

Fourth International

Three Years of the Yugoslav Experience

By E. Germain

The Trend of the Twentieth Century

By James P. Cannon

Cease-Fire in Korea

An Editorial



IN MEMORY OF LEON TROTSKY

November 7, 1879 -- August 21, 1940

Trotsky on the USA as a World Power

By William F. Warde

The Class Nature of the USSR

Two Articles by Leon Trotsky

July-August 1951

25c

Manager's Column

Among the articles that drew acclaim in the May-June issue of *Fourth International*, top place was taken by "The Future of the Soviet Union," the informative report of a revolutionary refugee who recently escaped from the Soviet Union. The general consensus of our readers' opinion is that it offers remarkable confirmation of Trotsky's analysis of the degenerated workers state and the certainty of deepening domestic opposition to the totalitarian Stalinist regime.

Other articles that rated high on the popularity gauge were "American Youth and Foreign Policy" by James P. Cannon, and the first English publication of "Tolstoy, Poet and Rebel" by Leon Trotsky.

Literature Agent Winifred Nelson of St. Paul reported that a student of the Russian language, with whom she is acquainted, found the article on Tolstoy of "great interest." She also noted that despite the intensive activity around the subscription campaign of our sister publication, *The Militant*, sales of the FI did not suffer. In fact, St. Paul sold out its regular bundle and had to order more copies.

Al Lynn of Los Angeles, ordering 20 more copies of the "Asia in Revolt" issue of the FI, says that "the magazine is terrific." All back issues "are sellable, especially when devoted to a special and specific item like Asia or the Negro question. Someone came into the office the other day to buy some back issues and I noticed that we have very few remaining even with newsstand returns on hand."

Al asks whether we are planning a Sales and Subscription Campaign of some kind such as *The Militant* just finished. He observes that "most of the new readers of *The Militant* would find the FI of interest." He suggests that another issue devoted to American labor leaders would have special appeal and would make a good introductory number.

We have not planned a campaign for the FI as Al suggests; however, we would like to hear from other literature agents about this. What are you doing in your area to introduce the FI to new readers of *The Militant*?

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Among the warmest and most devoted friends of the FI are the followers of Leon Trotsky in India. They read every issue with the closest attention and write us their honest opinion, generally making fruitful suggestions to the editorial staff on how to improve the magazine still further.

A comrade in Ranchi, for example, recently commented on every issue of the past year. Here are some of his remarks: "Among the FI issues of 1950, the first five were very highly appreciated by us. The January-February issue met the wants of the day. The March-April issue with Leon Trotsky's article on art and

politics is needed by all. The May-June issue exposed 'equality' under the Welfare State. The exposure of the Stalinist intellectuals was good. Even I translated the character of Paul Robeson from that article. Next the Leon Trotsky Memorial issue was appreciated very cordially. Some Stalinists read the foreword to Stalin's Frame-Up System and the Moscow Trial and became confused. After reading the 'Asia in Revolt' issue, some of my friends said it would be good if the FI had an article on India. But the last article in the November-December issue was not up to standard. The other articles are no doubt good ones as they teach us how to expose the 'labor leaders.'"

T.S.M. of the Trichy District writes that the FI "is a very needful help to me." He is anxious to get a complete file of all back issues.

S.K. of Darbhanga appreciates the FI so much he would like to get it by airmail to speed delivery. The comrades there are planning to publish a number of Trotsky's shorter workers in Hindusthani, which is the language of 60% of the Indian people. He too wants a file of back issues.

H.C. of Howrah thanks us for some back numbers and says "we are working hard to recruit Trotskyist-minded people to our ranks. In spite of our poverty, we have already published some books and bulletins in Bengali."

R.S.B. of Colombo, Ceylon, suggests we "get up a theoretical article on Spain. How explain the 'stabilization' of Spanish fascism? I am sure that this is now topical enough to merit an article."

R.S.B. also thinks that a complete bibliography of Trotsky's works should be printed, including his articles in the FI. "This will be a very useful guide to all revolutionaries."

Commenting on how much the American Trotskyist press is appreciated in Ceylon, R.S.B. says that "the popularity of *The Militant* has been steadily growing." One reason for this is the difficulty of maintaining an English-language paper because of financial difficulties. However, "even purely American affairs have today a topical character and an international impact so that almost no item in your press is left undiscussed."

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FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

VOLUME XII

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World in Review

Cease-Fire in Korea

After a dramatic hitch involving the question of press representation at the scene of negotiations, talks regarding a cease-fire in Korea have been resumed in the city of Kaesang. In all likelihood, an armistice will sooner or later be achieved despite renewed complications over the issue of withdrawal of "foreign troops." For, although frictions and irritations manifesting the basically irreconcilable character of the opponents in the war are in the nature of things and may arise again from time to time, both sides are convinced that a stalemate has been reached. The current stalemate makes military operations fruitless at this stage and requires more adequate political and diplomatic as well as industrial and military preparations, before the test of arms is to be resumed. All this was foreshadowed by the course of the Senatorial investigation of the MacArthur dismissal on the one hand, and by the steadily mounting "peace offensive" of the Kremlin culminating in the Malik truce talk, on the other.

For the capitalists and their various apologists, as well as for the Stalinists and their fellow travelers, "both sides" simply means the administration in Washington and the regime in Moscow. For us this identification is much too narrow and oversimplified. We see the two sides in the struggle predominantly as the camp of capitalist imperialism, and the camp of the oppressed workers and colonial peoples. We see contradictions within each of these camps: Between the newly dominant, arrogant and more reckless American capitalists and the run-down, more cautious European capitalists, chastened by closer contact with the specter of proletarian and colonial revolutions — within the camp of imperialism; between the surging Asian masses ready to throw off the shackles of centuries of oppression cost what may and the conservative, treacherous Stalinist bureaucracy based on the first workers' state — within the other camp. It is these contradictions, expressed in manifold forms, that are at the root of the present stalemate.

Lessons of the Korean War

The whole Korean war has served from the first as an object lesson in the dynamics of this unfolding international class struggle and of the conflicting pressures within each

camp. Only the apostles of the sterile "Third Camp" (whose whole recent development has been one of ever closer adaptation to the camp of imperialism) choose to ignore the light that has been cast on the whole question.

That the outbreak of the war a year ago was deeply rooted in the latent civil war within Korea has been confirmed a hundred times over again by on-the-spot reports from the correspondents of the capitalist press itself. They could offer no other satisfactory explanation of the early collapse of the South Korean armies and the rapid sweep down to the Pusan beachhead.

That this war was linked directly with the Chinese revolution became evident when the intervention of the Chinese armies overcame the powerful build-up in men and materiel that permitted MacArthur to storm Inchon and drive up to the Yalu. Here again, the capitalist observers on the scene could account for the phenomenon in no other way than to refer, however obliquely, to the "will to fight regardless of all losses" which rendered futile the efforts of the greatest military machine in modern times. That is — to the spirit of the Asian revolution.

The role of the Stalinist bureaucracy in the war was made no less plain. MacArthur himself gave evidence to the effect that a *squadron or two* of military planes would have been sufficient to wipe out the Pusan beachhead and drive the imperialist troops into the sea. What adequate air support would have meant for the Chinese counter-offensive down from the Yalu is a foregone conclusion. The treacherous role of the Stalinist bureaucracy can be surmised from these facts, which furnish a bare hint of its full scope. It can only be ignored and made a subject for ill-placed pleasantries by "Marxists" like the Shachtmanites whose memories are so short that they cannot recall the facts of Stalin's betrayal in the Spanish civil war, to take one outstanding example and to leave aside entirely the facts recently published by the Yugoslav leaders on their experience with the Kremlin during World War II.

Finally, from the first the European capitalists have been dragging their feet in the joint venture, full of fear of the spread of the Asian upsurge — for which the Iranian crisis has served as a fresh confirmation — and uneasy about the feelings of the masses at home, of which Aneurin

Bevan's resignation from the British Labor government and the growing Left Wing opposition to Attlee's pro-American policy is only the most recent and most significant indication.

Differing Aims in the Truce

These are the broad basic factors that circumscribe the narrower, if more publicized, struggle between the Big Two — that is, between the most powerful single countries within each camp, the USA and the USSR. For both, the cease-fire in Korea signifies a retreat. For the USA, a retreat mainly into the recesses of greater military and industrial preparedness. For the USSR, a retreat mainly into the field of diplomatic maneuvers. The objectives of each retreat are conditioned by the character of the regime in each country in the light of the Korean experience.

The administration in Washington regards the cease-fire in Korea not as a step to peace but above all else as an armed truce that will give the USA time to mount its industrial apparatus and its military bases to a point at which it will be assured of the maximum chances of success in a war it now regards as inevitable and not too distant. The Korean venture has proved to Washington to be "the wrong war, at the wrong time, in the wrong place," as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staffs Omar Bradley put it. The very nature of capitalism permits of no other conclusion for the American ruling class. The productive apparatus of the capitalist USA has already grown to such proportions and the world market for "free enterprise" has shrunk to such an extent that any extended period of peace could only result in an economic disaster by comparison with which the crash of 1929 would look like a minor calamity. Even the cease-fire reports gave the New York Stock Market a bad case of "peace jitters." An armaments economy can only serve as a very restricted, temporary expedient to keep American industry going. The problem of markets has to be solved, and without too much delay.

Washington's Objectives

On the other hand, the possibility of the industrial plant in Western Europe falling into the sphere of the USSR represents not only an immediate threat of huge investment losses to American finance capital but also the danger of an enormous strengthening of the anti-capitalist camp economically — a prospect which could soon upset the present stalemate to the permanent disadvantage of capitalism and thus spell its early doom.

The "right" war thus appears as the one with the USSR directly, the "right" place as the European continent, and the "right" time as not too far off, by 1953 according to some who (like Defense Mobilizer Charles E. Wilson) see that year as the peak to be reached by the preparedness effort. Accordingly, Washington is speeding up its military plans at the risk of disturbing the diplomatic balance within its own camp — the deal with Franco Spain for air and naval bases being only the latest development in this trend. The achievement of a cease-fire in Korea has a more restricted political objective as well, as a theme on which to win the administration another term in the 1952 elections as the "peace party" (the Wilson and F. D. R.

administrations set the example) in order to hold the masses in tow all the better for the outbreak of the "right" war in the ensuing years.

Soviet Bureaucracy's Aims

The Soviet bureaucracy has another conception of the cease-fire in Korea. It supported the ambitions of the North Korean and the militant intervention of the Chinese only as a desperate expedient when the "cold war" of American imperialism left no possibility of any kind of a deal open to the Kremlin. Conservative as all bureaucracies are, its object is not to challenge American imperialism, but to seek a modus vivendi with it. Disloyal, like all bureaucracies to the social basis upon which it rests, its object is not to aid the colonial peoples in their anti-imperialist struggle, but merely to exploit that struggle for its own reactionary ends.

Stalin's policy aims at all times to defend and extend the power, the privileges and the revenue of the bureaucracy. Revolutionary upsurge and the entry of many millioned armed masses into the political arena unsettles the status quo of which the bureaucracy has been an integral part for more than two decades, and therefore is regarded by the Kremlin as the foremost threat to its existence. Stalin banks on the imperialists' equally great fear of the mass upsurge for a common basis upon which a deal can be concluded once more, as at Yalta and Potsdam toward the end of World War II.

The whole course of the Kremlin in the Korean war was undoubtedly directed toward convincing Washington of the imminence and extent of the threat from the aroused Asian masses, of the ability of the Kremlin itself to exert a measure of control over it and of the need of an understanding between Moscow and Washington if this danger common to both is to be curbed at all. This is the *real* line of reasoning behind the whole campaign that began with the Stockholm Peace Congress. It now has reached the point of open overtures to Washington with the issuance of the English-language Moscow "News" in which figures like the historian Eugene Tarle and the former ambassador Alexander Troyanovsky are brought into the limelight once more, to ponder on the "irrationality" of strained relations between the USA and USSR and to preach the gospel of peaceful cohabitation of the "two systems." This accounts for Malik's, that is, Stalin's, initiative in arranging for cease-fire negotiations.

Can There Be a Deal?

Clearly the Stalinist bureaucracy looks upon the armistice in Korea as the prelude for a deal with imperialism for which the Asian masses are to be put on the auction block in a new Stalinist betrayal that is to top off the whole history of Stalin's crimes against the oppressed of the world.

Washington was only too ready, for its part, to snap up Malik's proposal. But that hardly means a readiness to acquiesce in the objective behind it. The American ruling class has learned its lesson from the Yalta and Potsdam agreements. Much as they might desire to take up Stalin's offer, the imperialists cannot place any reliance upon it to solve their problems for three basic reasons: 1) Whatever

the Stalinist bureaucracy's intentions may be, the nationalized economy upon which it rests exerts an unyielding pressure upon all the territories assigned to the Soviet sphere which results in their economic absorption or assimilation within that economy, a development forecast by Leon Trotsky as far back as 1939, when the Stalin-Hitler deal gave Eastern Poland to the USSR. 2) This development, taking place at a time when the capitalist productive plant, above all in the USA, has been greatly expanded, means a constant shrinking of the world market for capitalism and threatens it with a steadily stepped-up strangulation. 3) The economic crisis of capitalism is a constant source of mass unrest, whose scope is unforeseeable and therefore uncontrollable with or without Stalin's aid as long as the crisis subsists.

Capitalist Drive to War Inevitable

Their objective is therefore to resolve the crisis once and for all from *their* point of view, that is, by reconquer-

ing the whole world for capitalist economy. That is why the Stalinist "peace campaign" can lead only to deceptive illusions, that is why the cease-fire can mean nothing but an armed truce. Otherwise, the Soviet bureaucracy would have to make fundamental concessions to imperialism affecting the whole nature of the nationalized economy, that is, agree to pave the road for a restoration of capitalism in the USSR and to the abolition of the source of its power and relative independence.

The new armed truce will be subject to the same contradictory pressures within each camp already observed in the course of the Korean war. The problem of shaking off the paralyzing hand of the totalitarian bureaucracy in the Kremlin is becoming ever more pressing for the aroused anti-imperialist masses of Asia. The problem of overthrowing capitalism in order to avoid the hellish new devastations of another world war is becoming more urgent for all of humanity.

The Trend of the Twentieth Century

By JAMES P. CANNON

The stream of history became a torrential flood in the first half of the 20th Century and rages and flows even higher toward the second half. Never have events moved so fast. Never have social convulsions been so deep and so destructive of old and apparently fixed conditions. The first half of the 20th Century is already behind us. Our concern now turns to the second half. But if we want to see what this second half of our century has in store for humanity, we must first look back into the fifty years now expiring — and even into the century which preceded them — and mark out their most important events and developments. From the examination of these events and developments we can best ascertain the course and the direction which will determine the shape of things to come in the years which lie ahead of us.

I.

The 19th Century was that brief space in the vast history of mankind which was especially assigned to the triumph and development of the capitalist system of production, and the social and political institutions based upon it. Under the mighty impulse of the great French Revolution, which freed the productive forces from the constricting fetters of the outlived feudal society, capitalism flourished and expanded and developed the productive forces of society — the true foundation of all social progress — with a speed and efficiency unknown before, and even undreamed of in all the centuries since men had begun to make their history and to record it. All the past achievements in this field put together were dwarfed beside the accomplishments of capitalism in a single century. The whole of the 19th Century stands out now in history as an unprecedented march of triumph of the capitalist class,

which had overthrown feudalism by revolution and cleared a path for the development of a new and progressive system of production.

To be sure, the expansive productivity of capitalism, even in the century of its heyday, was interrupted by periodic economic crises which the capitalists themselves could neither foresee nor understand. But these economic crises, which paralyzed the forces of production at approximately ten-year intervals, turned out every time to be new starting points from which the productivity of labor was intensified and raised to new heights. In the periods of prosperity which emerged from every crisis the capitalist machine of production expanded, and the products of labor flooded the world in unprecedented volume. This gave rise to a vast illusion, a blind confidence, in the camp of the triumphant capitalist class and their ideologists, in a continuing progressive development of the forces of production under capitalism, without limit and without foreseeable end.

Marx's and Engels' Dissenting Opinion

But right in the middle of capitalism's "19th Century of Progress," with the publication of the Communist Manifesto of 1848, Marx and Engels challenged the prevailing opinion. Analyzing the economic laws by which capitalism operates, and placing the epoch of capitalism in its historic context, Marx and Engels declared: Capitalism is not the fixed and final form of human society, but only a stage in its evolution. The contradictions which represent the dynamics of its development will eventually, and historically speaking, rapidly, bring it to a blind alley from which no exit and no further development will be possible for the social system based on the private ownership of the

means of production and their confinement within the out-lived borders of the national states.

Capitalism, said Marx and Engels, produces the modern proletariat, the wage workers, who are alienated from any stake in the ownership of the vast machinery of production which they operate, and have nothing to lose but their chains. At the same time, the capitalist owners are completely alienated from any necessary part in production and have become a parasitic obstruction to its further development. The wage workers, the useful producers, are condemned to accumulating misery and poverty, while the parasitic capitalists accumulate wealth and riches beyond the dreams of avarice. Capitalism will be broken and destroyed by this contradiction. In the modern working class, said Marx and Engels, capitalism is producing its gravedigger. The workers will be driven inexorably, by the very conditions of their existence, to revolt against capitalism, to overthrow it, and to replace it by a socialist order, which will plan and develop economy for the benefit of all. The downfall of capitalism and the victory of the proletariat are equally inevitable.

So said the voices crying in the wilderness, the farseeing prophets, Marx and Engels, in 1848.

Events Appear to Refute Marxist View

When the two great geniuses of the working class formulated their theory and confidently uttered their prediction capitalism had not yet reached the apex of its development. On the contrary, it was then only really beginning its most spectacular expansion and development. The fifty-odd years which followed the publication of the Communist Manifesto saw world capitalism attain ever-greater stability, ever-wider scope of increasing productivity, and ever-greater confidence in its thousand-year destiny. This is the way matters stood at the beginning of the 20th Century, which opened with the great fireworks of capitalist progress in the field of production and in scientific achievements.

II.

Capitalism ruled the world securely and confidently. Everything appeared to be fixed and final; and the ideologists of triumphant capitalism had a field day celebrating the refutation of the Marxist prophecy. The watchword of the ruling circles was progress, ever more progress, along the same line. In the prevailing psychology of the time, optimism was uppermost. The belief in gradual, uninterrupted, peaceful and harmonious improvement, within the framework of things as they were, took possession of the masters of society and all their retinue like a smug religion revealed to the chosen few. There was no room in their outlook for the social convulsions, wars, and revolutions which had been the motive forces of the previous history of mankind.

The socialist and labor movements, which had grown up in Europe on the revolutionary teachings of Marx and Engels, began to succumb to the prevailing atmosphere. A stratum of privileged workers, who had shared in the crumbs of capitalist prosperity at the expense of the great mass of the unskilled workers and the colonial slaves, began to adapt themselves to the prevailing state of affairs.

They traded off their vision and hope of the socialist future for a few privileges and comforts of the present. A conservative bureaucracy, likewise sharing in the crumbs of prosperity and privilege, imposed on the workers' organizations the opportunist theory of a gradual, peaceful transition to socialism along the road of social reform. The conquest of the world labor and socialist movement by theories of reformist gradualism was well under way.

Marxist Ideas Upheld by Few

Against this whole tide of things as they seemed to be in the first years of the 20th Century; and against all the theories and beliefs founded on this apparent reality, a small minority in the labor movement — Lenin and the Bolsheviks, Trotsky, Luxemburg, Liebknecht, a small left-wing in various countries — contended that the basic analysis and prognosis of Marx and Engels retained all their validity. They held that the period of the peaceful expansion of capitalism was approaching its culmination. They proclaimed that the accumulating contradictions of ascending capitalism were destined to explode in a mighty series of social convulsions, wars, and revolutions, which could have no outcome short of the revolutionary transformation of society and the replacement of capitalism by a new social order.

In the tumultuous developments which were to unfold in the first quarter of the 20th Century, these conflicting theories confronted each other like armies in battle. They influenced the course of developments, for social theories are not merely views of history, but also active forces in shaping the course of its development. Men make their own history, as Marx and Engels said, even if they don't make it out of the whole cloth; and ideas are active forces in this making of history — for progress if they read social reality aright, or for derailment and temporary regression if they read it falsely.

III.

Events did not wait long to pass their judgment on this great conflict of theories. In the first quarter of the 20th Century, the contradictions of capitalism, which had been pointed out by the Marxists and overlooked by their opponents, began to assert themselves and to take their revenge on the high priests of bourgeois optimism and socialist reformism.

Test of Theories Begins in Earnest

The private ownership of the means of production, and the exploitation of the wage laborers, led to an enormous over-production of goods and capital in all the countries of the great powers. This anomaly irresistibly drove each of them to seek new markets and fields of investment. But since there were no new continents to discover and exploit; and since the world market did not and could not expand with the expansion of the productive powers of modern industry; and moreover, since this geographically limited world was already divided up by the dominant and competing powers — none of them could expand its markets and dispose of its surpluses, except at the expense of others. The modern capitalist states, which had been consolidated by smashing feudal provincialism to provide a broader

arena for the unrestricted development of the capitalist productive process, were already becoming too small to permit any further development within their restricted borders.

Expansion is the law of life for the capitalist system of production; and the separate national states could no longer provide the field for it. The forces of production, in Trotsky's winged phrase, began to revolt against their national barriers. The tension between the great powers in the struggle for markets and fields of investment, in a world already divided up, increased and mounted from year to year. Behind an imposing facade of pacifist talk and diplomatic hypocrisy, a feverish armaments race got underway; and the accumulating contradictions finally exploded in the great World War of 1914-18. Bourgeois optimism in regard to the prospects of uninterrupted peaceful and harmonious development of the productive forces crashed up against the greatest orgy of destruction of human life and material culture in the war. The pernicious theory of reformist gradualism, which had taken possession of the aristocracy and bureaucracy of the labor movement, paralyzed the workers in each of the warring countries and drove them into the slaughter against each other in the interest of their exploiters. The downfall of international socialism was widely celebrated. Marxism was subjected to ridicule in the camp of the imperialists and the renegades who had joined them.

Premature Refutations of Marxism

But this celebration of the death of Marxism and the refutation of its revolutionary theory was premature. The revolutionary Marxists, reduced to a small handful, carried on their work in all countries — under the most onerous conditions. Meanwhile, the drawn-out war, bringing death and destruction on every side, was doing its work of sapping the economy of the contending powers, and undermining the confidence of the people in the social system which had brought this calamity upon them. By the very fact of the war, conducted on such a scale and at such a cost, capitalism branded itself as a reactionary obstacle to the aspirations of the people to live secure and prosperous lives. The revolutionary storm which the war was preparing was first heralded by sheet lightning when the Russian Czar was overthrown in February 1917. And then, eight months later, the storm itself broke in all its magnificent fury with the Bolshevik Revolution which put the Russian working class in power.

This was the great turning point. November 7, 1917 is the moment in history from which the new age begins. Never before in the history of the human race was such a gigantic leap forward taken. Never before was there such a beneficent promise and assurance of the good future of mankind written into deed as on that day 34 years ago, when the Russian workers took power into their own hands and declared an end to the old things and the beginning of the new.

The Russian Revolution abolished the private ownership of the industries and the land, and demonstrated in practice that neither capitalists nor landlords are necessary

to modern production, but are rather parasitic obstacles to it.

Russian Revolution's Irrefutable Proof

The Russian Revolution demonstrated that the working class, even in a backward country, is capable of taking power from the palsied hands of outlived exploiters; and is capable likewise of forging out of its own ranks a vanguard party capable of leading the struggle. The Russian Revolution awakened tens of millions of colonial slaves to political life and aspiration for political independence for the first time. It released the pent-up rage and hatred of the betrayed workers of Europe, and inspired them with the will to follow the Russian example by Russian methods.

The revolutionary will of the masses, especially of Europe, was so strong, and bourgeois economy and self-confidence had been so weakened and shaken by the war, that successful revolutions in one country after another, sweeping the whole of Europe, were undoubtedly possible in the years immediately following the termination of the war of 1914-18. The situation was there, the opportunity was there, but the revolutionary party capable of organizing and leading the revolutionary struggle was lacking. Reformist social democracy still controlling the apparatus of the workers' organizations, although greatly discredited and weakened by their treachery in the war, was still strong enough to paralyze and defeat the revolutionary struggle of the masses. In those few sentences are stated the main reason, one might even say the only reason, why the Russian Revolution was not extended and consolidated over the continent of Europe in the five or six years which followed the victory of 1917.

The failure of the European workers to take the power, for the reasons already stated, enabled the European bourgeoisie to regain a certain measure of their self-confidence, and to reestablish a shaky stabilization of their economy and their rule. On the other hand, the Russian Revolution consolidated its victory, prevailed in the Civil War against the bourgeois counter-revolution, and defeated the numerous military interventions of the capitalist powers. A great bridgehead had been established, so to speak, and the revolutionary workers had the opportunity and the space to dig in, to entrench themselves, and to prepare for the next assault. The working class on a world scale was immeasurably stronger than it had been at the beginning of the century, and the capitalist class was weaker. The capitalist system, on a world scale, had irrevocably entered the period of its decline and decay.

New Illusions in Midst of Struggle

This is the way matters stood at the end of the first quarter of the 20th Century. One great battle in the worldwide struggle between socialism and capitalism had been decided in favor of the workers. Other, still greater, battles remained undecided.

IV.

The inconclusive stalemate in the great historic conflict between socialism and capitalism, which marked the beginning of the second quarter of the 20th Century, gave rise to a new set of illusions, misconceptions, and improvised

theories as ill-founded as those which had dominated mass thinking at the beginning of the century. These misconceptions and false theories penetrated deeply into the revolutionary labor movement. They disoriented and demoralized it, and thus had their effect on social developments.

The isolation of the Soviet Union, combined with the harsh poverty of the country, inherited from Czarism and aggravated by the heavy costs of the Civil War and the interventions, created the conditions for the rise of a privileged bureaucracy. This bureaucracy, like all privileged strata of society, grew conservative. They sought to protect their privileges at all costs. The Soviet bureaucrats developed the mentality of all privileged bureaucrats in the labor movement in all countries, which is summed up in the fervent desire to "let well enough alone." Looking at the world with the myopia of immediate self-interest, they imagined those things which appeared momentarily under their eyes to be the only reality.

"Socialism in One Country" or . . .

The Soviet bureaucrats saw the temporary recovery of capitalist economy, enormously exaggerated its stability, and endowed it with the quality of permanence. They saw the stagnation of the European Communist movement, after the great post-war revolutionary wave had subsided, and lost faith in its potentiality to expand and grow again with a new revolutionary revival. In the service of these moods and sentiments, in order to justify and try to maintain the status quo, which had brought a limited prosperity at least to the bureaucrats, the leaders of the conservative bureaucracy began to tinker with theory. The crowning monstrosity of this irresponsible theoretical tinkering was the Stalinist theory of "Socialism in one Country."

This theory, which the Stalinist faction passed off as an extension and development of revolutionary Marxism, was in fact blood brother to the revisionism of the Social Democratic reformists which had wrought such havoc in the labor movement in the first quarter of the century. The theory of Socialism in one Country signified an expression of the overpowering desire of the privileged bureaucracy to preserve their privileges within the borders of the Soviet Union and let the rest of the world labor movement go hang. It signified a renunciation of the perspective of international revolution; the recognition and expectation of the permanent existence of capitalism in five-sixths of the world, and the willingness of the Soviet bureaucracy to adapt themselves to it and live with it.

. . . Permanent Revolution?

Trotsky denounced the new improvisation. The theory of Socialism in one Country, and a backward country at that, is utopian, he said. The construction of a harmonious socialist order of society requires the highest productivity of labor, with international collaboration and a division of labor between associated countries to produce plenty and abundance for all. This theory of socialism in a single country is also reactionary, he said, and downright false in its international perspectives. The stabilization of world capitalism is only limited and temporary. Conditions are

maturing for a devastating crisis and new revolutionary explosions in various parts of the world. That is the underlying reality. There will be no lack of revolutionary situations, said Trotsky; and there is no reason to change our course, which has had as its central aim the extension of the Russian Revolution to other countries, and eventually to unite the whole world in one socialist federation.

To the Stalinist theory of "Socialism in one Country" Trotsky counterposed the Marxist theory of the Permanent Revolution. The second quarter of the 20th Century was dominated by this conflict of theories.

V.

Again, as in the first quarter of the 20th Century, events did not wait long to pass judgment on the contending theories. The conservative international outlook of Stalinism completely misjudged great events in the making, and at the same time, worked mightily to influence their unfavorable outcome.

Events Refute Stalinist "Theory"

The Chinese Revolution of 1925-27, which had every reasonable chance of success, was a great demonstration and warning that the days of imperialist domination of the Orient were numbered. The British General Strike of 1927, fraught with enormous revolutionary potentialities, was a startling revelation of the shakiness of bourgeois rule in the most conservative of bourgeois countries. The devastating world-wide economic crisis, touched off by the stock market crash in New York in 1929, served notice that the supposedly permanent stabilization of the capitalist economic system had already run its brief course and could never be fully restored. The Spanish civil war; the French sit-down strikes of June 1936; the breath-taking rise and sweep of industrial unionism in the United States under the banner of the CIO — all gave powerful testimony against the illusion that the struggle of the classes could be suspended, and the status quo between the Soviet Union and the capitalist countries permanently maintained.

In this great complex of world-shaking events, all crowded together within the brief space of a dozen years in the second quarter of the century, there was undoubtedly the making of a world revolutionary movement of such power that nothing could have stopped it. The uncontrollable crisis wracking the capitalist system through those fateful years cried aloud for a revolutionary solution. But the revolutionary road was blocked by the Stalinist leadership which had demoralized and corrupted the communist movement with the theory of Socialism in one Country, and all the unbridled practices of class collaboration which flowed from this reactionary theory. Humanity had to pay for the crimes of Stalinism with the unspeakable horrors of fascism and another World War.

VI.

The terrible experiences of Stalinism and Fascism, and the Second World War, and all that led to them and followed from them, changed many things, disappointed many expectations, and raised new problems for theoretical investigation. Once again new phenomena, unforeseen by people who notice only what is immediately before their eyes,

and always imagine that it will last forever, produced its crop of superficial impressions masquerading as worked-out theories.

The rise of fascism in Germany strengthened and reinforced the fascist regime of Mussolini in Italy, and contributed heavily to the fascist victory in Spain. A section of the bourgeoisie, imagining that the class struggle, the real driving force of history, had been eliminated because it had been pressed down under the iron lid of police-state terror, began to indulge themselves in a new theory of fascism as "the Wave of the Future," wherein social tranquility and profits would both be permanently assured. Others in the socialist and labor movement, or on its fringes, bowing before the terrifying fact of the present and taking fright from it, likewise endowed fascism with a vitality and longevity that it by no means deserved and could not live up to.

"Retgressionist" View of Fascism

Out of the dark pool of their own fears and terrors, these panic-mongers fished up the so-called theory of "retgressionism." They announced that the historic process is definitely moving backward toward barbarism, not forward toward socialism. But this capitulatory pessimism was just as worthless as the delighted optimism of a section of the capitalists, in providing a real appraisal of the role and prospects of fascism.

The Trotskyists maintained — and events have already proved — that fascism is not a new social order, but the diseased expression of a dying one. Fascism, in fact, is latent in decadent capitalism; the specific form of its rule in times of the highest social tension and crisis. If decaying capitalism is not overthrown in time, and replaced by a socialist order, fascism will appear again in one part of the world after another, including the United States. But even in that case, the rule of neo-fascism will not last longer, nor will its fate be different, than that of the fascist regimes of Mussolini and Hitler. The very fact that capitalism in one country or another is forced to resort to the desperate expedient of fascism is the most convincing sign of its instability, of its unviability, and of its imminent downfall.

Hitler and Mussolini, in their boasts and pretensions, and also in their ultimate fate, stand out in history as representative symbols of all fascist dictators who may yet make their brief appearance in one country or another. Hitler, at the height of his madness, boasted that his Nazi regime would last for a thousand years. But he had to settle for a mere twelve years, and then throw his own head into the bargain with the ignominious collapse of his regime. Mussolini, strutting on the Roman balcony, impressed many people as an impervious superman. But his regime fell apart "like a rotten apple" after a mere twenty years. And Mussolini himself ended upside down, hanging by his heels in the public square like a slaughtered pig in a butcher shop. There was poetic justice, as well as prophecy, in the ignominious end of the two fascist supermen.

Equally False Concept of Stalinism

The fate of the Stalinist criminals will be no more glorious. The world-conquering historical mission ascribed to Stalinism by frightened philistines and professional

pessimists, is no less chimerical than that formerly attributed to fascism. At the moment of its apparently greatest triumph of expansion, Stalinism has been overtaken by a mortal crisis. The revolt of Yugoslavia, which is already spreading like a virulent infection throughout the Stalinist domain in Eastern Europe, and tomorrow will spread to China — heralds the death sentence of history on the right of Stalinism to expand, or even to survive as anything but a horrible interlude in the march of humanity.

Humanity is marching forward to socialism and freedom, not backward to barbarism and slavery. Neither fascism nor Stalinism has any historical right to stand in the way. Fascism is the degenerate product of dying capitalism, a social system which remains too long on the scene after it has exhausted all its progressive potentialities and has become reactionary through and through. Stalinism is a degenerate growth on the labor movement — the product of undue retardation and delay of the proletarian revolution, after all the conditions for it have become rotten ripe. Neither fascism nor Stalinism represent "the Wave of the Future." Both are reactionary and transitory phenomena. Neither fascism nor Stalinism represent the main line of historic development. On the contrary, they are deviations from it, which must and will be obliterated in the next tidal wave of colonial uprisings and proletarian revolutions.

VII.

In order to form a correct appraisal of everything that has happened, it is necessary first of all, to get a clear view of the most important and decisive factors and to subordinate those which are secondary and incidental. The most important fact revealed by the Second World War, and the insane preparations for a Third, is its demonstration of the crisis and death agony of the capitalist system of production; of its complete inability to operate any longer on a basis of social stability and peace. The Second World War did not culminate in a series of successful revolutions in the advanced countries as the Marxists expected and hoped. But it is completely false to say that revolutionary situations did not arise; that the working class was definitively defeated; and that the bourgeoisie emerged with a secure and stable victory. Nothing could be a greater misrepresentation of reality than that.

True Aspect of Reality Today

The end of the war released such a tremendous revolutionary movement of the workers in Italy and France, as well as in Eastern Europe, that the capitalists were nowhere able to rule in their own name. In Italy, after more than 20 years of fascist suppression, during which all independent working class action and propaganda had been suppressed, the workers emerged from the war with an almost unanimous cry for communism or socialism. The Italian example is the most striking and reassuring proof of the indestructibility of the proletariat, and of its socialist consciousness. The overwhelming majority of the French working class at the end of the war followed the Communist Party only because of the mistaken belief that it could lead them to a French version of the great Russian Revolution.

The unparalleled upsurges of the colonial masses, which came in the wake of the war, have revealed the startling weakness of the western imperialist powers, and their inability to maintain and secure their colonial domination any more. The doom of western imperialism is clearly written in the flaming skies of the Orient. Outlived capitalism has no secure future anywhere.

The workers of Europe had their second chance for revolution in the immediate post-war period, and in the main they were ready for it. They failed of this objective once again only because they still lacked a sufficiently influential revolutionary party to organize and lead the struggle. The conclusion to be drawn from this is not to write off the revolution, but to build a revolutionary party to organize it and lead it. That's what we are here for.

Barometer Reads: Storms Ahead

The perspective of the coming years, as we read it in the course of events as they have transpired in the half-century behind us, is that of a continuing crisis and increasing weakness of bankrupt capitalism; of new colonial uprisings on an ever-vaster scale; of more strikes and class battles in the main countries of capitalism. In the course of these struggles the workers will learn the most necessary lessons from their own experiences. They will settle accounts with perfidious Stalinism and social democracy and drive them out of the workers' movement. They will forge revolutionary parties worthy of the century of blood and iron. And these parties will organize their struggles and lead them to their revolutionary goal.

VIII.

The years of the first half of the 20th Century have been years of storm and strife. And the barometer reads: more storms to come. Those who want peace and security, without fighting or taking any risks, have simply chosen the wrong time to be born. But those who are not afraid of storm and strife, who see social progress riding with the storm — for them matters stand differently. For those who are in tune with this century; who understand the laws of its development; who see the course and direction in which it is moving and must move — for us, this is a great century to be alive in. This is our century.

Many people have been overwhelmed by great events which they could not foresee and do not yet understand. They have seen their theories and beliefs refuted and swept away by reality and have not been able to find new ones. For such people this is a time of great confusion and discouragement, and despair of their own fate, and even of the fate of humanity. The pacifist optimism, which presided over the inauguration of the 20th Century, has given way to a profound pessimism. Those people who look only at the surface of events and refuse to see the social reality which underlies them, wake up in the morning with pessimism and go to bed at night with despair.

A Balanced Perspective

We Marxists have no part of this nightmare world. We see the course of development for the next 50 years already foreshadowed by the main course it has taken in the

50 years now behind us. The course has not been straight. There have been zig-zags and even regressions. There have been frightful catastrophes. But the general direction toward social transformation has been clearly delineated. Hitler's gas chambers, Truman's Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and Stalin's prisons and forced labor camps — they are all part of the terrible reality of our time. But they are not the whole of it. They are not even the most important part of it. They represent horrible aberrations from the main course of history, as revealed in the first half of the 20th Century. The Russian Revolution of 1917 is the great signpost, showing the real course of development and pointing the way to the future; to the final emancipation of humanity from the oppression of outlived capitalism, and from all fear of poverty, insecurity and war, which are its evil progeny.

We Marxists face the struggle for this future with full confidence. And we bring to this struggle faith in men and good will to work for the common good of all. Faith in man, and his capacity to survive and improve his lot, is not a religious superstition, as the skeptics and snivellers say. It is the recognition of reality, the most important and decisive reality there is. Faith in man and his communist future is at the core of Marxism, the central element of its unshakable optimism. The gloomy prophets of the eclipse of civilization and, perhaps, even the obliteration of human society, ignore the history and the evolution of man, which demonstrates above all else his unconquerable will and capacity to survive and go forward.

Marxists Face Future Confidently

Shall man, who came down out of the trees, and learned to stand on his feet and look the world in the face; shall man who has come so far and done so much, fall victim now to his own inventions and achievements? Shall he cease now to do and dare and aspire and achieve, and even to exist? We do not think so. The great men who taught us and inspired us never thought so. All the great revolutionaries and leaders of the people have believed in men and their better future. They never doubted, never stood aside, never yielded to pessimistic despair, no matter how dark the situation might be at the moment. We should remember that, and turn to the great men of the people for inspiration and guidance, so that we too may be imbued with their spirit; that we may see light ahead at the end of our difficult and heavy struggle, and go bravely forward to meet it.

It is true that the human race, threatened with another war of atomic bombs and bacterial poisons, is indeed confronted with a problem of survival on this planet. But the human race will survive. And in order to survive, it will do away with the social system which threatens its survival.

That is the supreme task assigned by history to the 20th Century, and it will be accomplished. The work is in progress, and the goal is in sight. The first half of the 20th Century saw the beginning of the necessary social transformation of the world. The second half of the 20th Century will see it carried through to a triumphant conclusion. Socialism will win the world and change the world, and make it safe for peace and freedom.

First Balance Sheet of the Yugoslav Affair

June 28, 1948 — June 28, 1951

By E. GERMAIN

From the beginning of the break of the Yugoslav Communist Party with the Kremlin, the *Fourth International* greeted the event as a turning point in the history of the working class movement. For the first time an entire Communist Party had wrested its independence from the Soviet bureaucracy. Since July 1948 we have said that for this reason the Yugoslav CP has ceased being a Stalinist party in the accepted meaning of the term and would inevitably enter a period of growing political differentiation.

Understanding, at first instinctively and then consciously, the deep-rooted causes for the unrestrained attack of the Soviet bureaucrats upon the Yugoslav revolution, the Yugoslav CP could grasp the significance of the *bureaucratization of a proletarian revolution* and begin to combat the manifestations of bureaucratism in its own country. It offered proof that the bureaucratic degeneration of the proletarian revolution, even in a small backward country, is not some inevitable phenomenon against which the revolutionary and proletarian vanguard could not possibly intervene. An attempt could be undertaken to combat the danger of bureaucratism consciously based upon an expansion of working class democracy. Thus the proletarian revolution would be raised to a higher level just as the October Revolution of 1917 had marked a leap forward in relation to the Paris Commune of 1871.

Historical Potentialities

Such a possibility was of tremendous importance. Like every victorious proletarian revolution it would bring about an invaluable reinforcement of the international working class. But even beyond that, such an advance of the Yugoslav revolution and the Yugoslav CP could still more radically change the alignment of forces within the international labor movement. The crisis of Stalinism, which was kept under cover before the outbreak of the Yugoslav affair, could now appear in the full light of day. This experience could convince thousands of communists in all countries not only of the infamously slanderous nature of the Kremlin's policy but also of the obvious falseness of the fundamental proposition on which the present power of Stalinism rests: "To break with Stalin means to pass into the camp of American imperialism."

Here is a Communist Party which only yesterday was praised to the skies. Here is a proletarian country where the bourgeoisie has been thoroughly expropriated. And this country breaks with Stalin, maintains its proletarian character and remains more hostile than ever to capitalist politics and economy!

What a magnificent lesson that would have been for the communist workers of the entire world! Add to that

the force of attraction that could have been exercised upon the workers and intellectuals of all countries by the *concrete proof* that there exists a different way to industrialize a workers' state than that of bureaucratic oppression and a monstrous inequality of incomes — and you have the reason why the Fourth International enthusiastically rallied from the start to the aid of the Yugoslav CP and of Yugoslavia squeezed between the Stalinist blockade and imperialist blackmail.

Internally: Continued Progress

Today it is possible to draw up a first balance sheet of the Yugoslav affair. This balance sheet is not simple or of a single color. On the *internal* plane, the Yugoslav CP began by fulfilling in large measure the promises and hopes contained in its break with the Kremlin on June 25, 1948.

The law on the participation of workers councils in the administration of factories and branches of industry; the democratization of the peasant cooperatives; the introduction of the law and the practice of the recall of elected representatives; the increasingly active participation of councils of parents and students in the administration of education; the introduction of the most progressive legislation on social security; the legalization of abortion; the introduction of a beginning of free expression and creation for intellectual workers; and above all, the abolition of all bureaucratic privileges and the introduction of the communist principle: NO ONE SHALL HAVE MORE TO EAT THAN A WORKER ENGAGED IN A HARD JOB — all these comprise a series of steps along the road to proletarian democracy.

Even if the extent of these measures has been restricted by the absence of genuine democracy within the Yugoslav CP itself, expressed especially in the absence of the right to form temporary tendencies, they amply justify, not only the defense of Yugoslavia as a workers state confronting restorationist attempts by imperialism, but also the defense of this workers state which is incomparably less bureaucratized and far more advanced toward proletarian democracy against the Kremlin's efforts to reimpose its bureaucratic straitjacket as well as economic plunder and national oppression upon it.

Opportunist Foreign Policy

On the other hand, just as much as the balance sheet of internal development in Yugoslavia appears positive at first from the standpoint of the international labor movement, so the balance sheet of the *international action* of the Yugoslav CP has become increasingly negative with each passing day following the abrupt opportunist and

rightward turn Yugoslav foreign policy has undergone since the summer of 1950.

Feeling menaced by the new international situation after the outbreak of the Korean war; having no confidence in the forces of the world proletariat and the colonial peoples to safeguard them against a Stalinist military assault; getting ready to appeal to the United Nations in case of attack and seized in addition with anguishing economic difficulties, especially by the threat of famine, the Yugoslav leaders bowed down before the imperialist pressure exerted upon them. In the United Nations they demanded the withdrawal of Chinese troops from Korea and spoke against the withdrawal of the American fleet from the waters around Formosa. In their press and their speeches they have echoed the American propaganda condemning the heroic North Korean army as the "aggressor." They have sung the praises of the U. N., this mechanism for rubber-stamping the decisions of the State Department. They have condemned the revolutionary policy of Peoples' China as an "aggressive Great Power policy." They have forsaken the cause of Ho-Chi-Minh and the resistance movement of the Vietnamese. They have gone so far as to hail the "strategic value of the opening of the Belgrade-Salonika railroad." From all appearances, they have championed the positions of American imperialism on a growing number of questions.

"Theoretical" Justifications

This entire opportunist and rightward course, which has cut off the cause of the Yugoslav leaders from that of the colonial revolution and of the revolutionary working class movement of the West, has been clumsily justified after the fact by the elaboration of a scarcely novel political philosophy: the discovery of the "State Capitalist" nature of the USSR. They define Soviet foreign policy as characterized by the "old imperialist methods," more aggressive and warlike than American imperialism which would be satisfied with a peaceful penetration of the world (see the articles by Djilas in *Themes Contemporains*) and discover that socialist forces are progressing throughout the world under new and non-revolutionary forms, and so forth. Is it surprising under such conditions that the Yugoslav CP has had to resort in its turn to the weapon of slander against the revolutionary criticism of the Fourth International by accusing the Trotskyists of being "wholly on Stalin's side" in the domain of foreign policy (*Tanjug Bulletin*, January 12, 1951).

Last summer it could still be asked whether the opportunist declarations, speeches and writings of the Yugoslav leaders were not to be explained by the perilous situation and the famine in Yugoslavia and whether they might not have only a passing influence on the international working class movement. Could no more be involved than mere words, which few people after all take at their face value? That was an error which seriously underestimated the repercussions of the Yugoslav revolution upon tens of thousands of communists the world over.

The rightward turn of Yugoslav foreign policy, which inevitably looked like a real slap in the face to the Korean and Chinese masses struggling against their imperialist

enemy, quickly discredited the Yugoslav cause in the eyes of hesitating communist militants, and tended to give a certain basis to the Stalinist slander that "Tito had passed into the imperialist camp." The argument that this was needed for the delivery of wheat from America is not well founded. If Washington decided to deliver wheat to Yugoslavia, it is not because the opportunist speeches of Kardelj seduced the American bourgeoisie, but because the Pentagon strategists consider it advantageous to tie down twenty Stalinist divisions in the Balkans, even if it is a workers state that has to keep them tied down.

However, since then, deeds have followed upon words. It is no longer simply the *objective result* of the rightist Yugoslav policy which delays and obstructs the regrouping of the revolutionary forces but the deliberate intervention of the Yugoslav CP and the political forces it inspires which have more and more become one of the main checks upon this regroupment. In the British Labor Party it is not the left wing but the reformist and pro-imperialist leadership that Djilas and Pijade are embracing, declaring that it represents the principal socialist force today and keeping silent over the fact that it maintains colonial exploitation over half of Africa. In the French and Italian labor movement it is no longer a communist *left* supported by Yugoslavia which condemns the Stalinists for having ruined the excellent chances for a revolutionary conquest of power in 1944-48 by their policy of class collaboration. It is on the contrary an opportunist and reformist right-wing that, with Yugoslav backing, calls upon the communist workers to defend their bourgeois fatherland against an eventual "Soviet aggression," as Cucchi and Magnani have done (*Politica Nuova*, February 24, 1951) as well as Michel-Morin (in the "Free Forum" of *l'Unite*, November 26, 1950 and January 9, 1951) and Darius Le Corre (*La Paix du Monde*, February 25, 1951.).

Obviously, on this basis, a veritable selection in reverse is taking place among the thousands of communists who had begun to be shaken in their Stalinist convictions by the Yugoslav affair. The most proletarian, the most revolutionary and the most *communist* elements in the deepest sense of the word have been thrown back into the arms of Stalinism and their hesitations and doubts have in a large measure been dissipated. At the same time the petty-bourgeois elements, or the reformist workers won over to the Communist parties during their "National Front" policy who have never overcome their yearning to return to this period, have been attracted toward these new formations and serve, not as a catalytic agent for a revolutionary regroupment, but as a mere bridge toward the decayed Social Democracy.

Why This Contradictory Development

How has this two-sided and contradictory development of the Yugoslav affair been possible? Left to the forces of its own small country alone, the Yugoslav revolution could not solve all its problems. But the era of such national isolations of the revolution has definitively gone by. Today the revolution rebounds from one year to another into new countries, into new continents. Victorious in China, it advances toward Korea, Indochina, Burma,

Malaya and Indonesia. Lifting its head in Spain, it already casts its shadow upon France and Italy.

A genuine revolutionary party, after having conquered power even in a small country must depend on these forces to overcome the fundamental difficulties of its situation, meanwhile maneuvering in a principled manner. Along this road it may now and then be forced into compromises while talking in such terms as Lenin and Trotsky employed at Brest-Litovsk, when they were infinitely weaker and more isolated than the Federated Republic of Yugoslavia is today.

By abandoning, on the contrary, all efforts aimed at an international extension of the revolution; by basing themselves essentially on aid from imperialism to surmount their immediate difficulties, the Yugoslav CP leaders have actually left the flanks of the Yugoslav revolution wide open. A growing and formidable pressure from hostile class forces — world imperialism and the well-to-do peasantry within the country itself — is beginning to undermine the gains of this revolution. Planning is encountering ever greater obstacles. Prices have been virtually freed. The “unrestricted operation of economic laws” is being restored more and more. It matters little that all this is taking place under the cover of what is called a “withering away of the State in the economic sphere.”

What Is Really Happening?

In reality, *the restoration of capitalism is becoming a real threat for the Federated Republics of Yugoslavia*, as the rightward course of foreign policy is now beginning to be extended into domestic affairs. In this respect the decisive importance of the utmost clarity in program and firmness in revolutionary principle is again being confirmed. To be sure, in the last analysis, peculiar objective conditions explain the entire course of the Yugoslav revolution. But just as the Yugoslav CP leadership can rightly pride itself on its specific role in the organization of the

revolutionary struggle of 1941-45 and in the struggle for proletarian democracy of 1949-1950, so the same heavy responsibility rests upon it now as its policy drags the Yugoslav revolution toward its downfall.

Defense and Criticism

The Fourth International does not subordinate the interests of the world revolution to any special cause. No more than they countenanced or accepted Stalinist justification for the political capitulations beginning with 1923 on the pretext of the tremendous burdens on the USSR, do the Trotskyists acknowledge that the dangers threatening Yugoslavia justify the abandonment of the cause of the colonial peoples and of the proletarian revolution in the West. That is why it is their duty to expose, with all the necessary political clarity and without the slightest compromise, the terrible political errors committed by the Yugoslav CP which are likewise blows delivered to the international revolutionary movement.

At the same time, the Fourth International regards the cause of the working class as indivisible in all countries. Whatever Tito does or Kardelj says, neither Stalin nor Truman should be permitted to profit thereby in order to eliminate the elements of proletarian democracy in Yugoslavia or to restore either national oppression or capitalist property there. That is why we will continue to defend Yugoslavia against all its enemies so long as it remains what it is today. Far from being in contradiction, the tasks of defending Yugoslavia and of criticizing the policy of the Yugoslav CP are complementary to each other. At bottom these are two aspects of a single policy which defends the common interests of the workers and every one of the struggles they are conducting for their freedom, whether in Yugoslavia or Korea, in Europe, Asia or America.

(Translated from *La Vèrite*, July 18, 1951)

Women in the Chinese Revolution

By **FRANCES CONWAY**

The changes in a historical epoch may always be inferred from the comparative freedom of women in one part of it or another, for in an improvement in the relations between women and men, between the weak and the strong, we see most clearly the victory of human nature over the nature of the brute. . . . The degree of the emancipation of woman is a natural standard of the general emancipation.

Karl Marx and Frederick Engels in “The Holy Family.”

The unfolding social revolution in China has awakened millions of the “lowest of the low,” the Chinese women. Women workers, peasants and students have been awakened to struggle for a new freedom and equality. They are fighting to overcome centuries of brutal oppression and inhuman degradation. In thousands they have joined the struggles of the peasants in “overturning” the landlords.

More thousands have joined the workers’ struggles in the cities and girl students have taken their place among the revolutionary youth of China. Sheer numbers alone indicate the tremendous importance of the participation of women in the Chinese revolution.

But an appreciation of her numerical participation alone is not enough to gauge the depth of the social change unfolding there. It is necessary to understand the revolutionary significance of the role of women and the woman question in the entire social structure of the country. These women are only now obtaining rights which were obtained in the West long ago, with the development of capitalism and the political regime of bourgeois democracy. The problems of Chinese women today, and the solution of their problems, are an inseparable part of the struggles of

the masses of China as a whole — of the peasant to overcome the remnants of feudalism and of the city proletariat against inhuman conditions of labor.

Semi-Slave Conditions

The semi-slave position of the vast majority of Chinese women is well known and their extreme degradation does not need reiteration here. Suffice it to point to the centuries-old practice of concubinage, the buying and selling of wives and daughters, the existence of thousands of slave girls for use either as cheap labor or in prostitution. Even until the most recent developments and the establishment of the new regime in China, the peasant in many places could turn in his wife or daughter for the unpaid balance of his taxes. In the cities husbands openly offered their wives and daughters to strangers to keep the family from starvation.

Women factory workers were little better off. In Shanghai, where more than half of the cotton industry of south and east China was concentrated, women employees made up over 65% of the working population. In the textile industry there were more than three times as many women employed as men. The vast majority of these industrial workers were supplied through "labor masters" who generally took 40% of the workers' earnings. The master kept his laborers in dormitories, sometimes as many as 30-40 workers in one room. A woman could be beaten for errors in her work. She could be punished for infringements of factory discipline by being locked in cages too small to lie down in. The vast majority of women workers were between 14-19 years of age. Of 8,946 women employees in the cotton mills in Tsingto, 7,272 were found to be less than 25 years old, and 6,342 less than 20 (in 1942).

In an extensive investigation among female employees in Shanghai (1940), it was revealed that "complaints over inadequate wages are exceedingly rare, but complaints about mental and emotional discomfort, such as might be occasioned by fierce-looking supervisors, are very common." The explanation is that in spite of the near starvation wages and terrible conditions of employment, they worked to escape "family troubles" — forced marriages, tyrannical mothers-in-law, sale into slavery by starving parents, etc.

Ideological Base

To view the woman question of China solely from the aspects of the misery and degradation of her sex is to underestimate its role in the entire social structure. The position of women in society and the structure and role of the family are mutually dependent and inseparable factors. The philosophy of Confucius and his theory and practice of ancestor worship has formed the ideological base of the family in China up to the most recent period. Confucius regarded the family as the foundation of the political organization of the state, and regarded filial piety as the chief moral virtue of mankind:

He developed the practice of ancestor worship, cultivated by the virtue of filial piety, as a means of securing political tranquillity and submission of the people to the authority of the state. Ancestor worship increases the sense

of propriety and righteousness, and thereby creates respect for law and order. Furthermore, it teaches respect for the state authority, for learning respect for one's elder brothers as preparation for serving all the elders of the country.

Throughout the works of Confucius the general idea is expressed that women should be submissive to man. Indeed, some authorities state that Confucius, in all his wise sayings, had not one favorable word to say about women. Women are not permitted to fulfill the duties of ancestor worship. Their role is the production of sons and submission to the male head of the household. The submission of the female to the male and of the son to the father, has its reflection in the submission of the peasant to the gentry, tenant to the landlord and the landlord to the state. Thus the family in China, perhaps more than any elsewhere, has served as an ideological training ground for submission to authority and respect for things as they are, for acceptance of one's position in society as a matter of "fate."

Role in Agriculture

In addition to its ideological role, the family, and women in particular, have been used as a direct means of accumulating wealth. The process of accumulation on the land has resulted in the most land and the most women being owned and controlled by the rich peasant and local landlord. The poor peasant seldom had more than one wife, while the local lord had numerous wives, concubines and slave girls from whom he benefited both for his pleasure and through their labor in domestic industry. His consequent many sons served as his local political machine. In his book *China Shakes the World*, Belden cites the example of one landlord who had a family of 68 members and through this family controlled 700 tenant farmers, 30 slave girls, 200 squatters and maintained seven wet-nurses to assist in feeding and raising additional family members. By increasing his family he could further expand his rule and acquire additional wealth.

Thus the woman question and the family has been for centuries both a material and ideological means of power and political control over the peasantry in the village by the local semi-feudal lord and on a national scale has been the ideological foundation and a direct means of reactionary oppression by tyrannical rulers such as Chiang Kai-shek. The problems of the land and of women are inseparable and mutually dependent in the Chinese revolution. This is why any serious attempt of the women to free themselves from oppression or any serious attempt by the peasant to "overturn" the landlord could not help but result in the upheaval of the entire social pyramid, from the family and its degradation of women, through the village up to national authority and inevitably raise the question of state power.

The Women's Associations

In the course of the civil war against Chiang Kai-shek and his imperialist supporters which resulted in the establishment of the new regime, Women's Associations were formed in hundreds of villages throughout the liberated areas of China. The Communist Party and the "cadres" —

students and intellectuals of the government of the liberated areas — supported the revolts of the women. They gave leadership to their meetings and assisted them in organizing and extending their struggles. The method of organization of these Women's Associations, the participation of peasant women in "Speak Bitterness" meetings and the justice dealt out by them to hated and brutal husbands is described in detail by Belden in his above mentioned book.

Most dramatic is the story of Gold Flower, a North China village girl, deprived of her young sweetheart and married to an ugly older man she had never before seen. Her husband and his family abused her mercilessly. "Gold Flower, though only eighteen, was already tired of her existence. She hated society, she hated her husband, she hated life itself, she contemplated suicide again, but was restrained by the thought of the sorrow she would bring her mother. When her mother died, she determined she would kill herself."

In 1945 a Women's Association was organized in her village after the 8th Route Army passed through. One of its first acts was to investigate Gold Flower's treatment by her father-in-law. Sixteen women carrying clubs and ropes took him into custody. Here is Belden's account of the Speak-Bitterness meeting at which he was tried:

"Gold Flower's father-in-law was held a prisoner for two days in a room in the building of the Women's Association. On the third day a general meeting of all the women in the village was called to decide what to do with him. Groups of women were making their way toward the center of the village. Never had they all come out on the streets before, and Gold Flower realized with a start that there were many women in the village whom she scarcely knew, so close had they heretofore kept indoors. Dark Jade and Taowa sought her out at home and led her to the hall of the Women's Association which had been established in the house of a puppet who had fled away when the Japanese had gone.

"When they arrived, the meeting was in full swing. Forty or fifty women were crowded into the room and on the steps of the courtyard outside. Up front, behind a table, was a smaller group of women, among them a girl whom Gold Flower had never seen before. Dark Jade went up to the front of the room and called for silence.

"Sisters," she announced, "a cadre from the district will now speak. I ask you to keep order."

"The woman whom Gold Flower did not know stood up. From the very first words of her speech the others all came under the spell of her eloquence. She spoke of the feudalism of China, which was making the women slaves of men, of the common interests of brides and maidens, of the necessity to struggle against in-laws who oppressed daughters-in-law, of the need to fight parents who opposed freedom of marriage, of the aims of the 8th Route Army and the Communist party, which were carrying on a struggle against the old black society for the equality of women.

"We stretch out our sisterly hands to the oppressed women, and hope that in our struggle against the dictatorship of Chiang Kai-shek and the landlords we shall find faithful allies among the village women." Her voice sounded like a trumpet to Gold Flower. "At the front the workers and peasants of our democratic army are pouring out their blood against the soldiers of Chiang Kai-shek, armed by the American reactionaries; and in the rear, here in the villages, we must stand together and build a new society. And we shall build it! Hand in hand we shall go into the struggle against those who have enslaved us for two

thousand years. And any man, any husband, any father-in-law who opposes us we shall beat to the ground and treat without mercy."

"That's right. Ah, that's right!" Gold Flower said to herself over and over again, as she listened to this woman who seemed to be speaking directly to her heart.

"After the cadre finished speaking, Dark Jade, as chairman of the meeting, stood up. Her talk was burdened with clumsy, involved phrases, for she had never made a speech before. But the women listened to her with a great deal of sympathy as she was from their own village and was one of them. Rarely did someone interrupt, and her words found a vivid response.

"Suddenly she paused, and Gold Flower felt herself grow weak as Dark Jade looked directly at her and spoke in an intimate way.

"Now," she said, "the time is come to talk of the case of our dearest sister, Gold Flower. Her sufferings are the sufferings of all women. If she is not freed, we cannot be free ourselves. . ."

"That's true," shouted a voice from the center of the room. "Let us free Gold Flower."

"We must beat that old man," shrieked a voice in Gold Flower's ear. "Beat him. Beat him."

"The other women began to take up the cry. Dark Jade pounded on the table with her fist, and the roar died away.

"Sisters! We must take our meeting to be a serious business so that it should not be shameful to the people and so that we should get a good result from our actions. As it is we have been treated unjustly enough by men, but we should not fall into the same error. We must have respect for our Women's Association so that everyone shall respect it. Let us first discuss how we shall treat the old man before we decide on anything."

"The meeting finally decided to call in the old man.

"Dark Jade threw open the door at Gold Flower's back and her father-in-law, his arms bound to his sides, was led in, guarded by two women. His face was pale and he glanced around the room uncertainly, blinking his old eyes.

"Old man! Be frank. Tell your bad treatment," said Dark Jade, and the rest of the women echoed her shouting: "Be frank!"

"I have done nothing." The father-in-law spoke with deliberate roughness. "If you don't believe me, you can ask my daughter-in-law." His eyes looked over the heads of the other women and fell on Gold Flower with a look that expressed his hostility, and seemed to say: "Be careful."

"Looking at him from afar, Gold Flower felt a shiver of apprehension. She saw all eyes were on her. Pressing her fists against her chest, she ran on her toes to the front of the room. Then feeling it was now or never, she summoned all her determination.

"I married into your family — yes!" she hissed into his face. "But there's been no millet for me to eat. No clothes in the winter. Are these not facts? Do you remember how badly you have treated me in these past five years? Have you forgotten the time my mother was sick and you made me kneel in the courtyard for half a day? In the past I suffered from you. But I shall never suffer again. I must turn over now. I have all my sisters in back of me and I have the 8th Route Army."

"She shouted these words. His face grew dark and red.

"Is it right for you to treat me like this? There is much that I could say. If I should speak, all these women would beat you to death."

"As she said this, a wave of agitation ran through the meeting and a loud shout arose. "Speak!" Then as the roar of the voices sank, a thin girlish shriek pierced the growing quiet:

"Down with those who treat daughters-in-law badly! Long live our Women's Association!"

"You ate wheat flour bread and let me eat husks!" Gold Flower said, growing excited.

"Ai-a-a-ah!" a shout like a bursting shell rose from the women.

"The crowd groaned. In the heavy swelling voices, the sound of shuffling feet could be heard. Gold Flower felt herself being pushed aside. A fat girl was at her elbow and others were crowding close. 'Let us spit in his face,' said the fat girl. She drew back her lips over her gums and spat between the old man's eyes. Others darted in, spat in his face, and darted away again. The roar of voices grew louder. The old man remained standing with his face red and his beard matted with saliva. His knees were trembling and he looked such a poor object that the women laughed and their grumbling and groaning grew quieter. Then Dark Jade, pushing the others back, cried:

"Are you ready to reform yourself?"

"I will change.' The old man's voice was low and subdued.

"Will you torture your daughter any more?"

"No."

"All women unite,' the same girlish voice that had cried from the crowd before shouted out in another slogan.

"Women unite,' echoed the crowd.

"Beat down conservatives,' cried the voice again.

"Down with conservatives,' echoed the crowd.

"Now that Gold Flower's father-in-law had confessed his sins,' the meeting was over."

"Gold Flower's husband was likewise punished by the Women's Committee until he agreed to reform. He was finally forced to flee from the vengeance of the village women for his failure to carry out his promise. The liberated Gold Flower became a revolutionary recruiter for the 8th Route Army."

Role in Revolution of 1925-27

The more recent developments among the Chinese women stem from their basic experiences in the rise of the revolutionary tide in 1925-27. In the course of this tremendous upsurge of workers and peasants, all that was degenerate and decadent in the old society was shaken asunder and trampled upon. "Bandages were torn from the bound feet of women. Young girls, with bobbed hair and an air of defiant energy, streamed into the countryside to awaken their sex and free it of chains that bore the rust of generations. Confucius, the high priest of privilege and submission, was torn from the shrouds of a vicious and reactionary morality and paraded in effigy through village streets and burned," H. R. Isaacs reported in his *Tragedy of the Chinese Revolution*. Women's Unions were formed at that time, claiming over 300,000 women in the major cities of China. A generation of "bobbed haired girls" arose. Bobbed hair became a flag for which women died!

Then, in the reaction and slaughter of 1927, over 1000 leading women workers, students, and even bourgeois women were killed. "It is actually true that if a girl had bobbed hair she was subject to execution as a communist in Hunan and Santon," according to Wm. Wales' "Inside Red China." Such is the explosive character of the woman question! It is through experiences such as these that both revolution and reaction learned well the importance of women in China. To go forward, the revolution had to encompass the fight for women's freedom and

equality, and to suppress the revolution the reaction must subordinate women, by death if necessary!

Led in New Upsurge

Through their own activity and organizations, and in conjunction with the revolt of the peasantry and demonstrations of the students, women and young girls joined the battles and the guerrilla warfare of the recent civil war. Many stories of great heroism have been told by observers of various political opinions. Not only did thousands of peasant women lend their assistance to the military units of the people's army but many women served as armed guerrilla fighters and as spies behind the lines of the Nationalist army. In the liberated areas peasant women went to work in the fields and demanded that their husbands and sons take up arms against Chiang Kai-shek and American imperialism. In many cases these peasant women had not previously been allowed to appear in public unaccompanied. Now they were working in the fields and were among the most ardent supporters of the Red army. Many landlords' wives secretly gave information to the revolutionary elements to assist in the great overturning. In the area around Peking it is reported that approximately 50% of the rural women have actively taken part in the land reform. It is as a result of their participation in these struggles that the women of China have gained their newly obtained rights.

New Basis for Genuine Equality

The "Basic Program of the Agrarian Law" adopted by the new government specified that women are entitled to the same allotment of land as men. The *Shanghai News* reports that in Central and Eastern China 60,000,000 women have acquired land equally with men! The question of land equality is especially significant since the vast majority of Chinese people are peasants. Equality of land means the possibility of vast numbers of women becoming economically independent of men and thereby giving material reality to their legal equality.

The "Common Program," adopted by the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference in 1949, proclaimed legal equality of women and men. "The People's Republic of China shall abolish the feudal system which holds women in bondage. Women shall enjoy equal rights with men in political, economic, cultural, educational and social life. Freedom of marriage for men and women shall be established." The laws on working conditions adopted the principle of equal pay for equal work and set forth the legal basis for protection of the special interests of women and juvenile workers. The industrial program has opened up opportunities for industrial training and employment of women. Symbolic of this is the fact that International Women's Day, declared a national holiday in 1949, was inaugurated by means of a train operated completely by women from Port Arthur to Darien.

The leading Marxists have long anticipated the colossal role women workers play in the development of the working class movement and especially in the Far Eastern revolutions. This was the theme of Trotsky's speech to the Second World Conference of Communist Women in 1921:

"Generally speaking, in the world labor movement the woman worker stands closest. . . to that section of labor which is the most backward, the most oppressed, the lowliest of the lowly. And just because of this, in the years of the colossal world revolution this section of the proletariat can and must become the most active, the most revolutionary and the most initiative section of the working class. . . Henceforth woman will be to a far lesser degree than ever in the past a 'sister of mercy,' in the political sense, that is. She will become a far more direct participant on the main revolutionary battlefield."

Trotsky's Prediction Vindicated

Chinese women have vindicated Trotsky's prediction. The advances already made toward the solution of their

problems are a direct result of women entering the revolutionary battlefield in their own name and giving their life's blood in the struggle for freedom and equality. The awakening of women and their revolt against centuries of oppression and degradation has unloosed a tremendous revolutionary force in China. This force has been a strong contributing factor in the victories of the civil war, and in the building of the new China it will be a source of power in the coming socialist revolution. An understanding of this revolt, its social content and the depth of its penetration into every aspect of Chinese life is indispensable for a thorough analysis of the significance of the social revolution unfolding in China today.

IN MEMORY OF LEON TROTSKY

November 7, 1879 -- August 21, 1940

Eleven years ago, Stalin's hired assassin murdered Leon Trotsky in his home at Coyoacan, Mexico. The fatal attack of August 20, 1940 brought to a close the fruitful work of one of the greatest of the revolutionists of all history, one of the ablest Marxist interpreters of the problems of our time.

Out of the great heritage of scientific work which Trotsky has bequeathed to us, we have selected for publication on this anniversary, two articles in which he defended the Marxist analysis of the class nature of the Soviet Union. Together with these two articles, we are also publishing a survey and appraisal of the Marxist work on the role of United States capitalism done by Trotsky in the course of many years of attention to this problem.

Thus our memorial tribute to Trotsky this anniversary takes the form of a presentation of Trotsky's ideas on the two countries that stand at the center of the current maelstrom of conflict: the USA and the USSR.

Main Problems of Our Time

The gathering forces of the social storm have, for the present at least, been polarized around these two powerful antagonists. This has been apparent for the past six years, or since the closing days of World War II. It must not be imagined, however, that the role being played at present by the two leading centers of two antagonistic social systems was suddenly invented or discovered. The parts played by American imperialism and by the Soviet Union have been prepared by a long process of social development.

This process, which has set the stage for the present battles, was analysed in detail as it developed by Leon Trotsky. On the one hand, he was one of the great revolutionary founders of the Soviet Union. Following this, he was a witness to, and the leader of the fight against the subsequent degeneration of the new state power. And finally, he was the greatest single defender of the progressive

conquests of October, conquests which remain to the present day.

On the other hand, Trotsky was, among the Russian Marxists, the closest observer of the imperialist development of the United States. Not only did he devote much time and attention to the problems of American capitalism, but, as the article we print here shows, he sketched out an accurate forecast of the coming role of America.

Importance of Russian Question

The problem of the class nature of the Soviet Union, analysed here in polemical form by Trotsky, has never ceased to claim the attention of the radical movement. The Soviet Union, because of the extreme degeneration it has undergone during the past quarter of a century, has become the crucial issue for revolutionists everywhere. Revolutionary socialists have found that they must clarify their conception of the goal of the socialist movement to the very utmost when discussing the Soviet Union, precisely for the reason that so many of the original conquests of October have been destroyed there. On the other hand, renegades have used Stalin's crimes as a convenient portal through which to make their graceless exits from the revolutionary camp.

In our opinion, Trotsky's analysis of the Soviet Union, its class nature and degeneration, is the only one which is in accord with reality. Nothing else can explain the extraordinary determination of the whole capitalist world to destroy the Soviet Union. Nothing else can explain why the Soviet bureaucracy clings tenaciously to nationalized property within the territories under its control, while doing so much to prop up capitalism in the rest of the world. Nothing else can explain the self-contradictory nature of Stalinism, caught in a trap between the warring world bourgeoisie and the aroused working class and colonial peoples.

The fact that the workers of one of the most backward

of all countries made a revolution in 1917, the fact that, because of the backwardness of this country this revolution degenerated; the fact that even this degenerated revolution made possible the most enormous economic progress in the history of any country at any time; and finally, the fact that the remaining conquests of the degenerated revolution have become the target for the attack of the whole capitalist world — all of these facts must be grasped together to give us the real picture of the USSR today. Without comprehending them, there is no possible comprehension of the present world crisis.

For these reasons, Trotsky's articles, both about the US and the USSR, have far more than an historical interest. They delineate the framework upon which all of contemporary history is draped. And, like all of science, the science of contemporary society requires first of all a scientifically discovered background, without which it becomes a formless mass of petty journalistic observations.

A word about the circumstance under which these articles on the USSR were written. Craipeaux, Burnham,

Carter, were representative types of the many minority groupings in the Fourth International who, for years, challenged the Marxist analysis of the Soviet Union and tried to substitute analyses that they said were "better," "more revolutionary," etc. Since, contrary to charges made by ignorant and malicious people, the Fourth International is democratic in its structure and methods, these minority groupings were given facilities whereby they could discuss their views both in writing and in speech. The articles by Trotsky printed here are replies made by him to arguments of the minority groupings aimed at his analysis of the so-called "Russian Question."

Very little remains of these groupings in the radical movement today. Some of them have abandoned their efforts to teach Marxists to be more "revolutionary" only to take up the task of teaching the bourgeoisie to be more reactionary: witness James Burnham. And despite all efforts before or since, the scientific work of Trotsky in the analysis of the social structure of the degenerated USSR remains the only solid foundation for revolutionary socialism today.

Trotsky on the Role of the U.S.A.

By WILLIAM F. WARDE

Leon Trotsky looked upon the United States as "the foundry in which the fate of man is to be forged."

This country was marked out for such a role, not because its inhabitants were possessed of unique virtues beyond the reach and ability of other peoples but because of the entire course and tendencies of world development in modern times.

Thanks to exceptionally favorable historical circumstances and natural endowments, the productive forces of modern society and its techniques — which are the mainsprings of progress — had reached their highest levels here.

The wealth and productive facilities of America could supply the material basis for a new social organization which would ensure plenty for all in the shortest time. But the capitalist ownership of industry and the monopolist control of the government stands in the way of using these riches and facilities for the benefit of the American people as a whole and for mankind.

Two Main Contradictions in U.S.

Because its economic and financial strength is locked within the framework of capitalist relations, America finds herself simultaneously impelled in two opposite directions. On the one hand, Trotsky explained, "it is precisely the international strength of the United States and her irresistible expansion arising from it, that compels her to include the powder magazines of the whole world into the foundations of her structure, that is, all the antagonisms between the East and the West, the class struggle in Old

Europe, the uprisings of the colonial peoples, and all wars and revolutions."

The United States is thus subjected, externally and internally, to tremendous revolutionary pressures far greater than any other advanced country has had to withstand.

On the other hand, the operation of these same forces, produces just the opposite effect, transforming "North American capitalism into the basic counter-revolutionary force in the modern epoch interested in the maintenance of (capitalist) 'order' in every corner of the terrestrial globe." That is why, for all its vast material achievements, the United States has appeared to the rest of the world, not as the trailblazer to socialism, but as the supreme embodiment of its opposite — capitalism.

These words, laying bare the dynamics of the world role of America, were written almost a quarter of a century ago. They have been entirely confirmed by the course of events.

Trotsky's First View of America

A Marxist, who understood how world conditions and tendencies dominate the development of every separate nation, Trotsky always took as his point of departure the review and analysis of world economic and political relations. The problem of America's role in world affairs first preoccupied his attention when he was expelled from France and then Spain for his socialist anti-war activities and came to New York in the third year of the First World War.

Shortly after his arrival in January 1917 he addressed an international meeting of welcome in the following words:

"It is a fact of supreme importance that the economic life of Europe is being blasted to its very foundations whereas America is increasing in wealth. As I look enviously at New York — I who still think of myself as a European — I ask myself: 'Will Europe be able to stand it? Will it not sink into nothing but a cemetery? And will the economic and cultural center of gravity not shift to America?'"

In one of the New York libraries he assiduously studied the economic history of the United States.

"The figures showing the growth of American exports during the war astounded me; they were, in fact, a complete revelation. And it was those same figures that not only predetermined America's intervention in the war but the decisive part that the United States would play in the world after the war, as well. I wrote several articles about this at the time, and gave several lectures," he wrote in *My Life* (pp. 270-271).

"Since that time the problem of 'America versus Europe' has been one of my chief interests. And even now I am studying the question with the utmost care, hoping to devote a separate book to it. If one is to understand the future destiny of humanity, this is the most important of all questions."

Foresaw World Importance of U.S.A.

After his return to Russia, despite his absorption in the Russian revolution or more accurately, precisely because of it, the question of America keeps recurring again and again in his work. In the period between the close of the civil war in the USSR and the outbreak of World War II, the role of U.S. imperialism loomed in his mind as the paramount problem of world economy and world politics.

As early as 1920, in the *Manifesto* issued by the Second World Congress of the Communist International, he set forth the main considerations on the dynamics of American monopoly capitalism. These guided the outlook of the Communist International in its most progressive years until Lenin died, and Trotsky's own thinking on the subject over the next two decades.

With its decisive intervention in World War I, the United States had become thoroughly imperialistic, displacing Britain as the master of world capitalism and compelled to pursue an aggressive policy of expansion on a global scale. Henceforward, the needs of the imperialist ruling class and their tool, militarism, would tend more and more to dominate not only American life but the entire course of international affairs.

This perspective was summarized by him as follows: "The (First) World War has completely dislodged the United States from its continental conservatism ('isolationism'). The program of ascending national capitalism — 'America for the Americans' (The Monroe Doctrine) — has been supplanted by the program of imperialism. 'The Whole World for the Americans.'" (*The First Five Years of the Communist International*, p. 109.)

Perspectives in "Europe and America"

Trotsky sketched out the book he hoped to write on the interrelations between the Old World and the New in a

number of speeches delivered in 1924 and 1926 to audiences of Russian workers. These were later published by the Soviet State Publishing House under the title: *Europe and America*. In his speeches Trotsky reviewed the prospects of world development as they appeared in the mid-Twenties. He pointed out how imperialist America was moving out into all world channels and taking the offensive against its rivals.

What did this mean for Europe? "This means that Europe will be permitted to rise again, but within limits set in advance, with certain restricted sections of the world market allotted to it. American capitalism is now issuing commands, giving instructions to its diplomats. In exactly the same way it is preparing and is ready to issue instructions to European banks and trusts, to the European bourgeoisie as a whole. . . . This is its aim. It will slice up the markets; it will regulate the activity of the European financiers and industrialists. If we wish to give a clear and precise answer to the question of what American imperialism wants, we must say: *It wants to put capitalist Europe on rations.*" (*Europe and America*, p. 16.)

Following the defeat of the German revolution in 1923, America's new role in Europe enabled the bankrupt capitalism to be temporarily stabilized there. Trotsky was the only one who emphasized that the intervention of the Almighty Dollar had become the most important factor in European life. The German Social Democracy, the French Radicals and the British Labor Party adapted themselves materially and ideologically to this situation and put forward a new gospel of salvation through the aid of American gold and loans.

These economic and political conditions helped prop up European capitalism at the time and fed the democratic and pacifist illusions of its "leftist" parties. Meanwhile, however, the inexorable pressure of American imperialism upon Europe was disrupting world economic relations and preparing new conflicts. The staggering material preponderance of the United States excluded the possibility of economic upswing and regeneration for capitalist Europe. "If in the past it was European capitalism that revolutionized the backward sections of the world, then today it is American capitalism that revolutionizes overmature Europe," pointed out Trotsky. America was pushing Europe into an economic blind-alley from which there was no escape except through the proletarian revolution.

Internal Repercussions of New World Role

But this expansion of U.S. imperialism into Europe and Asia was bound to have momentous consequences not only for Europe but for the United States itself. "The more the United States puts the whole world under its dependence, all the more does it become dependent upon the whole world, with all its contradictions and threatening upheavals. . . . America is no longer a self-sufficing whole. In order to maintain its internal equilibrium the United States requires a larger and larger outlet abroad; but its outlet abroad introduces into its economic order more and more elements of European and Asiatic disorder." (*Europe and America*, pp. 68-69.)

The crash of 1929 was the first demonstration of the consequences of this inescapable interdependence.

One of the outstanding peculiarities of American imperialism Trotsky singled out for examination was the mask of democracy and pacifism donned by the American monopolists, no less predatory, dictatorial and ruthless than their European predecessors. This has deceived, as it still continues to do, many people. Thanks to the special conditions of American development, and its relative geographical and political isolation, this pacifist and democratic mask had, so to speak, become glued to the imperialist face making it difficult to peer beneath it and pry it off. This feature has persisted to the present day. But as American imperialism grows more openly militaristic and reactionary in its operations, the discrepancy between the real face and the mask is becoming more apparent, as, for example, the Korean war illustrates.

So long as Lenin lived the basic ideas outlined above constituted an important part of the programmatic position of the world communist movement. It was generally accepted by Marxists that one of the first tasks of the proletarian revolution was the establishment of the Socialist United States of Europe as the only progressive way of resolving the internal chaos of the Old Continent. This slogan was, in fact, formally accepted by the Communist International in 1923.

Stalinism and America's Role

But in Lenin's lifetime the world revolutionary movement did not succeed in formulating or adopting a definitive international program. This was not done until 1928 when at the Sixth World Congress, a program drafted by Bukharin and Stalin was finally adopted. The basic ideas of Leninism received only lip service, but were scuttled in action. And among the things that went overboard were all of Trotsky's scientific expositions of the interrelations between capitalist America and the rest of the world, Europe in particular. The slogan of the Socialist United States of Europe was the very first to be scuttled.

The original draft of the Stalin-Bukharin program did not even contain a reference to the United States by name; this, along with a few other formal references, was included only under the pressure of Trotsky's criticism, from his exile at the time in Alma-Ata, Central Asia.

To the conservative, narrow-nationalistic Stalinist bureaucracy the state boundaries of Europe represented the same untouchable fetish as to the capitalists. They not only failed to understand the reactionary character of these state boundaries, but as experience was to prove, following World War II, they maintained them intact in Eastern Europe.

They never understood, as Trotsky pointed out in his classic critique of Stalinism, *The Third International After Lenin*, that "the inevitable further development of American expansion, the contraction of the markets of European capital, including the European market itself, entail the greatest military, economic and revolutionary convulsions,

beside which all those of the past fade into the background" (p. 7).

They were blind, as they still are, to the fact that "the further inexorable pressure of the United States will reduce capitalist Europe to constantly more limited rations in world economy; and this, of course, implies not a mitigation, but, on the contrary, a monstrous sharpening of inter-state relations in Europe accompanied by furious paroxysms of military conflict, for states as well as classes fight even more fiercely for a meagre and a diminishing ration than for a lavish and growing one." The culmination of both of the above-outlined processes has been taking place before our very eyes.

Following the crash of 1929 when fraudulent pacifism still remained the official pretense of Washington, Trotsky once again emphasized that precisely the international strength of the U.S. and its tremendous productive capacity, requiring the whole world as an outlet, would impel America's monopolists toward the conquest and domination of the globe. "The changes introduced by the (first world) war into the American structure have in turn made the entry into the world arena a life-and-death question for American capitalism," he warned in an article, "Nationalism and Economic Life" written for *Foreign Affairs*. "There is ample evidence that this entry must assume extremely dramatic forms. . . . Sooner or later American capitalism, must open up ways for itself through the length and breadth of our entire planet. By what methods? By all methods. A high co-efficient of production denotes also a high co-efficient of destructive force." (Reprinted in *Fourth International*, September 1945.)

Insight on "New Deal"

Six years before the outbreak of World War II in the theses "War and Fourth International" Trotsky predicted: "Capitalism in the United States is running head on into those problems which impelled Germany in 1914 upon the road of war. . . . For Germany it was a question of 'organizing' Europe. For the United States it is a question of 'organizing' the world. History is taking mankind directly into the volcanic eruption of American imperialism."

These words were written at the height of the "New Deal" ballyhoo. In his study of U.S. capitalist development — "Twentieth-Century capitalism's most perfect mirror" — Trotsky set forth the reasons why Roosevelt's reforms and oft-repeated pacifism would not allay the warlike and dictatorial trends of the monopolist magnates but on the contrary reinforce them and prepare the soil for their open manifestation. "The New Deal policy with its fictitious achievements and its very real increase in the national debt is unavoidably bound to culminate in ferocious capitalist reaction and a devastating explosion of imperialism." (*The Living Thoughts of Karl Marx*, p. 25.)

These prophetic words, written in 1938, outline the grim realities of recent years: U.S. participation in World War II, the Truman Doctrine, Taft-Hartleyism, the unbridled

witch-hunts, the growth of militarism and the feverish preparations for World War III.

That is the reactionary side of American developments. So far as the revolutionary perspectives are concerned Trotsky originally inclined to the view that the socialist revolution was far closer in Europe than in the United States. But he always qualified this position. In a letter written in 1929 to the first conference of the Communist League of America, the pioneer Trotskyists, he repeated this thought but immediately added that a turn of events was possible that could alter the succession of revolutionary events and pull the United States into the front rank of the revolution as well as the counter-revolution.

Perspectives on Labor in U.S.A.

By next year, however, he drastically revised his estimates of American revolutionary potential. "It is nowhere written," he then concluded, "and theoretically it cannot be substantiated, that the American workers will perforce have to pass through the school of reformism for a long period of time. They live and develop in another period, their coming to maturity is taking place under different circumstances than that of the English working class, for instance. . . . It is not at all permanently established that the United States will be last in the order of revolutionary primacy, condemned to reach its proletarian revolution only after the countries of Europe and Asia. A situation, a combination of forces is possible in which the order is changed and the tempo of development in the United States enormously accelerated" (*The Militant*, May 10, 1930.)

With the unfolding and deepening of the depression in the Thirties, Trotsky became increasingly preoccupied with the problems presented by revolutionary prospects in the United States. He was firmly convinced that the very position of the United States as the foremost capitalist power made it impossible for it to escape the effects of the disintegration and decay of world capitalism.

The collapse of the entire capitalist economy which began in the United States demonstrated this. The two chief objective factors required for a sweeping social change were already present: on the one side, the highly developed forces of production which could easily be tripled once capitalist parasitism was eliminated and, on the other, a deepening social crisis.

A revolutionary movement further requires a progressive class interested in and impelled toward a radical transformation of productive and property relations. This too existed in the formidable American working class which embraced the majority of the population and could give leadership to the distressed farmers and oppressed Negroes.

The remarkable organizational capacities of this central social force were dramatically displayed in the battles that gave birth to the CIO, the most important product of the great storms that shook America from top to bottom during this period. The CIO lifted American labor to new heights. This organization of the industrial workers is

ordinarily looked upon by superficial observers as nothing more than a change in the trade union movement.

Saw Significance of C.I.O.

But it is far more than that, as Trotsky perceived. The CIO was a colossal mobilization of the vanguard of the industrial proletariat pitted in combat against the corporate giants who rule America, a combat from which the workers had emerged victorious in their immediate objectives. It was a surging, seething rank-and-file revolt, organized and led on picket lines by militant leaders from the shops, mines and mills, democratic in spirit and bold in its methods of struggle.

"The rise of the CIO is incontrovertible evidence of the revolutionary tendencies within the working masses," Trotsky summarized in 1941. He had previously noted in the founding document of the Fourth International: "The unprecedented wave of sit-down strikes and the amazingly rapid growth of industrial unionism in the United States (CIO) is the most indisputable expression of the instinctive striving of the American workers to raise themselves to the level of the tasks imposed on them by history."

However, although this new union movement born of the radicalization of the industrial workers was profoundly revolutionary in its potentialities, these did not find means of expression at this first stage. Trotsky analyzed the reasons for this retarded and drawn-out development. He saw the biggest internal obstacle to the progress of the CIO in the conservative character of its capitalist-minded top leadership, seconded by the Stalinists. This leadership did its utmost to keep the insurgent masses within the narrow confines of bargaining with the corporations and collaboration with government boards and mediators. They subordinated the independence of the CIO to the needs of their political coalition with Roosevelt, as subsequently with Truman.

Proposal for a Labor Party

The second obstacle was the immature political and class consciousness of the American workers, their lack of traditions of independent political activity, their illusions about Rooseveltism, which were cleverly exploited by the leadership. Yet there were already signs, such as the setting up of Labor's Non-Partisan League that the ranks were chafing at their subservience to the capitalist political machines and would enthusiastically respond to a clear call for a definitive break with them.

How could these tendencies be fortified? The CIO as the economic expression of the new stage in the advancement of American labor had virtually overnight become a powerful political factor that could — and should — be able to blaze another political pathway for the entire American people. The growth of the CIO and the deepening decline of American capitalism made the creation of such a new political instrument imperative. "We must put forward a proposal which can enable the trade unions to throw their full weight into the political balance," urged Trotsky beginning with 1938. Under the given conditions that meant the formation of a national Labor Party.

Such a party need not be reformist and in any case

the Marxists should endeavor to make it the most effective agency for solving the problems of the working people. One way was the presentation of a basic program for such a party, a program of transitional demands which could both meet the needs of the current stage of struggle and lead the workers forward to the conquest of power through a Workers and Farmers Government.

With the economic nosedive of 1937-38 Trotsky expected a sharpening of the social crisis and a rapid radicalization of the labor movement which would open up wide-ranging revolutionary perspectives. Under the impact of this developing crisis, he remarked, "I believe that the change in the mentality of the American workers will come at a very speedy rhythm." However, the military preparations, and then the war itself, cut across this line of development.

But even though the war retarded the further unfolding of the social crisis in this country, it did not and could not alter the fundamental trends or overcome the inner contradictions of American capitalism. When conditions change, so will the mood and mind of the masses, Trotsky kept reminding the American Marxists. Then the workers will quickly discard their conservatism and prejudices and incline toward socialist ideas and the most radical solutions.

What is essential at all stages in this process, through all the ups-and-downs of the class struggle, is to build a socialist workers party that will be ready, willing and able to provide the American workers with the kind of leadership they need and deserve. The struggles between capitalist reaction and the advancing hosts of labor can last for a long period "and during this time our people will steel themselves, become more sure of themselves, and the workers will say: 'They are the only people capable of seeing the path.'" Under revolutionary conditions a party prepared to fulfill its tasks can become the decisive political force within the country in a comparatively short time, like Lenin's Bolsheviks in 1917.

American Revolution and Soviet Bureaucracy

Nowadays the solicitors of support for the schemes of global conquest projected by the American militarists and monopolists depict the capitalist "free enterprise" system as the sturdy protector of civil rights at home and the carrier of democracy abroad — on B-29's and flame-throwers. On the other hand, to frighten workers from the road of struggle for socialism, they point to the bog of Stalinist totalitarianism and declare that such a police state is the inescapable outcome of a socialist revolution.

In an interview given to a *St. Louis Post Dispatch* reporter in February 1940 Trotsky explained that in reality it was the uninterrupted decay and sharpening crises of capitalism which generated fascist trends and gave rise to police states in the capitalist countries confronted by the demands of the workers for a better life. And that the Stalin despotism which strangled and replaced the working class democracy of the early Russian Revolution had nothing in common with socialism but was a horrible political relapse toward the worst features of class rule, fostered by the backwardness of Russia, the isolation of its revolution and the persistent scarcity of material goods.

Actually the victory of the workers revolution in so

developed a country as the United States would remove these exceptional historical conditions and thereby eliminate the material reasons for the existence of any bureaucratic governing caste resting on poverty, scarcity and the scramble for privileges at the expense of the living and working conditions of the masses. The high technological and cultural level of the American workers would likewise guarantee an expansion of genuine democracy under a Workers and Farmers Government. Asked whether the rule of the workers would not necessarily mean the suppression of personal freedom and the surrender of civil rights, as the anti-socialists allege, Trotsky replied:

What a Socialist America Would Mean

"It would be a great mistake to think the socialist revolution in Europe or America will be accomplished after the pattern of backward Russia. The fundamental tendencies will, of course, be similar. But the forms, methods, the 'temperature' of the struggle, all this has, in each case, a national character. By anticipation it is possible to establish the following law: The more countries in which the capitalist system is broken, the weaker will be the resistance offered by the ruling classes in other countries, the less sharp a character the socialist revolution will have, the shorter it will be, the sooner the society will be reborn on the basis of a new, more full, more perfect and humane democracy. In any case, no revolution can infringe on the Bill of Rights as much as imperialist war and the fascism it will engender.

"Socialism would have no value if it should not bring with it, not only the juridical inviolability but also the full safeguarding of all the interests of the human personality. Mankind would not tolerate a totalitarian abomination of the Kremlin pattern. The political regime of the USSR is not a new society, but the worst caricature of the old. With the use of the might of the techniques and organizational methods of the United States; with the high well-being which planned economy could assure there to all citizens, the socialist regime in your country would signify from the beginning the rise of independence, initiative and creative power of the human personality."

Trotsky himself embodied the "independence, initiative and creative power of the human personality" to an exceptional degree. But he developed these traits through his entire life work as a socialist determined to bring forth conditions in our world which would make possible such a flowering and fulfillment of the human personality, not simply for a favored few, but for the billions of toiling and aspiring mankind. In his outlook the ultimate purpose and supreme justification of all revolutionary activity in our time was not only to liberate the economy from capitalist restrictions so that it could provide abundant material goods to satisfy the needs of all. This was indispensable and preliminary to a higher goal: the creation of a new type of human being cleansed of the abominations bred by class-divided society. The productive facilities of a Socialist America would derive their decisive importance and value from the great part they were destined to perform in the making of a free race of human beings for the first time on our planet.

The Class Nature of the Soviet Union

By LEON TROTSKY

I.

Once Again: The USSR and Its Defense

Craipeau Forgets the Principal Teachings of Marxism

Comrade Craipeau wants to persuade us once again that the Soviet bureaucracy as such is a class. It is not a question, however, for him, of pure "sociology." No. All he wants, as we shall see, is once and for all to mark out a free and straight path to his kind of internationalism, an internationalism, alas, which is not at all sure of itself. If the bureaucracy is not a class, if the Soviet Union can still be recognized as a workers state, it is necessary to support it during the war. How then can one remain in irreconcilable opposition to one's own government, if the latter is allied to the Soviets? There you have a terrible temptation to fall into social-patriotism! No, it is far more preferable to make a radical sweep of the field: the Stalinist bureaucracy is an exploiting class, and in case of war, we hardly need to distinguish between the Soviets and Japan.

Unfortunately, this terminological radicalism does not advance things very much. Let us admit for a moment that the bureaucracy is really a *class*, in the sense of Marxist sociology. We then have a new form of class society which is identical neither with feudal society nor with capitalist society, and which never was foreseen by Marxist theoreticians. Such a discovery is worthy of a little more attentive analysis.

Why does capitalist society find itself in a blind alley? Because it is no longer capable of developing the productive forces either in the advanced countries, or in the backward countries. The world imperialist chain was broken at its weakest link, Russia. Now we learn that in place of the bourgeois society there has been established a new class society. Craipeau has not yet given it any name nor analyzed its internal laws. But that does not prevent us from seeing that the new society is progressive in comparison with capitalism, for on the basis of nationalized property the new possessing "class" has assured a development of productive forces never equalled in the history of the world. Marxism teaches us, does it not, that the productive forces are the fundamental factor of historic progress. A society which is not capable of assuring the growth of economic power is still less capable of assuring the well-being of the working masses, whatever may be the mode of distribution. The antagonism between feudalism and capitalism and the decline of the former has been determined precisely by the fact that the latter opened up new and grandiose possibilities for the stagnating productive forces. The same applies to the USSR. Whatever its

modes of exploitation may be, this new society is by its very character superior to capitalist society. There you have the real point of departure for Marxist analysis!

This fundamental factor, the productive forces, also has its reflection in the ideological domain. While the economic life of capitalist countries no longer teaches us anything except different forms of stagnation and decay, the nationalized and planned economy of the USSR is the greatest school for all humanity aspiring to a better future. One must be blind not to see this difference!

In the war between Japan and Germany on one side, and the USSR on the other, there would be involved not a question of equality in distribution, or of proletarian democracy, or of Vyshinsky's justice, but the fate of the *nationalized property and planned economy*. The victory of the imperialist states would signify the collapse not only of the new exploiting "class" in the USSR, but also of the new forms of production — the lowering of the whole Soviet economy to the level of a backward and semi-colonial capitalism. Now I ask Craipeau: When we are faced with the struggle between two states which are — let us admit it — both class states, but one of which represents imperialist stagnation and the other tremendous economic progress, do we not have to support the progressive state against the reactionary state? Yes or no?

In his entire thesis, Craipeau speaks of the most diverse things, and things furthest away from the subject, but he does not mention a single time the decisive factor of Marxist sociology, the development of the productive forces. This is precisely why his entire construction remains suspended in air. He juggles with terminological shadows ("class," "non-class") instead of grasping the reality. He believes that it suffices to attribute the term class to the bureaucracy in order to avoid the necessity of analyzing what place the new society occupies in the historic rise of humanity. Wishing to force us not to distinguish between a society which is absolutely reactionary since it fetters and even destroys the productive forces, and a society which is relatively progressive, since it has assured a great upsurge in economy, Craipeau wants to impose upon us the policy of reactionary "neutrality." Yes, Comrade Craipeau, reactionary!

But Is the Bureaucracy a Class?

One sees from the preceding that we could very well dispense with again analyzing this theoretical question, that is to say, the question preoccupying Craipeau, which in itself is far from being decisive for our policy in time

of war. But the problem of the bureaucracy's social character is, despite everything, very important from a more general viewpoint and we do not see any reason to make the slightest concession to Craipeau on this level. Our critic changes his arguments without putting himself to any inconvenience. This time he draws his smashing argument from a statement in *The Revolution Betrayed*, to the effect that, "All the means of production belong to the State, and the State belongs *in some respect*, to the bureaucracy." (My emphasis.) Craipeau is jubilant. If the means of production belong to the state, and the state to the bureaucracy, the latter becomes the collective proprietor of the means of production and by that alone, the possessing and exploiting class. The remainder of Craipeau's argumentation is almost purely literary in character. He tells us once again, with the air of polemicizing against me, that the Thermidorian bureaucracy is evil, rapacious, reactionary, blood-thirsty, etc. A real revelation! However, we never said that the Stalinist bureaucracy was virtuous! We have only denied it the quality of class in the Marxist sense, that is to say, with regard to ownership of the means of production. But there is Craipeau forcing me to disown myself, since I recognized that the bureaucracy treats the state as its own property. "And that's the key to the enigma!" By this oversimplified argument Craipeau shows a deplorable lack of dialectic sense. I have never stated that the Soviet bureaucracy was equal to the bureaucracy of the absolute monarchy or to that of liberal capitalism. Nationalized economy creates for the bureaucracy an entirely new situation and opens up new possibilities — of progress as well as of degeneration. We more or less knew this even before the revolution. The analogy between the Soviet bureaucracy and that of the fascist state is much greater, above all from the viewpoint that interests us. The fascist bureaucracy likewise treats the state as its property. It imposes severe restrictions upon private capital and often provokes convulsions within it. We can say, by way of a logical argument: if the fascist bureaucracy succeeded in more and more imposing its discipline and its restrictions on the capitalists without effective resistance on the part of the latter, this bureaucracy could gradually transform itself into a new ruling "class" absolutely analogous to the Soviet bureaucracy. But the fascist state belongs to the bureaucracy only "in some respect." (See quotation above.) Those are three little words Craipeau deliberately ignores. But they have their importance. They are even decisive. They are an integral part of the dialectical law of the transformation of quantity into quality. If Hitler tries to appropriate the state, and by that means, appropriate private property completely and not only "in some respect" he will bump up against the violent opposition of the capitalists; this would open up great revolutionary possibilities for the workers. There are, however, ultra-lefts who apply to the fascist bureaucracy the reasoning that Craipeau applies to the Soviet bureaucracy and who place an equal sign between the fascist and Stalinist regimes (some German Spartakists, Hugo Urbahns, certain anarchists, etc.). We have said of them what we say of Craipeau: their error is in believing that the foundations of society can be changed

without revolution or counter-revolution; they unwind the film of reformism in reverse.

But it is here that Craipeau, still jubilant, quotes another statement of *The Revolution Betrayed* regarding the Soviet bureaucracy: "If these relations should be stabilized, legalized, become the norms, without any resistance or against the resistance of the workers, they would end up in the complete liquidation of the conquests of the proletarian revolution." And Craipeau concludes: "Thus Comrade Trotsky envisages the possibility (in the future) of a passage without military intervention (?) from the Workers' State to the Capitalist State. In 1933, that used to be called unrolling the film of reformism in reverse." That is called the same thing in 1937. What for me is a purely logical argument, Craipeau considers a historical prognosis. Without a victorious civil war the bureaucracy cannot give birth to a new ruling class. That was and that remains my thought. Besides, what is now happening in the USSR is only a preventive civil war, opened up by the bureaucracy. And nevertheless, it has not yet touched the economic foundations of the state created by the revolution and which, despite all the deformation and distortion, assures an unprecedented development of the productive forces.

Nobody has ever denied the possibility — especially in case of prolonged world decay — of the restoration of a new possessing class springing from the bureaucracy. The present social position of the bureaucracy which by means of the state holds the productive forces in its hands "in some respect" is an extremely important point of departure for this process of transformation. It is, however, a question of a historic possibility and not of an already accomplished fact.

Is a Class the Product of Economic Causes or of Political Causes?

In *The Revolution Betrayed* I attempted to give a definition of the present Soviet regime. This definition comprises nine paragraphs. It is not very elegant, I'll admit, this series of descriptive and cautious formulas. But it attempts to be honest with regard to reality. That's always an advantage. Craipeau doesn't even mention this definition. He doesn't oppose another one to it. He doesn't say if the new exploitive society is superior or inferior to the old one, and he doesn't ask himself if this new society is an inevitable stage between capitalism and socialism or if it is merely a historic "accident." However, from the point of view of our general historical perspective, as it is formulated in the *Communist Manifesto* of Marx and Engels, the sociological definition of the bureaucracy assumes capital importance.

The bourgeoisie came into the world as an element born of the new form of production; it remained a historic necessity as long as the new form of production had not exhausted its possibilities. The same assertion can be made with regard to all previous social classes: slave-owners, the feudal lords, the medieval master-artisans. In their time they were all the representatives and leaders of a system of production which had its place in the advance of humanity. How, then, does Craipeau appraise the historical place of the "bureaucracy-class"? He doesn't say anything on this

decisive question. Nevertheless, we have repeated many times, with the aid of Craipeau himself, that the degeneration of the Soviet state is the product of the retardation in the world revolution, that is to say, the result of political and "conjunctural" causes, so to speak. Can one speak of a new . . . "conjunctural" class? I really doubt that. If Craipeau will consent to verify his rather hasty conception from the point of view of the historic succession of social regimes, he will surely recognize himself that to give the bureaucracy the name possessing class is not only an abuse of terminology, but moreover a great political danger which can lead to the complete derailment of our historic perspective. Does Craipeau see sufficient reasons to revise the Marxist conception on this capital point? As for myself, I do not see any. That is why I refuse to follow Craipeau.

However, we can and must say that the Soviet bureaucracy has all the vices of a possessing class without having any of its "virtues" (organic stability, certain moral norms, etc.). Experience has taught us that the workers state is still a state, that is, a product of the barbaric past; that it is doubly barbaric in a backward and isolated country; that under unfavorable conditions it can degenerate to the point of becoming unrecognizable; that it may require a supplementary revolution in order to be regenerated! But the workers state nonetheless remains an inevitable stage on our road. This stage cannot be overcome except by the permanent revolution of the international proletariat.

And Where Is the Dialectic?

I cannot follow the entire argumentation of Comrade Craipeau point by point; for that it is really necessary to recapitulate the entire Marxist conception. The trouble is that Craipeau does not analyze the facts as they are, but rather collects logical arguments in favor of a preconceived thesis. This method is in its essence anti-dialectic and therefore anti-Marxist. I will give some samples of this.

a) "The Russian proletariat lost all hope of political power many years ago. . . ." Craipeau takes care not to say exactly *just when*. He merely wants to create the impression that our tendency has nurtured illusions for "many years." He forgets to say that in 1923 the bureaucracy was quite shaken up and that only the German defeat and the discouragement of the Russian proletariat which followed it re-stabilized its position. During the Chinese Revolution (1925-27) the crisis was repeated with similar phases. The First Five-Year Plan and the great rumblings in Germany which preceded Hitler's rise (1931-33) once again threatened bureaucratic domination. Finally, can we doubt for an instant that, if the Spanish revolution had been victorious and if the French workers had been able to develop their May-June offensive of 1936 to its conclusion, the Russian proletariat would have recovered its courage and its combativity and overthrown the Thermidorians with a minimum of effort. It is only a succession of the most terrible and depressing defeats throughout the entire world that has stabilized Stalin's regime. Craipeau opposes the result, which is quite contradictory in itself, by the way, to the process which produced it and to our policy, which was the reflection of this process.

b) In order to refute the argument that the bureaucracy manipulates the national resources only as a corporation guild, an extremely wobbly one at that, and that the isolated bureaucrats do not have the right to freely dispose of state property, Craipeau replies: "The bourgeois (?) themselves had to wait for a long time before they could transmit to their descendants title to property over the means of production. At the dawn of the guilds, the boss was elected by his peers. . ." etc. But Craipeau leaves aside the trifle that precisely at the "dawn of the guilds," the latter were not yet divided into classes and that the boss was not "bourgeois" in the modern sense of the world. The transformation of quantity into quality does not exist for Craipeau.

c) "Private property is being restored, inheritance re-established. . ." But Craipeau avoids saying that it is a matter of property over objects of personal use, and not of the means of production. He likewise forgets to mention the fact that what the bureaucrats, even those in high places, possess in private property is nothing in comparison with the material resources opened up to them by their posts, and that precisely the present "purge," which by one stroke of the pen throws thousands upon thousands of the families of the bureaucrats into the greatest poverty, demonstrates how entirely fragile are the links between the bureaucrats themselves and all the more so between their families and state property.

d) The preventive civil war being conducted at present by the ruling clique demonstrates anew that the latter cannot be overthrown except by revolutionary force. But since this new revolution must develop on the basis of state property and planned economy, we have characterized the overthrow of the bureaucracy as a political revolution in contradistinction to the social revolution of 1917. Craipeau finds that this distinction "remains in the domain of casuistry." And why such severity? Because, you see, the recapture of power by the proletariat will also have social consequences. But the bourgeois political revolutions of 1830, 1848 and September 1870 also had social consequences insofar as they seriously changed the division of the national income. But, my dear Craipeau, all is relative in this world which is not a creation of ultra-left formalists. The social changes provoked by the so-called political revolutions, serious as they were, really appear to be secondary when they are compared with the Great French Revolution, which was the bourgeois *social* revolution par excellence. What Comrade Craipeau lacks is a sense of proportion and the concept of relativity. Our young friend is not at all interested in the law of the transformation of quantity into quality. And yet that is the most important law of the dialectic. It is true that the authorities of the bourgeois academic world find that the dialectic in itself is in the "domain of casuistry."

e) It is not by chance that Craipeau is inspired by the sociology of M. Yvon. The personal observations of Yvon are honest and very important. But it is not by accident that he has found refuge in the little haven of the *Revolution Proletarienne*. Yvon is interested in the "economy," in the "workshop" — to use Proudhon's word — and not in "politics." that is, in *generalized economy*. He belongs, in

form, to the Proudhonist school; this permitted him precisely to remain neutral during the struggle between the Left Opposition and the bureaucracy; he did not understand that the fate of the "workshop" depended on it. What he has to say about the struggle "for the heritage of Lenin" without distinguishing the social tendencies — even today, in 1937! — clearly reveals his altogether petty bourgeois conception, entirely contemplative and not at all revolutionary. The notion of class is an abstraction for Yvon which he superimposes over the abstraction "workshop." It is really sad that Craipeau does not find any other source of theoretical inspiration!

Defense of the USSR and Social-Patriotism

This whole sociological scaffolding, unfortunately very fragile, only serves Craipeau, as we have said, to flee from the necessity of distinguishing between the USSR and the imperialist states during the war. The two last paragraphs of his treatise, which deal with this subject, are particularly revealing. Craipeau tells us: "Every European or world war is resolved in our day by imperialist conflicts and only the Stalinist and reformist fools can believe that, for example, the stakes of tomorrow's war will be the fascist regime or the democratic regime." Mark well this magisterial thesis: somewhat simplified, it is true, but nevertheless borrowed, this time, from the Marxist arsenal. Immediately after this, in order to characterize and to flay the USSR as the "champion of the imperialist war," Craipeau tells us: "In the camp of Versailles, its (the USSR's) diplomacy now plays the same animating role as Hitlerite diplomacy in the other camp." Let us admit it. But is this imperialist character of the war determined by the provocative role of fascist diplomacy? Not at all. "Only the Stalinist or reformist fools can believe it." And I hope that we others are not going to apply the same criterion to the Soviet state. One is a defeatist in the imperialist countries — isn't that so? — because one wants to crush the regime of private property and not because one desires to castigate some "aggressor." In the war of Germany against the USSR, it will be a matter of changing the economic base of the latter, insofar as the imperialists are concerned, and not of punishing Stalin and Litvinov. And then? Craipeau has established his fundamental thesis solely in order immediately to take the opposite road. The danger, the real danger, consists, according to him, in that the social-patriots of every caliber will take the defense of the USSR as the pretext for a new treachery. "In those conditions any equivocation in our attitude becomes fatal." And in conclusion: "Today it is necessary to choose: either the 'unconditional defense' of the USSR, that is (!!!), the sabotage of the revolution in our country and in the USSR, or defeatism and the revolution." There we are. It is not a matter at all of the social character of the USSR — what does that matter — since according to Craipeau, the defense of a workers state, even when it is most authentic, implies that the proletariat of the allied imperialist country concludes a sacred union with its own bourgeoisie. "And there is the key to the enigma" as others say. Craipeau believes that in the War—the war with a capital W—the proletariat should not be interested in whether it is a war against

Germany, the USSR, or against a Morocco in rebellion, because in all these cases it is necessary to proclaim "defeatism without phrases" as the only possibility of escaping the grip of social-patriotism. Once again we see, and with what clarity, that ultra-leftism is always an opportunism which is afraid of itself and demands absolute guarantees — that is, non-existent guarantees — that it will remain true to its flag. This type of intransigent calls to mind that type of timid and weak man who, becoming furious, shouts to his friends: "Hold me back, I'm going to do something terrible!" Give me hermetically sealed theses, put impenetrable blinkers over my eyes, or else. . . I'm going to do something terrible! Really, we have found the key to the enigma!

But in any case does Craipeau, for instance, doubt the proletarian character of the Soviet state between 1918 and 1923 or at least, in order to make a concession to the ultra-left, between 1918 and 1921? In that period the Soviet state maneuvered on the international arena and sought temporary allies. At the same time, it is precisely in that period that defeatism was made a duty for the workers of all the imperialist countries, the "enemies" as well as the temporary "allies." The duty of defending the USSR has never meant for the revolutionary proletariat, giving a vote of confidence to its bourgeoisie. The attitude of the proletariat in the war is the continuation of its attitude in the time of peace. The proletariat defends the USSR by its revolutionary policy, never subordinated to the bourgeoisie, but always adapted to the concrete circumstances. That was the teaching of the first four congresses of the Communist International. Does Craipeau demand a retrospective revision of this teaching?

If Blum, instead of proclaiming the perfidious "non-intervention" and — always obeying the orders of finance capital — had supported Caballero and Negrin with their capitalist democracy, would Craipeau have renounced his irreducible opposition to the "People's Front" government? Or would he have renounced the duty to distinguish between the two camps fighting in Spain and of adapting his policy to this distinction?

The same holds for the Far East. If Chiang, following England, should tomorrow declare war against Japan, is Craipeau going to participate in a sacred union in order to help China? Or will he, on the contrary, proclaim that for him there is no difference between China and Japan that can possibly influence his policy? Craipeau's alternative: either the defense of the USSR, or Ethiopia, of Republican Spain, of colonial China, etc. by concluding the sacred union, or thoroughgoing defeatism, hermetically sealed and cosmic in scope — this fundamentally false alternative will crumble into dust at the first test of events and open the doors wide for the crassest sort of social-patriotism.

"Our own theses on the war," Craipeau asks, "are they exempt from any equivocation on this question"? Unfortunately not! Analyzing the necessity of defeatism, they underline that "*in the character of the practical actions there may be considerable differences provoked by the concrete situation in the war.*" For instance, the theses point out, in case of a war between the USSR and Japan, we must "not sabotage the sending of arms to the USSR," consequently

we must avoid instigating strikes which sabotage the manufacture of arms, etc. One can hardly believe one's eyes. The events have confirmed our thesis on this point remarkably, with an indisputable force, and especially in France. Workers' meetings for months vibrated with the cry: "Airplanes for Spain!" Imagine for a moment that Blum had decided to send some. Imagine that at this particular moment a strike of longshoremen or of sailors was in process. What would Craipeau have done? Would he have opposed the cry: "Airplanes for Spain"? Would he have counselled the workers on strike to make an exception for this cargo of airplanes? But the USSR really did send airplanes (at quite a high price and on the condition of support for the capitalist regime, I know that very well). Should the Bolshevik-Leninists have called upon the Soviet workers to sabotage these shipments? Yes or no? If tomorrow the French workers learn that two boatloads of ammunition are being prepared for shipment from France, one to Japan and the other to China, what will Craipeau's attitude be? I consider him enough of a revolutionist to call upon the workers to boycott the boat destined for Tokio and to let through the boat for China, without, however, concealing his opinion of Chiang Kai-shek, and without expressing the slightest confidence in Chautemps. That is precisely what our theses say: "In the character of the practical actions

there may be considerable differences provoked by the concrete situation in the war." Doubts were still possible, concerning this formula, at the time when the draft theses were published. But today, after the experience of Ethiopia, of Spain, and of the Sino-Japanese war, to speak of equivocation in our theses seems to me to be an ultra-left Bourbon who wants to learn nothing and to forget nothing.

Comrade Craipeau, the equivocation is entirely on your side. Your article is full of such equivocations. It is really time to get rid of them. I know very well that even in your errors you are guided by your revolutionary hatred of the oppression of the Themidorian bureaucracy. But sentiment alone, no matter how legitimate, cannot replace a correct policy based on objective facts. The proletariat has sufficient reasons to overthrow and to chase out the Stalinist bureaucracy, corrupt to the bone. But precisely because of that, it cannot directly or indirectly leave this task to Hitler or to the Mikado. Stalin overthrown by the workers — that's a great step forward toward socialism. Stalin crushed by the imperialists — that's the counter-revolution triumphant. That is the precise sense of our defense of the USSR. On a world scale, analogous, from this point of view, to that of our defense of democracy on a national scale!

November 4, 1937

II.

Not a Workers and Not a Bourgeois State?

Political Form and Social Content

Comrades Burnham and Carter have placed a fresh question mark over the class character of the Soviet state. The answer which they give is, in my opinion, completely erroneous. But inasmuch as these comrades do not attempt, as do some ultra-leftists, to substitute shrieking for scientific analysis, we can and should seriously discuss with B. and C. this exceptionally important question.

B. and C. do not forget that the main difference between the USSR and the contemporary bourgeois state finds its expression in the powerful development of the productive forces as a result of a change in the form of ownership. They further admit that "the economic structure as established by the October Revolution still remains basically unchanged." They deduce from this that it is the duty of the Soviet and world proletariat to defend the USSR from imperialist attacks. In this there is complete agreement between B. and C. and us. But no matter how great the degree of our agreement, it by no means covers the whole issue. Though B. and C. do not solidarize themselves with the ultra-lefts, they nevertheless consider that the USSR has stopped being a workers state "in the traditional (?) sense given to this term by Marxism." But since the "economic structure . . . still remains basically unchanged," the USSR has not become a bourgeois state. B. and C. at the same time deny — and for this we can only congratulate them —

that the bureaucracy is an independent class. The result of these inconsistent assertions is the conclusion, the very one the Stalinists draw, that the Soviet state, in general, is not an organization of class domination. What, then, is it?

Thus we have a new attempt at revising the class theory of the state. We are not, it goes without saying, fetishists; should new historical facts demand a revision of the theory, we would not stop at doing so. But the lamentable experience of the old revisionists should in any case imbue us with a salutary caution. We should, ten times over, weigh in our minds the old theory and the new facts before we attempt to formulate a new doctrine.

B. and C. themselves remark in passing that in its dependence on objective and subjective conditions the rule of the proletariat "is able to express itself in a number of different governmental forms." For clarity we will add: either through an open struggle of different parties within the Soviets, or through the monopoly of one party, or even through a factual concentration of power in the hands of a single person. Of course personal dictatorship is a symptom of the greatest danger to the regime. But at the same time, it is, under certain conditions, the only means by which to save that regime. The class nature of the state is, consequently, determined not by its political forms but by its social content; i.e., by the character of the forms of property and productive relations which the given state guards and defends.

In principle B. and C. do not deny this. If they nevertheless refuse to see in the USSR a workers state, it is due to two reasons, one of which is economic and the other, political in character. "During the past year," they write, "the bureaucracy has definitively entered the road of destruction of the planned and nationalized economy." (Has only "entered the road"?) Further we read that the course of development "brings the bureaucracy into ever-increasing and deepening conflict with the needs and interests of the nationalized economy." (Only "brings it"?) The contradiction between the bureaucracy and the economy was observed before this, but for the past year "the actions of the bureaucracy are actively sabotaging the Plan and disintegrating the State monopoly." (Only "disintegrating"? Hence, not yet disintegrated?)

As stated above, the second contention has a political character. "The concept of the dictatorship of the proletariat is not primarily an economic but predominantly a political category. . . All forms, organs, and institutions of the class rule of the proletariat are now destroyed, which is to say that the class rule of the proletariat is destroyed." After hearing about the "different forms" of the proletarian regime, this second contention, taken by itself, appears unexpected. Of course, the dictatorship of the proletariat is not only "predominantly" but wholly and fully a "political category." However, this very politics is only concentrated economics. The domination of the Social Democracy in the state and in the Soviets (Germany 1918-19) had nothing in common with the dictatorship of the proletariat inasmuch as it left bourgeois property inviolable. But the regime which guards the expropriated and nationalized property from the imperialists is, independent of political forms, the dictatorship of the proletariat.

B. and C. "in general" as it were, admit this. They therefore have recourse to combining the economic with the political contention. The bureaucracy, they say, has not only definitively deprived the proletariat of political power, but has driven economy into a blind alley. If in the previous period the bureaucracy with all its reactionary features played a comparatively progressive role, it has now definitively become a reactionary factor. In this reasoning there is a healthy kernel, which is in complete conformity with all former evaluations and prognoses of the Fourth International. We have more than once spoken of the fact that "enlightened absolutism" has played a progressive role in the development of the bourgeoisie only afterward to become a brake upon this development; the conflict resolved itself, as is known, in revolution. In laying the ground-work for socialist economy, we wrote, "enlightened absolutism" can play a progressive role only during an incomparably shorter period. This prognosis is clearly confirmed before our very eyes. Deceived by its own successes, the bureaucracy expected to attain ever bigger coefficients of economic growth. Meanwhile it ran up against an acute crisis in economy, which became one of the sources of its present panic and its mad repressions. Does this then mean that the development of productive forces in the USSR has already stopped? We would not venture to make such an assertion. The creative possibilities of nationalized economy are so great that the productive

forces, in spite of the bureaucratic brake upon them, can develop for a period of years although at a considerably more moderate rate than heretofore. Along these lines it is scarcely possible at the moment to make an exact forecast. In any case, the *political* crisis which is rending the bureaucracy asunder is considerably more dangerous for it today than the perspective of a stoppage in the development of the productive forces. For the sake of simplifying the question, however, let us grant that the bureaucracy has already become an absolute brake upon the economic development. But does this fact in itself mean that the class nature of the USSR has changed or that the USSR is void of any kind of class nature? Here, it seems to me, is the chief mistake of our comrades.

Up until the First World War bourgeois society developed the productive forces. Only during the past quarter of a century has the bourgeoisie become an absolute brake upon economic development. Does this mean that bourgeois society has ceased being bourgeois? No, it means only that it has become a *decaying* bourgeois society. In a number of countries, the preservation of bourgeois property is possible only through the establishment of a fascist regime. In other words, the bourgeoisie is devoid of all forms and means of its own direct political domination, and must use an intermediary. Does this mean then that the state has stopped being bourgeois? To the extent that fascism with its barbaric methods defends private property in the means of production, to that extent the state remains bourgeois under the fascist rule.

We do not at all intend to give our analogy an all-inclusive meaning. Nevertheless, it demonstrates that the concentration of power in the hands of the bureaucracy and even the retardation of the development of the productive forces, by themselves, still do not change the class nature of society and its state. Only the intrusion of a revolutionary or a counter-revolutionary force in property relations can change the class nature of the state.*

But does not history really know of cases of class conflict between the economy and the state? It does! After the "third estate" seized power, society for a period of several years still remained feudal. In the first months of Soviet rule the proletariat reigned on the basis of bourgeois economy. In the field of agriculture the dictatorship of the proletariat operated for a number of years on the basis of petty-bourgeois economy (to a considerable degree it does so even now). Should a bourgeois counter-revolution succeed in the USSR, the new government for a lengthy period would have to base itself upon nationalized economy. But what does such a type of temporary conflict between the economy and the state mean? It means a *revolution* or a *counter-revolution*. The victory of one class over another signifies that it will reconstruct economy in the interests

* The London *New Leader* under the editorship of Fenner Brockway, writes in an editorial, dated November 12th of this year:

"The ILP does not accept the Trotskyist view that the economic foundations of Socialism in Soviet Russia have been destroyed."

What can one say about these people? They do not understand the thoughts of others because they do not have any of their own. They can only sow confusion in the minds of the workers.

of the victors. But such a dichotomous condition, which is a necessary moment in every social overturn, has nothing in common with the theory of a classless state which in the absence of a real boss is being exploited by a clerk, i.e., by the bureaucracy.

Norm and Fact

It is the substitution of a subjective "normative" method in place of an objective, dialectical approach to the question which renders it difficult for many comrades to arrive at a correct sociological appraisal of the USSR. Not without reason do Burnham and Carter say that the Soviet Union cannot be considered a workers state "in the traditional sense given to this term by Marxism." This simply means that the USSR does not correspond to the norms of a workers state as set forth in our program. On this score there can be no disagreement. Our program has counted upon a progressive development of the workers state and by that token upon its gradual withering away. But history which does not always act "according to a program" has confronted us with the process of a degenerating workers state. But does this mean that a workers state, coming into conflict with the demands of our program, has ceased thereby to be a workers state? A liver poisoned by malaria does not correspond to a normal type of liver. But it does not because of that cease to be a liver. For the understanding of its nature, anatomy and physiology are not sufficient; pathology too is necessary. Of course it is much easier upon seeing the diseased liver to say: "This object is not to my liking," and to turn one's back upon it. But a physician cannot permit himself such a luxury. Depending upon the conditions of the disease itself, and the resulting deformation of the organ, he must have recourse either to therapeutic treatment ("reforms") or to surgery ("revolution"). But to be able to do this he must first of all understand that the deformed organ is a sick liver, and not something else.

But let us take a more familiar analogy; that between a workers state and a trade union. From the point of view of our program, the trade union should be an organization of class struggle. What then should be our attitude to the American Federation of Labor? At its head stand manifest agents of the bourgeoisie. Upon all essential questions, Messrs. Green, Woll and Co. carry out a political line directly opposed to the interests of the proletariat. We can extend the analogy and say that if until the appearance of the CIO, the AFL accomplished somewhat progressive work, now that the chief content of its activity is embodied in a struggle against the more progressive (or less reactionary) tendencies of the CIO, Green's apparatus has definitely become a reactionary factor. This would be completely correct. But the AFL does not because of this cease to be an organization of the trade unions.

The class character of the state is determined by its relation to the forms of property in the means of production. The character of a workers' organization such as a trade union is determined by its relation to the distribution of national income. The fact that Green and Co. defend private property in the means of production characterizes them as bourgeois. Should these gentlemen in addition

defend the income of the bourgeoisie from attacks on the part of the workers; should they conduct a struggle against strikes, against the raising of wages, against help to the unemployed, then we would have an organization of scabs, and not a trade union. However, Green and Co., in order not to lose their base, must lead within certain limits the struggle of the workers for an increase — or at least against a diminution — of their share of the national income. This objective symptom is sufficient in all important cases to permit us to draw a line of demarcation between the most reactionary trade union and an organization of scabs. Thus we are duty bound not only to carry on work in the AFL, but to defend it from scabs, the Ku Klux Klan, and the like.

The function of Stalin, like the function of Green, has a dual character. Stalin serves the bureaucracy and thus the world bourgeoisie; but he cannot serve the bureaucracy without defending that social foundation which the bureaucracy exploits in its own interests. To that extent does Stalin defend nationalized property from imperialist attacks and from the too impatient and avaricious layers of this very bureaucracy. However, he carries through this defense with methods that prepare the general destruction of Soviet society. It is exactly because of this that the Stalinist clique must be overthrown. But it is the revolutionary proletariat who must overthrow it. The proletariat cannot sub-contract this work to the imperialists. In spite of Stalin, the proletariat defends the USSR from imperialist attacks.

Historical development has accustomed us to the most varied kind of trade unions: militant, reformist, revolutionary, reactionary, liberal and Catholic. It is otherwise with a workers state. Such a phenomenon we see for the first time. That accounts for our inclination to approach the USSR exclusively from the point of view of the *norms* of the revolutionary program. Meanwhile the workers state is an objective historical *fact* which is being subjected to the influence of different historical forces and can as we see come into full contradiction with "traditional" norms.

Comrades B. and C. are completely correct when they say that Stalin and Co. by their politics serve the international bourgeoisie. But this correct thought must be established in the correct conditions of time and place. Hitler also serves the bourgeoisie. However, between the functions of Stalin and Hitler there is a difference. Hitler defends the bourgeois forms of property. Stalin adapts the interests of the bureaucracy to the proletarian forms of property. The same Stalin in Spain, i.e., on the soil of a bourgeois regime, executes the function of Hitler (in their political methods they generally differ little from one another). The juxtaposition of the different social roles of the one and the same Stalin in the USSR and in Spain, demonstrates equally well that the bureaucracy is not an independent class but the tool of classes; and that it is impossible to define the social nature of a state by the virtue or villainy of the bureaucracy.

The assertion that the bureaucracy of a workers state has a bourgeois character must appear not only unintelligible but completely senseless to people stamped with a formal cast of mind. However, chemically pure types of state never existed, and do not exist in general. The semi-feudal

Prussian monarchy executed the most important political problems of the bourgeoisie, but executed them in their own manner, i.e., in a feudal, not a Jacobin style. In Japan we observe even today an analogous correlation between the bourgeois character of the state and the semi-feudal character of the ruling caste. But all this does not hinder us from clearly differentiating between a feudal and a bourgeois society. True, one can raise the objection that the collaboration of feudal and bourgeois forces is immeasurably easily realized than the collaboration of bourgeois and proletarian forces, inasmuch as the first instance presents a case of two forms of class exploitation. This is completely correct. But a workers state does not create a new society in one day. Marx wrote that in the first period of a workers state, the *bourgeois* norms of distribution are still preserved. (About this see *The Revolution Betrayed*, the section "Socialism and the State," p. 53.) One has to weight well and think this thought out to the end. The workers state itself, as a *state*, is necessary exactly because the bourgeois norms of distribution still remain in force.

This means that even the most revolutionary bureaucracy is to a certain degree a *bourgeois organ* in the workers state. Of course, the *degree* of this bourgeoisification and the general tendency of development bears decisive significance. If the workers state loses its bureaucratization and gradually falls away, this means that its development marches along the road of socialism. On the contrary, if the bureaucracy becomes ever more powerful, authoritative, privileged and conservative, this means that in the workers state the bourgeois tendencies grow at the expense of the socialist; in other words, that inner contradiction which *to a certain degree* is lodged in the workers state from the first days of its rise does not diminish, as the "norm" demands, but increases. However, so long as that contradiction has not passed from the sphere of distribution into the sphere of production, and has not blown up nationalized property and planned economy, the state remains a workers state.

Lenin had already said fifteen years ago: "Our state is a workers state, but with bureaucratic deformations." In that period bureaucratic deformation represented a direct inheritance of the bourgeois regime and, in that sense, appeared as a mere survival of the past. Under the pressure of unfavorable historical conditions, however, the bureaucratic "survival" received new sources of nourishment and became a tremendous historical factor. It is exactly because of this that we now speak of the *degeneration* of the workers state. This degeneration, as the present orgy of Bonapartist terror shows, has approached a crucial point. That which was a "bureaucratic deformation" is at the present moment preparing to devour the workers state, without leaving any remains, and on the ruins of nationalized property, to spawn a new propertied class. Such a possibility has drawn extremely near. But all this is only a possibility and we do not intend beforehand to bow before it.

The USSR as a workers state does not correspond to the "traditional" norm. This does not signify that it is not a workers state. Neither does this signify that the norm has been found false. The "norm" counted upon the com-

plete victory of the international proletarian revolution. The USSR is only a partial and mutilated expression of a backward and isolated workers state.

Idealistic, ultimatic, "purely" normative thinking wishes to construct the world in its own image, and simply turns away from phenomena which are not to its liking. Sectarians, i.e., people who are revolutionary only in their own imagination, guide themselves by empty idealistic norms. They say: "These unions are not to our liking, we will not join them; this workers state is not to our liking, we will not defend it." Each time they promise to begin history anew. They will construct, don't you see, an ideal workers state, when god places in their hands an ideal party and ideal unions. But until this happy moment arrives, they will, as much as possible, pout their lips at reality. A very big pout — that is the supreme expression of sectarian "revolutionaryism."

Purely "historical," reformist, Menshevik, passive, conservative thinking busies itself with justifying, as Marx expressed it, today's swinishness by yesterday's swinishness. Representatives of this kind enter into mass organizations and dissolve themselves there. The contemptible "friends" of the USSR adapt themselves to the vileness of the bureaucracy, invoking the "historical" conditions.

In opposition to these two casts of mind, dialectic thinking — Marxist, Bolshevik — takes phenomena in their objective development and at the same time finds in the internal contradictions of this development a basis for the realization of its "norms." It is of course necessary not to forget that we expect the programmatic norms to be realized only if they are the generalized expression of the progressive tendencies of *the objective historical process itself*.

The programmatic definition of a union would sound approximately like this: an organization of workers of a trade or industry with the objective of (1) struggling against capitalism for the amelioration of the conditions of the workers; (2) participating in the revolutionary struggle for the overthrow of the bourgeoisie; (3) participating in the organization of economy on a socialist basis. If we compared this "normative" definition with the actual reality, we should find ourselves constrained to say: there does not exist a single trade union in the world today. But such a counterposing of norm to fact, that is to say, of the *generalized* expression of the development to the *particular* manifestation of this same development — such a formal, ultimatic, non-dialectic counterposing of program to reality is absolutely lifeless and does not open any road for the intervention of the revolutionary party. In the meantime the existing opportunistic unions under the pressure of capitalist disintegration *can* and under the conditions of our correct policies within the unions, *must* approach our programmatic norms and play a progressive historical role. This, of course, presupposes a complete change of leadership. It is necessary that the workers of the United States, England, France, drive out Green, Citrine, Jouhaux & Co. It is necessary that the Soviet workers drive out Stalin & Co. If the proletariat drives out the Soviet bureaucracy *in time*, then it will still find the nationalized means of production and the basic elements of planned economy after its victory. This means that it will

not have to begin from the beginning. That is a tremendous advantage! Only radical dandies, who are used to hopping carelessly from twig to twig, can lightmindedly dismiss such a possibility. The socialist revolution is too tremendous and difficult a problem for one to lightmindedly wave his hand on its inestimable material achievement and begin from the beginning.

It is very good that Comrades B. and C. in distinction from our French comrade Craipeau and others do not forget the factor of the productive forces and do not deny defense to the Soviet Union. But this is completely insufficient. And what if the criminal leadership of the bureaucracy should paralyze the growth in economy? Can it be possible that Comrades B. and C. in such a case will passively allow imperialism to destroy the social bases of the USSR? We are sure this is not the case. However, their non-Marxist definition of the USSR as neither a workers nor a bourgeois state opens the door for *all kinds* of conclusions. That is why this definition must be categorically rejected.

Simultaneously a Ruling and an Oppressed Class

"How can our political conscience not resent the fact," say the ultra-leftists, "that they want to force us to believe that in the USSR, under Stalin's rule, the proletariat is the 'ruling class' . . . ? !" This assertion phrased in such an abstract manner can actually arouse our "resentment." But the truth is that abstract categories, necessary in the process of analysis, are completely unfit for synthesis, which demands the utmost concreteness. The proletariat of the USSR is the ruling class in a *backward* country where there is still a lack of the most vital necessities of life. The proletariat of the USSR rules in a land consisting of only one-twelfth part of humanity; imperialism rules over the remaining eleven-twelfths. The rule of the proletariat already maimed by the backwardness and poverty of the country, is doubly and triply deformed under the pressure of world imperialism. The organ of the rule of the proletariat — the state — becomes an organ for the pressure from imperialism (diplomacy, army, foreign trade, ideas and customs). The struggle for domination considered on an historical scale, is not between the proletariat and the bureaucracy, but between the proletariat and the world bourgeoisie. The bureaucracy is only the transmitting mechanism in this struggle. The struggle is not concluded. In spite of all efforts on the part of the Moscow clique to demonstrate its conservative reliability (the counter-revolutionary politics of Stalin in Spain!), world imperialism does not trust Stalin, does not spare him the most humiliating flicks and is ready at the first favorable opportunity, to overthrow him. Hitler — and therein lies his strength — simply more consistently and frankly expresses the attitude of the world bourgeoisie to the Soviet bureaucracy. For the bourgeoisie — fascist as well as democratic — isolated counter-revolutionary exploits of Stalin do not suffice; it needs a complete counter-revolution in the relations of property and the opening of the Russian market. So long as this is not the case, the bourgeoisie consider the Soviet state hostile to it. And it is right.

The internal regime in the colonial and semi-colonial countries has a predominantly bourgeois character. But the pressure of foreign imperialism so alters and distorts the economic and political structure of these countries that the national bourgeoisie (even in the politically independent countries of South America) only partly reaches the height of a ruling class. The pressure of imperialism on backward countries does not change, it is true, their *basic* social character since the oppressor and oppressed represent only different levels of development in one and the same bourgeois society. Nevertheless the difference between England and India, Japan and China, the United States and Mexico is so big that we strictly differentiate between oppressor and oppressed bourgeois countries and we consider it our duty to support the latter against the former. The bourgeoisie of colonial and semi-colonial countries is a semi-ruling, semi-oppressed class.

The pressure of imperialism on the Soviet Union has as its aim the alteration of the very nature of Soviet society. The struggle — today peaceful, tomorrow military — concerns the forms of property. In its capacity of a transmitting mechanism in this struggle, the bureaucracy leans now on the proletariat against imperialism, now on imperialism against the proletariat, in order to increase its own power. At the same time it mercilessly exploits its role as distributor of the meagre necessities of life in order to safeguard its own well-being and power. By this token the rule of the proletariat assumes an abridged, curbed, distorted character. One can with full justification say that the proletariat, *ruling* in one backward and isolated country, still remains an *oppressed* class. The source of oppression is world imperialism; the mechanism of transmission of the oppression — the bureaucracy. If in these words "a ruling and at the same time an oppressed class" there is a contradiction, then it flows not from the mistakes of thought but from the contradiction in the very situation of the USSR. It is precisely because of this that we reject the theory of socialism in one country.

The recognition of the USSR as a workers' state — not a type but a mutilation of a type — does not at all signify a theoretical and political amnesty for the Soviet bureaucracy. On the contrary, its reactionary character is fully revealed only in the light of the contradiction between its anti-proletarian politics and the needs of the workers' state. Only by posing the question in this manner does our exposure of the crimes of the Stalinist clique gain full motive force. The defense of the USSR means not only the supreme struggle against imperialism, but a preparation for the overthrow of the Bonapartist bureaucracy.

The experience of the USSR shows how great are the possibilities lodged in the workers' state and how great is its strength of resistance. But this experience also shows how powerful is the pressure of capitalism and its bureaucratic agency, how difficult it is for the proletariat to gain full liberation and how necessary it is to educate and temper the new International in the spirit of irreconcilable revolutionary struggle.

L. TROTSKY

November 25, 1937
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