gene that carries them from one generation to the next?

### Mutations of the Genes

In 1927, H. J. Muller, an American geneticist who worked for many years in the Soviet Union, found that by subjecting sex organs to X-rays new characteristics could be made to appear in the next generation. Here for the first time we had a hint of the precise way in which environment influences heredity.

Under X-ray bombardment, some of the genes changed (mutated). Later it was found that certain chemicals and temperature shocks had similar effects. Subjected to such treatment, extra chromosomes are also sometimes formed, or the whole set is doubled, pieces broken off, added on, or switched around. Organisms bearing such altered genes and chromosomes depart sometimes widely from the normal.

As in nature, many "mutations" thus formed are of no advantage to the new organism. In fact many prove lethal. Some mutations appear, however, which under different environmental conditions prove advantageous.

An instance of how this works out in nature is provided by the occasional *Drosophila* flies born with very reduced wings. In *normal* life this mutation will usually not be passed on since such an individual is handicapped in finding food and sex partners. However, if the *Drosophila* colony is located say on an island in a prevailing wind, the members with reduced wings have less chance of being blown away into the sea. Consequently they soon become the dominant type in the colony. Three French geneticists proved this by experiment in 1937.

Mutations are widely observable. Sometimes people are born with extra fingers or toes. Or contrariwise, in a recent case a person was born without hands or feet. Mated to a normal person, the mutation was passed on to the children. Hemophilia, or inability to form normal blood clots, is another well-known hereditary condition that arises every so often.

Dwarf plants and trees suddenly appear, or sometimes plants with differently shaped leaves or new fruit colors. Thousands of mutants occur. Some survive. Many do not. In 1937 Dubinin and three other Russian geneticists examined 130,000 *Drosophila melanogaster* flies from Southern Russia and found more than 2,800 mutants in this collection. Such research is, of course, now banned in the Soviet Union.

Some mutations occur more frequently than others. Some do not show their effect in the new generations until the individual mates with another carrying the same mutation.



We can now say with great certainty that the raw material for evolution — the new types selected by environment for survival — is continually being formed in nature as a result of quantitative mutation, both of genes and chromosomes. Under new environmental conditions these mutant types give rise to qualitative changes — new species.

### Interrelation of Life and Environment

The relation between living forms and environment is dialectical through and through. Over geologic time, environment goes through tremendous changes. Mountains rise and are eroded. Glaciers advance, then recede before encroaching tropical climates. Oceans change in temperature and composition. New natural enemies appear. Foods change in type and quantity. Thus environment acts as a mighty dynamic power to “negate” mutations and combinations that do not fit changed conditions. The process leads to an ever-increasing complexity of forms and relations, to a greater role for “mediation” such as is played by the gene, and as we see to a high degree in the case of man to increased reciprocal influence between living form and environment.

This knowledge has already made possible a greater measure of control over evolution of types of interest to man. By cross-breeding, new gene combinations can be brought about from which we can select the best. By inducing mutations through newly-discovered means, we can step up formation of new varieties from which to choose those suited to our purposes. New highly productive foods like hybrid corn and various rust-resistant wheats and cross-bred cattle and poultry are all products of our conquest and understanding of these principles. That our gains are so paltry in the light of the known possibilities is part of the overhead cost of the capitalist system. Included in the great promise of Socialism is increasing control over environment and even conscious direction of man's own evolution.

### V.

Let us now turn to the \$64 question. Is Perov, a follower of Lysenko, right when he calls the gene “mystical, mythical, and actually non-material”?<sup>13</sup> Or is Prezent accurate in scornfully comparing the “invisible gene” to the “invisible spirit”?

Research up to now reveals the chemical structure of this “spirit” is that of a highly organized protein molecule or side-chain attached to a protein molecule. Protein particles are the most complex chemical structures yet known and up to now only a few of the simplest have been synthesized. It is the chemical structure of protein, not any abstract “property” or “essence” as Lysenko claims that gives matter the mode of existence we know as life.

Recently, with the aid of the electron microscope a photograph was taken of a chromosome section showing many small dots clumped along its length. Whether these dots are actual genes cannot yet be accurately determined.

However, although we are not sure that we have a photograph of the gene, we can infer from its actions that it is quite real just as we can infer the same for atoms.

The gene acts like a protein particle, to be more specific, an enzyme. Just as water molecules act as a catalyst, enabling iron to rust, so the gene acts as an intermediary in the chemical reactions of the cell. It is, however, an enzyme that acts in the production of other enzymes. When its structure is changed under the impact of X-rays or other environmental influences (many not yet discovered), the enzymes produced by the gene are also changed, and this occurrence is known as “gene mutation.”

### Gene Mutation

In the developing organism some of the enzymes produced by the genes function as growth accelerators or differentiators, causing some tissues to grow faster than others or some to change from a primitive state to bone, muscle, nerve, etc. All the cells of the body have the same number and kind of genes except in certain very rare cases of “somatic” mutation. This can easily be seen if we remember that the fertilized egg has a full complement of genes, that this complement doubles, then divides into two daughter cells which also now have a full complement of genes. This process continues throughout growth.

However not all the genes of the body or their products work at the same time. Certain areas start growing when others stop. Some areas differentiate into structures with functions quite distinct from others. If you throw a rock into a quiet pond and follow it with a series of others, the ripples will converge and diverge in a complex pattern. The analogy provides an idea of how chemical gene products, interacting within the organism as a whole, set each other off at various times and places. Small quantitative changes combining with other small quantitative changes in an exceedingly intricate way cause the general qualitative changes observable in the growing organism. And so mutant chemical genes cause new effects in different parts of the body.

### Not a Conscious Process

Far from Lysenko's concept that living things can “absorb” the environment and then act accordingly in future generations, the gene has no *conscious* power to direct its changes. It cannot say to itself, “I'm going to mutate so that future generations will fit better with a certain new environment.” It can't possibly *know* how the environment will change, not even under the prodding of a Lysenko. It is only a chemical, a very complex chemical, but not a fortune-teller able to predict that “for this environment this type of mutation is necessary and for another environment I'll have to mutate in a new direction.”

The gene mutates without discrimination among possible effects. The causes of its changes are of an electro-chemical order. The eventual effects as we see them among surviving species may make it appear superficially that they have “acquired” their characteristics directly from the environment, so dovetailed is their relationship to it. But this

<sup>13</sup>The Situation in Biological Science, p. 146.

relationship is due to the "selection" by the environment of favorable genic effects and consequently of the genes and gene combinations that cause these effects. In the absence of factual knowledge, it is not strange that the Lamarckians did not understand this complex interaction of environment and heredity.

Natural or artificial selection, however, as we now see in observation and practice, acts on the varieties which are formed by mutation. If certain mutations turn out to be useful, "fine," if not, "too bad." The gene itself has no idea where it is going. Eventually man, by conscious application of the theory and practice of genetics and all the other sciences, will be able to guide mutation in the direction he wishes. But so far, no one has been able to show that the gene or organism is guided by an "internal life energy" such as Lysenko postulates.<sup>14</sup>

## VI.

We have already mentioned Lysenko's famous "vernalization" experiments in which summer varieties of wheat, given shock treatment in a refrigerator, responded by absorbing the cold environment and changing into a winter variety. What about his other claims? At best it is difficult to say, since Lysenko does not specify his materials and methods so that other experimenters can check them. He takes no consideration of statistical results which alone might reveal the success or failure of his experiments. He uses no "controls" to determine whether something new has really been discovered in the experiment. He does not specify the purity or impurity of his materials. These omissions reveal that Lysenko's technique does not even approach scientific procedure.

The evidence shows, moreover, that impure stocks with a large amount of hereditary variability have been used in Lysenko's experiments. There is increasing suspicion that Lysenko has been *selecting* those genetic variations always present in impure stocks, which can survive in new environments. As Darlington, the British biologist, comments:

The evidence as a whole shows that Lysenko is making use of the three classical precautions needed for the "success" of experiments designed to prove the inheritance of environmental effects: namely, beginning with a mixed stock, omitting to use proper controls, and repudiating statistical tests.<sup>15</sup>

### "Pangeneses" and "Blending Inheritance"

Two of Lysenko's pet beliefs are "Pangeneses" and "Blending Inheritance." Pangeneses holds that every part of one's body makes its individual contribution to the heredity that goes into the sex cells. Blending Inheritance maintains that in a fertilized egg each of the parents' contributions *merges directly* like two dyes in water. These beliefs, held by Catholic theologians in the middle ages, have not been borne out by science.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>14</sup>Lysenko, *Heredity and its Variability*, p. 51.

<sup>15</sup>C. D. Darlington, "A Revolution in Soviet Science." *Journal of Heredity*, p. 143. Quoted by Huxley, op. cit. p. 74.

<sup>16</sup>See Conway Zirkle, "The Early History of the Idea of the Inheritance of Acquired Characters and of Pangeneses." *Transactions of the Amer. Philos. Soc.*, Vol. XXXV, No. 2, 1946.

Genes transmitted from the parents do not "blend" any more than sodium and chlorine atoms "blend" in sodium chloride, common table salt. As for the sex cells, they are formed in specialized protected sex organs which safeguard the hereditary line from gross accidental change. If Pangeneses were true, the effects of amputation, infantile paralysis, poor physical and mental environments would be *inherited*.

### Reactionary Inferences of Theory

Lysenko himself does not openly carry the reactionary content of his theories to their logical conclusion. However H. J. Muller reports a revealing conversation with a Stalinist bureaucrat, the head of Soviet Agriculture, in 1936. When asked if it were true that Lysenko's theories indicate that minority, colonial and poverty-ridden peoples are inferior to the better-off populations, this bureaucrat replied:

... yes, we must admit that this is after all true. They are in fact inferior to us biologically in every respect, including their heredity. And that is in fact the official doctrine. But after two or three generations of living under conditions of Socialism, their genes would have so improved that then we would all be equal.<sup>17</sup>

This is nothing but a reflection of the Russian chauvinism fostered under Stalin. The truth is that these peoples are not inferior in the first place. And if just living in the shadow of the Kremlin can change genes, then Soviet monkeys should soon be as genius-like as Stalin.

Yet Lysenko insists that he has proved Blending Inheritance by experiments of "vegetative hybridization." This is to graft a branch of one variety (the scion) on to a plant of another variety (the stock). "The union of the grafted plants," says Lysenko, "gives rise to an organism of a different breed, namely a combination of the breeds of the scion and the stock."<sup>18</sup>

### Lysenko's Vegetative Hybridization

Julian Huxley, one of the world's foremost biologists, discusses these claims at some length. Here is one deflating excerpt:

... when Ashby (an Australian botanist) and I were in Moscow in 1945, we ascertained that the crucial grafting experiments of Avakian and Yastrub, which, though published in 1941, were then (and still are) the mainstay of Lysenko's evidence for vegetative hybridization, had been independently repeated in another laboratory in the USSR, with the same strains of tomatoes, but using ade-

<sup>17</sup>H. J. Muller, *Genetics in Relation to Modern Science*. Eighth International Congress of Genetics, 1948. Quoted in Zirkle, op. cit., p. 91.

<sup>18</sup>Lysenko, *Heredity and its Variability*, p. 32. Also: "The frequency of obtaining vegetative hybrids will depend upon the ability of the experimenter to force the scion to assimilate as many as possible of the nutrient materials prepared by the variety the properties of which are to be transmitted to the scion. The experimenter must overcome the 'lack of desire' (the selectivity) on the part of the scion to include these materials in the building of its body." *Ibid.* p. 34.

quate controls. In particular, numbers of plants of the strains used for stock and for scion were raised without grafting and bred from. Ashby later investigated further, and found that the one positive result obtained was that the ungrafted controls produced just as many "new" forms as the grafted plants. In other words, the strains employed in Lysenko's Institute were genetically far from pure, "throwing" many variations without grafting; and accordingly this genetic impurity, and not the grafting would in fact account for many of the new forms which had turned up in Lysenko's experiments. He also ascertained that permission could not be obtained to publish the results, presumably because they throw doubt on Lysenko's conclusions.

A little later, Wilson and Withner (1946) repeated the same type of experiment with a number of combinations of tomato strains, all of which had been previously bred to a high degree of purity. In this case, no results of the original grafting, either of stock on scion or vice versa, could be detected. There was no question of Lamarckian inheritance in later generations, as there was no initial effect to be inherited.<sup>19</sup>

Simple mechanistic theories about complex phenomena appear lucid and materialistic. Carry them to their logical conclusion, however, and they end in the murkiest mysticism. Lysenko's views are a case in point.

### Lysenko and Bergson

To explain how "external characteristics and conditions" can be "acquired" and inherited, Lysenko postulates in his main theoretical pamphlet, *Heredity and Its Variability*, that all living beings have a "property." In various places he calls this property "nature," "heredity" or "life." It is this "property," according to the doctrine, that enables organisms to "acquire" new characteristics. "*Any living body part, and even a droplet (if the body is liquid) possesses the property of heredity, i.e., the property of demanding relatively determined conditions for its life, growth and development.*" (Lysenko's italics.)<sup>20</sup>

If we now ask Lysenko what is the basis of this "property" we get the following answer: "the life impulse,"<sup>21</sup> "the very essence, i.e., the nature,"<sup>22</sup> "the internal life energy."<sup>23</sup>

This is like asking an astrologer of the middle ages why he maintains that the sun goes around the earth and getting the profound answer, "The sun goes around the earth because you can see it does. It obviously has the property of revolving, to be more specific, a revolving essence, an internal revolving energy."

Here Lysenko's thought departs completely from materialism and merges with reactionary idealist philosophy. It was Henri Bergson who sought to popularize belief in a mystic "elan vital" or "vital impulse" as the basic cause of evolutionary change. As is known, the central radiating point of Bergson's "elan vital" turned out to be "God."

<sup>19</sup>Huxley, op. cit., pp. 78-79.

<sup>20</sup>Lysenko, *Heredity and its Variability*, p. 32.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid., p. 51.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid., p. 3.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid., p. 51.

## VII.

The destruction of genetics in the Soviet Union and Lysenko's ascendancy cannot be explained on any rational grounds if you confine yourself to biological science. In both theory and practice Lysenko must be characterized as either a deluded zealot or a charlatan. The correct explanation must be sought in more general aspects of life in the USSR today. We have already indicated that the parallel which comes most forcefully to mind is the destruction of Marxism and the rise of Stalin to power.

### Stalinism in Politics and in Science

Stalin turned away from the difficult international task of building world socialism. He held out the promise of quick, easy gains if the Marxist program were scuttled and attention focussed on building "socialism in one country." All this was done under guise of maintaining Marxism and remaining faithful to scientific socialism. For a time Stalin appeared to have some substance to his claims. National planning and the monopoly of foreign trade made it possible even under Stalin for Soviet industry to forge ahead rather rapidly. The rate of gain, however, soon slowed and eventually Stalinist politics helped pave the way for catastrophic setbacks both to the Soviet Union and the world working class. The Marxists, headed by Leon Trotsky, warned of these dangers with singular foresight. But the dangers appeared distant. Stalin could usurp power because he represented the rising bureaucracy with its limitless thirst and greed for an immediate pay-off from the planned economy. The Russian Trotskyists, remaining true to the long-range interests of both the Soviet Union and world socialism as a whole, struggled against the reactionary tide but like the scientists today, suffered temporary defeat.

Lysenko represents the encroachment of the Stalinist tendency in the field of science. He scorns the difficult problems and techniques of genetics which appear to him remote from life. He holds out the promise of quick, easy gains if genetics is scrapped and attention focussed on some immediate practical steps in plant breeding. This is done under the guise of faithfulness to science and especially to dialectical materialism. And it is quite possible that some gains can be shown. As Huxley points out:

Lysenko's success was in large measure due to the fact of Soviet agricultural backwardness. In a country with antiquated methods, any modernization of technique will have a salutary effect. . .

Again, in a country where the strains of crop-plants and livestock are relatively unimproved and far from genetically pure, as appears to be the case in the USSR, almost any energetic attempt at improvement will have considerable practical results in the first few years. And Lysenko is undoubtedly energetic. . . It is worth pointing out, however, that mass selection cannot go on producing rapid results. It soon reaches a point of diminishing returns; and after this is reached, it is necessary to employ special methods based on Mendelian theory to secure any considerable improvement."<sup>24</sup>

Huxley cites the case of the development of hybrid corn in the USA on this basis. Nearly 100,000 inbred lines were

<sup>24</sup>Huxley, op. cit., p. 180.

prepared and tested. "The inbred lines, lacking hybrid vigor, look (and are) miserable; but the new hybrids are immensely superior to the original strain." Some 90 percent of the corn in the Corn Belt is now hybrid. This seed enables the farmers of America to grow in two years what would normally require three years with old type varieties. Hybrid corn is worth about \$1,000,000,000 a year to the farmers of the USA. (That's before the current inflation.) Huxley concludes:

It is a great pity for the USSR that they were in such a hurry and they would not trust neo-Mendelian theory. On seeing the poor quality of the lines produced by intensive inbreeding, the Michurinites decided against "time-consuming inbreeding procedures" and in favor of direct selection from the original strains. This undoubtedly will have had a rapid effect over a short period, but the improvement will have been much less than what they could have obtained by following in the footsteps of the neo-Mendelians in America.<sup>25</sup>

The source of the pressure for quick results is not difficult to ascertain. It is the same pressure that led the bureaucracy to plunder the satellite countries taken by the Red Army. Throughout the Soviet Union at the end of the war, hatred of the regime that had helped open the country to the Nazi scourge was at fever height. The bureaucracy had to appease this mass feeling immediately with some fruits of victory. Lysenko was held up to the peasants as a miracle man who could guarantee quick increase in crop production. The geneticists were made into convenient scapegoats.

### A Lesson in Politics -- for Scientists

Stalin himself is reported to have Lamarckian leanings but it is more likely that the personal interest of the dictator in the purge derives from his general policy of rooting out all personnel of Lenin's time, no matter how remote the field, if they possess an ounce of independence of mind. Under a totalitarian dictatorship, centers of political resistance can form in the most unlikely fields. Stalin equates all independence of thought to political opposition. In this his instincts no doubt serve him well.

When Trotsky was driven into exile in the Soviet Union and Marxism was extirpated, many Soviet scientists very likely comforted themselves with the thought that these events were remote from their field and did not concern them. Their failure to intervene in the political struggle proved costly.

In the society of today whether it be the USSR, Germany or the United States or anywhere, no fields are exempt any longer from the great social and political issues. Failure to intervene actively in time is equivalent to suicide. Scientists must consider themselves *citizens* as well as observers and investigators in a narrow field. This is the

great lesson to be drawn from the strangling of genetics in the Soviet Union.

Some scientists delude themselves with the thought that Lysenko's views are a consequence of his holding to dialectical materialism along with the rest of the bureaucracy and that a purge such as he headed can't happen in a land where government officials profess a different philosophy. Two things can be said in reply:

### Two Admonitions for Lysenko's Critics

(1) Lysenko is not a defender of dialectical materialism any more than is Generalissimo Stalin. The evidence shows that he is a mechanist with a strong inclination toward vitalism. His claim that he defends dialectical materialism can no more be taken at face value than his claim that he defends genuine science in biology. A geneticist who denies the validity of Lysenko's views on heredity but concedes dialectical materialism to him reveals ignorance in philosophy quite on a par with Lysenko's ignorance in biology. The truth is that the findings in biology as in all other sciences speak for dialectical materialism and not against it. The case of Lysenko is one of fraud, slander, bigotry and abysmal ignorance, from his "experiments" with tomatoes to his pronouncements on philosophy.<sup>26</sup>

(2) The "loyalty" purge and witch-hunt conducted by the Truman administration for the past five years, along with its reactionary censorship of atomic research, give no room for confidence that science is much safer in imperialist America than it is in the USSR under Stalin. To permit the present trend to gather momentum without intervening politically is to follow the fatal course many Soviet scientists took in Trotsky's time. The time to act is now before the juggernaut of the police state takes final shape.

<sup>26</sup>P. S. Hudson and R. H. Richens, who have written what many consider to be the most thorough analysis of the experiments published by the Lysenko school (*The New Genetics in the Soviet Union*, Imperial Bureau of Plant Breeding and Genetics, Cambridge, 1946) use Lysenko as a convenient stalking horse to attack dialectical materialism. "By extrapolating from history to philosophy and deciding philosophically questions which should be approached by experimental methods, Marxists have emptied their philosophy of much of its value, etc." (p. 55). Are Hudson and Richens ignorant of the views of Marxism? In criticizing Hegel, for instance, Frederick Engels said: "The mistake lies in the fact that these laws (dialectics) are foisted on nature and history as laws of thought, and not deduced from them. This is the source of the whole forced and often outrageous treatment; . . ." (*Dialectics of Nature*, International Publishers, 1940, p. 26.) And Leon Trotsky, speaking at the Mendeleev Congress, Sept. 17, 1925, said: "Whenever any Marxist attempted to transmute the theory of Marx into a universal master-key and ignore all other spheres of learning, Vladimir Ilyich (Lenin) would rebuke him with the expressive phrase: 'Komchvanstvo' ('Communist swagger'). This would mean in this particular case — communism is not a substitute for chemistry." (Reprinted in *The New International*, Feb. 1940. Also in pamphlet form, *Marxism and Science*, Pioneer Publishers.)

<sup>25</sup>Ibid., p. 181.

# *We Say "No" to Remilitarization*

By **GEORG JUNGCLAS**

On March 17 and 18, the founding convention of the new Independent Workers Party is to take place in Germany. A lively pre-convention discussion has been taking place in its ranks. Most of the participants have only recently broken away from the KPD (Communist Party of Germany) and the SED (Socialist Unity Party), the Stalinist organizations in the Western and Eastern zones, respectively. A good deal of the discussion has had as its medium the *Freie Tribuene*, the excellent weekly of the Preparatory Commission for the Formation of the Independent Workers Party. In order to present a graphic example of the leadership's attitude in that discussion, of the atmosphere of tension in which it takes place within this key country in the "cold war," and of the indomitable revolutionary spirit animating the new movement, we carry below a polemical article on the crucial question of rearmament by one of the leaders, published in a recent issue of their weekly.—Ed.

\* \* \*

Lately we have been receiving letters repeatedly, in which readers of *Freie Tribuene* take issue with our opposition to the remilitarization of Western Germany. In one such letter a comrade explains his position in the following characteristic sentences:

"I read *Freie Tribuene* with great interest. Many of its articles I find very good but there is one thing I do not like: we who have come out of the KPD and SED and have become opponents of Stalin, cannot be neutral in the face of Soviet aggression, which in Europe today threatens West Germany most after Yugoslavia. We must be prepared . . . to struggle against Soviet aggression. . . . While maintaining our just criticism of the Western Governments we should not forget that as against the Stalin system they represent the lesser evil. If war should come then it would be our task to see to it that it (1) is not directed against the Slav peoples but only against the Stalin system, and that (2) the socialist conquests are not disturbed but on the contrary, further expanded."

Here we have in concentrated form a position which is common to disillusioned socialists in Western Germany today. It contains a number of arguments with which we must seriously deal.

## **"SOVIET AGGRESSION"?**

The comrade who sent us the letter quoted proceeds from the assumption that the Third World War is very near and that the Stalinist bureaucracy is its motive force. We cannot accept this premise. We do not think that a third world war is as immediate as the propaganda on both sides of the Iron Curtain wants to make us believe. This propaganda aims to lull the working masses so that they will bend willingly to the desires of the rulers, so that they will patiently support the immense burden of armaments and allow their most important democratic rights to be robbed from them without any resistance. In reality however, neither of the two op-

posing power concentrations dares as yet launch the new world war. The peoples, particularly those of Europe, are not ready to enter into a new slaughter. They are neither materially nor morally prepared. But without the submission of broad masses a world war is a neck-risking enterprise for the ruling powers.

## **THE KREMLIN'S FEAR**

How do matters stand with the Soviet Union? We admit that it is not simple to resist the pounding of the propaganda drums to which Western public opinion is submitted day after day. Publicists no longer debate as to whether the Kremlin wants to "swallow" Western Europe, but only as to when. But the discussion of the question must really begin with that first question. The latest events in the Far East have appeared to contribute considerably to support the thesis of "Soviet aggression." But here too we have no reason to accept official Western propaganda without examining it more closely. It is necessary to look into the social and national contradictions which form the fertile soil for the outbreak of these conflicts.

But let us return to Europe. Here the writer of the letter quoted sees, aside from Yugoslavia, above all Western Germany as being threatened by Soviet aggression. Insofar as Yugoslavia is concerned, he is undoubtedly right. The Kremlin bureaucracy dreads an independent socialist force inside its sphere of influence, and that is why political motives compel the Kremlin to threaten Yugoslavia. Even if we assume that Stalin would like to swallow Western Europe for some reason, we nevertheless must grant that he is sufficiently circumspect not to bite off more than he can chew. Is his capacity sufficient to achieve this goal militarily? Is he in condition to digest such a "bite"?

From recent experience we know that in the long run it becomes very difficult to hold down an advanced country by means of military oppression. This

experience was not unique with Hitler. Stalin is also undergoing it at present.

We therefore do not believe that we are immediately threatened with Soviet aggression. We do not take stock in the propaganda which pictures the immense armament drive of the West as an innocent measure of "defense."

We believe, moreover, that armament is a means for capitalism to overcome economic difficulties that threaten it. We are of the opinion that the best way to fight against the danger of war is to oppose the politics of capitalism in our own country. This is the only possible socialist way.

## **A "LESSER EVIL"?**

The Western Governments, according to the writer cited, represent the "lesser evil" as against the Stalin system.

If with these words nothing more is meant than that we independent socialists, for the moment, can still openly defend our ideas and build our organizations in the Western countries, then that is doubtless true. But it seems to us that the author of the letter goes beyond that and means something different.

He considers that the politics of the West with all of its consequences signifies a lesser evil for us as against the Stalin system. On this point too we are decidedly of another opinion. We believe that the politics of the West must lead to war of its own inner logic. In view of such a perspective the question of the lesser evil becomes meaningless. For in the last analysis it can hardly matter whether we are pulverized by American atom bombs or mowed down by Russian tanks.

## **ANTI-BOLSHEVISM**

Nor is Western democracy today in a good condition. Let us not forget that the rising armament budgets inevitably imply a considerable sinking in the living standards of the workers. This means of necessity that the coercive apparatus of every state must be strengthened in order to master the dangers arising from mass sentiments of dissatisfaction. Experience teaches that such measures are not directed against Stalinists alone, but also against the working class which resists in order to defend its political rights. Propaganda against Bolshevism is utilized in order to justify dictatorial measures. Even today in our country, there are not a few outcries that the Trade Unions are preparing the ground for "Bolshevism" . . .

If a socialist movement ties itself to the politics of one of the power blocs, it commits political suicide. But this picture is particularly true today for the West. Our present task consists not in draping a little democratic cloak around the war, but in preventing it. We hold the view that this is still possible.

We have taken the path of forming an independent worker's party precisely because a strong socialist movement will be capable of thwarting the plans of the warmongers. This can hardly be done by considering the Western capitalist powers as "forces of protection."

#### "DEMOCRATIZE" THEIR WAR?

The comrade is of the opinion that a war against the Soviet Union could, to a certain extent, be "democratized," so that it would be turned, not against the people, but only against the Stalin system. But we know from experience that it is always the mass of the people who serve as targets for the bombs and grenades rather than the rulers. Eventually the war of the Western powers can only become an anti-Bolshevik crusade and a war of annihilation like the last one. It will be an imperialist war, not for the liberation of the peoples of Eastern Europe from the yoke of Stalinism, but for the destruction of the military and economic might of the East in the conquest of markets and sources of raw material. To demand of the strategists of such a

war that they leave untouched all the socialist achievements, and moreover that they expand these achievements, is an unforgivable illusion. Naturally as in every previous war, there will be the promise: we are waging war not against your peoples but only against your wicked governments! In practice it has always turned out otherwise.

We know only too well that Stalinism is a serious danger for us as an independent socialist movement. We know how much the workers in the East suffer under its system. But if we want to protect ourselves from this danger, and if we want to aid in liberating the peoples from its oppression, we must not forget that our aim can never be achieved in league with a military power cut on the Prussian pattern. We can protect and extend our democratic liberties only in the struggle for socialism. That is not simple today, because the instrument needed for this struggle, an independent socialist movement still has to be created.

#### SENTIMENT OF MASSES

In this connection we need not dwell upon the various evil signs of our Western civilization (on the misery of those driven from their homes, on the unemployed, on the spiraling prices and on the luxuries of the possessing classes). All this is only too well known, and has its effect on the thinking of millions. Even very conservative bourgeois poli-

ticians have come to the conclusion that the average citizen of the West German federal republic is not prepared to give his life for Herr Erhard's "social market economy." These politicians draw the lesson: it is first necessary to make life in West Germany worth living; then, allegedly, it can also be defended.

#### SOCIALISM ONLY SOLUTION

A Herr Kogan, for instance, thinks that it is sufficient for us to be incorporated in a European Union in order to make of our youth enthusiastic soldiers of Europe. He has been greeted with a storm of protests. The president of the trade unions, Dr. Boeckler, is of the opinion that all that is necessary for us to want to defend ourselves is the Co-determination Law. Social Democratic politicians declare that they must be taken into the Bonn Government so that they can abolish social misery. All of them think that this or that national or social patchwork can overcome the manifest antipathy and defeatism of the German population.

We, on the other hand, say that only in a struggle for socialism can the working people attain a life worth living. Only in and through this struggle will they gain the strength necessary for a powerful defense of their achievements and for the conquest of broader rights.

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