

WORKERS OF THE WORLD  
UNITE!

# the new International

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1934

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A MONTHLY ORGAN OF REVOLUTIONARY MARXISM

# THE NEW INTERNATIONAL

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## THE NEW "NEW INTERNATIONAL"

EARLY this month, a joint fusion convention of the Communist League of America and the American Workers party launched the Workers party of the United States. The new party is dealt with elsewhere in this issue and requires no detailed comment here. The assembled delegates voted to publish an official weekly organ, *The New Militant*, and to adopt THE NEW INTERNATIONAL as the monthly theoretical review of the Workers party. Beginning with the new year, therefore, our magazine will appear as the official publication of the new party, devoting itself essentially to the theoretical and scientific problems of the working class movement and putting forward the revolutionary Marxian doctrine of our party.

The party has designated as editors of the magazine comrades Max Shachtman and John West, with comrade William Duncan as business manager.

With the founding of the new party, which represents a concentration of the advanced revolutionary forces in this country, who have already succeeded in attracting to the party a number of militants who were previously unattached, or else members of other organizations, the

prospects for our review are greatly enhanced. The gratifying reception with which it has met up to the present will now certainly be extended into new fields, so that we shall be able in increasing measure to reach new hundreds and even new thousands of readers.

In harmony with these prospects, we intend to make the review even more attractive than it has been up to now. In addition to dealing with the more direct problems of the working class, with polemics, with theoretical questions, THE NEW INTERNATIONAL will henceforth strive to reflect more systematically the topical questions of the American class struggle—both in the economic and political fields. Furthermore, we intend to aim at dealing with subjects of even more universal interest—the cultural and scientific world. We shall not write on such themes merely because they deserve being written about, but only when the contributions made are of a quality which merit printing.

Another point in our policy which will be of interest to our readers is the fact that we do not intend to print only such articles as are written by members of the new party, or only from the strict stand-

point of the party's principles. As the occasion offers itself, we aim to invite contributions also from critics or opponents, without thereby converting our review, which has a point of view and adheres rigidly to it, into a loose open forum. This invitation will be extended particularly in cases where the subjects dealt with are of a nature which still deserve or require thorough discussion in the movement itself.

We want to make THE NEW INTERNATIONAL the outstanding review of revolutionary Marxism, at least in the English-speaking world. The multiplication of the forces now behind our review will surely facilitate the attainment of this goal. For our part—the part of the editors and the contributors—we shall do all in our power to produce a satisfactory publication. The rest depends entirely upon our body of loyal readers and friends. We are counting on their support, on their subscriptions, on their distribution of the magazine, on their financial aid whenever it is necessary—and it always is. We feel confident that you, reader, will do your part.

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# THE NEW INTERNATIONAL

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## The Workers Party Is Founded

**T**HE WORKERS party of the U. S. did not emerge suddenly from nowhere. It was born of the merger of the Communist League of America and the American Workers party, itself the outgrowth of the Conference for Progressive Labor Action. Each organization took pride in its past. It did not disown that past in coming into the merger. Rather did each organization by its participation in the merger bear witness to its appreciation of the history of the other.

Before launching on the main theme of this article, two observations on the significance of the merger may be made. In the first place, a number have asked the question, Why is it that precisely the group which has been most concerned about theory, and on the other hand, the group which has been most "activist" have got together? Without entering now into a discussion as to the exactness of the description here employed, it may be pointed out that at one point in the evolution of the movement, the elaboration of theory may be the prime need, and at another the application of theory in action. However, there cannot be, and never is, a divorce between sound theory and sound practise. A group which devotes itself to the discussion of theory in the Marxian sense does not do it for the sake of agreeable mental exercise, as an alternative perhaps to working cross-word puzzles. It is concerned with theory because it needs to know how to act and will not act on a merely opportunistic basis. Elaboration of theory leads, therefore, to practical work in the labor scene. On the other hand, a group which seeks to act in a responsible and not an adventurist spirit in the revolutionary movement, which is concerned about ultimate and not merely about immediate aims, may indeed scorn Talmudic theologizing and debates which lead simply to more debates; but it cannot be indifferent to theory. It can render a service which the trade union bureaucrats, for example, cannot render, not merely because its members may individually be more honest or self-sacrificing, but chiefly because it has a clear conception of the economic and political system, the rôle of the working class, etc., and therefore can thread its way through the complex maze of events. That is to say, it must fall back on theory. If it does not find theoretical questions answered by any existing political party it must hammer out theory for itself and build a new party. Thus the fusion of the C.L.A. and the A.W.P. was not accidental. Moreover, the fusion will bear fruit which neither group by itself could have produced.

Another question which has been raised is, Why is it that the most "internationalist" and the most "nationalist" group got together? The first comment on that question is naturally that one cannot believe everything he reads in the papers, especially in the *Daily Worker*. Seriously, the point of the revolutionary internationalism of the C.L.A. has been that it is a fatal error to make the laying of the foundations of the socialist economy in the Soviet Union and the so-called "defense of the Soviet Union" the almost exclusive concern of the revolutionary movement; that the defense of the Soviet Union itself today depends upon the growth and victory of revolutionary parties in capitalist countries and that energy must be concentrated on that task. When the A.W.P. has insisted that the revolutionary movement must be built in the United States it has done this, not with any notion that a revolutionary movement could be national in character, but precisely because it was so deeply concerned that the working class of the United States should do its part in the world revolutionary movement. It inveighed sometimes against sentimentality and romanticism about labor internationalism because it was so deeply concerned about building the international revolutionary movement realistically and so avoiding a repetition of the tragic débâcle which overtook the movement in 1914 with the outbreak of the war and again in 1932 under the onslaught of Fascism in Germany and elsewhere. Again,

therefore, the merger is the correct and natural outcome of the history of the two groups.

The merger also signifies that we are not slaves to the past. Our faces are set to the future. We go to meet the test of action.

Objective conditions vary in different countries; the working class is at different stages in its evolution. Consequently the crucial issue before the revolutionary party is not the same in different countries or at different periods. The trade union issue is the master issue in the United States today. By the manner in which it meets that issue the Workers party will justify or stultify itself in the initial period of its existence.

Reactionary employer interests and the "liberal" Roosevelt administration are well aware of the fact that it is over the right of workers to organize and bargain collectively, in the organizing campaigns and strike struggles of the past two years, that capitalism and the working class are locking horns today in the U.S. By might and main, by direct and brutal or indirect and subtle means, they seek to prevent organization, to build company unions, to postpone the issue over Section 7a of N.R.A. to prevent strikes, to break them, and where unions are formed to confuse the membership and corrupt the leaders so that the unions may not become or remain genuine instruments of struggle.

Without in most cases thinking the problem through, with wrong or incomplete theory perhaps, if they have any at all, the masses of the workers also sense the significance of the conflict. And this includes not a few white-collar, professional and technical workers, who until recently hardly thought of themselves as "workers" at all. They are fighting for bread and butter of course. What else should starving men and women fight for? But they sense the need for power in order to get bread; they know that power comes from organization; they fight magnificently and starve in order to get recognition of their union. In the room in which Okey Odell, the Ohio onion strike leader, lay recovering from his wounds last August, surrounded by armed union members determined to fight it out with any vigilantes who might try to seize him again, a special guard stood before the federal union charter these onion workers had received from the A. F. of L. pledged to die before they would permit it to be taken away!

In certain more sophisticated quarters of the labor movement, there are those who do not see what is plain to the capitalists and politicians on the one hand and the working masses on the other. The avowed social democrats and the unavowed ones, including some of those who regard themselves as devotees of the "American approach", think of course that the class struggle is fought primarily and mainly at the polls. One of them recently remarked that Upton Sinclair in his EPIC campaign for governor of California had carried the class struggle in that state to the highest point it had ever reached, and did not even mention the marine workers' strike that raged up and down the Pacific coast last summer, and the general strike in the San Francisco area! No, not Upton on his soap-box but Tom Mooney in jail is still the symbol of the class struggle in California.

At the other extreme are doctrinaires and Leftists to whom the unions, especially those in the A. F. of L., are company unions, Fascist unions, "bulwarks of capitalism", etc. Until recently at least the C. P. held to this estimate and proceeded to do its utmost to divide the working class by building its own sectarian, paper "industrial" unions. Others holding this estimate stand in holy aloofness from the present struggles of the workers and their ill-advised attempts to organize, perhaps condescending to lift up their voices to preach the one true doctrine to deaf ears. Those with syndicalist leanings may participate actively and courageously in strike struggles, but they will have nothing to do with the unions which conduct or grow out of these strikes. Some day, they feel

blissfully certain, objective conditions will compel the workers to rise spontaneously, to turn their backs suddenly upon the past and its misguided struggles, and to put over the revolution.

To reject these attitudes does not mean that we accept the present leadership of the A. F. of L., its structure, its policies, its attitude toward employers and government. For the Marxist that is even more impossible than it was at an earlier period. The unions cannot in the period of capitalist decline fulfill the functions, achieve the gains for the workers, that were possible when capitalism was still able to give substantial concessions at least to large sections of the population. The class-collaboration philosophy becomes more dangerous as the capitalist crisis deepens, will prove fatal if it prevails as that crisis reaches its climax.

The struggle of the unions against the employing class and the government is genuine and has a progressive character, therefore, only in the degree that within the unions the struggle against the bureaucracy and its policies goes on. This intra-union struggle can be effectively waged by the rank and file, the progressive and Left elements, only if they are organized. Who shall lead and inspire in this struggle and the organization for it, if not the politically developed, the theoretically trained workers? In other words, the revolutionary party? Correctly, therefore, the Workers party of the U. S. places in the forefront of its Program of Action for the next six months the organization of the Left-progressive wing in the unions.

Neither the socialist party as a whole nor any section of it worth mentioning has a clear conception of the crucial nature of this task. In effect, therefore, they all strengthen the hands of the trade union bureaucrats and, so far as they have influence, commit the movement to a non-militant and reformist attitude. The Right wing has of course always served the union officialdom in exchange for votes and jobs as "labor lawyers", etc. At the Detroit convention they fought bitterly against even a mild censure of the A. F. of L. leaders. Today they are openly seeking an alliance with the unions under their present leadership in a Labor party—to the Right of where the S. P. has supposedly stood.

Meanwhile the adolescent and unrealistic character of the leadership of the various shades of "Militants" is clearly illustrated by the fact that they engage in most violent shadow-boxing with the Right wing over the "united front" with the C.P. (or that poor relation of the C. P., Lovestone, of whom the R.P.C. is in turn a poor relation) and over what they are going to do, or think they are going to do, when war or the revolution comes—but back down before the Right wing on the trade union issue, the test of the revolutionary realist today. The Militants do not concentrate on building the Left-progressive wing in the unions. They concentrate on getting posts in the unions which, in the absence of a Left-progressive wing under the leadership of revolutionary forces, can only result in the Militants becoming assimilated to the trade union bureaucracy, as has happened often enough in previous years. It is inconceivable that the workers, the miners, e. g., or the steel workers, who know the union situation from the inside and whose very livelihood in many instances depends literally upon the outcome of the struggle against the union bureaucracy, can long follow such leadership, can postpone joining the Workers party and thus assisting most effectively in building the Left wing in the unions.

The unions are instruments of struggle, agencies of collective bargaining, etc. within the capitalist system. By themselves, they are not revolutionary instruments. In fact, left to themselves they become "pure and simple", degenerate into rackets, fail even as collective bargaining agencies. What transformations, revolutionary changes, new formations, may occur in the economic organizations and the economic struggle, as on the one hand the economic crisis deepens and on the other hand the revolutionary party gains the confidence and leadership of the masses, is subject matter for analysis in future issues of this magazine. Even among those who may differ on these matters, there can be agreement—there must be if disaster is not to overcome the American working class—that today in the U. S. the main sector of the class struggle is the movement of workers of all categories into unions, the fight for recognition of the right to organize, the strike struggles, the fight against the trade union bureaucrats. In the shops, mines, stores,

offices; in union halls; on the picket lines; on the streets of Toledo, Minneapolis, Milwaukee, San Francisco, the steel and textile and automobile and mining towns, that struggle rages and will rage in the months ahead. Build the unions; organize the workers; develop their militancy; broaden, deepen, intensify, politicalize the day-to-day struggles; fight the bureaucrats; build the Left-progressive wing—this is the program of revolutionists today, the program of the Workers party.

The so-called communist party has clearly demonstrated how such a program should NOT be carried out. Abandoning the conception of party democracy and workers democracy completely, the C. P. has espoused a mystical, absolutist, utterly un-Marxian conception of a party which can do no wrong, which stands outside and above the working class. (From this to an absolute ruler over the party itself is only a step.) This leads to a fatal lack of faith in, actual contempt for, the working class. It finds expression in the theory of social-Fascism (working class organizations that do not accept our domination are Fascist); in united-front-from-below manœuvres (these stupid asses will not see through our clever scheme to crush them); in using strong-arm methods to break up the meetings of other labor groups; in "capturing" unions and other mass organizations by political trickery or main force; in manipulating union machinery so as to put party members in office; in calling strikes and telling the workers what the strike is about after they get out on the sidewalk. At this very moment we are seeing another ludicrous and yet tragic illustration of what this attitude leads to. Members of independent building trades unions fostered by the C. P. are in open revolt against the party which, after years of building separate sectarian, often paper, unions all along the line, has suddenly realized the futility of that course and now proceeds quite as mechanically and dictatorially to try to liquidate every independent union it can lay its hands on, regardless of the circumstances which gave it birth, its mass base or the will of the membership!

The Workers party will not utter its own doom in advance by using such methods in its trade union work. It will rely upon the correctness of its analysis and program, the persuasiveness of its propaganda, above all upon the activity, devotion and militancy of its members in the unions to win the confidence first of the progressives and then of the broad masses in the unions.

No fact stands out more clearly from a survey of the present scene than the need of a revolutionary party with a sound trade union program. The masses are in motion. They continue to press into the unions. One strike struggle follows upon the heels of the other. Yet for lack of effective organization of the Left-progressive wing, itself the result of the disastrous policies of the C. P. and S. P., many strikes are prevented, no strike has gained results proportionate to the spirit displayed by the workers, the issue of unionization in the traditional anti-union strongholds in the basic industries is still unresolved, the old A. F. of L. machine continues in the saddle. The fact that the workers continue to organize in the A. F. of L. does not mean that they have a naïve confidence in the present leadership. On the contrary, textile, steel, automobile, marine workers, to mention but a few instances, know that this leadership cannot be trusted. They are ready to welcome a new leadership which will display vigor and a sense of reality. Whenever the idea of building an organization of Left-progressives has been broached, it has met with an instant response. In fact, the movement is already under way independently in many sections of the country.

No organization except the Workers party is in a position to take advantage of the opportunity and to give leadership to the movement. The C. P. is in this field hopelessly discredited and at sea. The S. P., apart from all other considerations, is so torn with conflict and confusion that it cannot devote attention to this crying need of the workers. In Toledo and Minneapolis the forces that by merging have constituted the Workers party have already demonstrated their ability and gained the attention of the masses.

Thus with confidence and determination we address ourselves to the task of building the Left-progressive wing in the unions—building the Workers party of the U. S.—building the new, the Fourth, International!

A. J. MUSTE.

# Right Face in the Socialist Party

“WHILE one may count upon the vertebral firmness of the Right wing,” we wrote in our last issue about the situation in the socialist party, “the same cannot be said of its opponents. Properly speaking, the question is not so much ‘Will the Right wing split?’ as it is ‘Will the Militants retreat before the Right wing threat of split?’”

The Boston meeting of the National Executive Committee of the socialist party has replied with a thumping affirmative to the latter question, in exactly the manner we indicated last month. The decisions made at Boston not only register a victory for the Right wing all along the line, but mark a decisive turn-about-face for the party. The swing to the Left has been brought to an abrupt halt and given way to an equally unmistakable swing to the Right.

The Detroit convention was the culminating point of the Leftward development in the socialist party. The explosion of the prosperity myth in the United States by the unrelieved crisis, the succession of strike waves, helped to undermine the position of traditional reformism in the party. The catastrophes produced by classic social democratic policies in Europe also impelled thousands to reconsider the fundamental questions of the movement and to conclude that a thorough revision was needed. The influx of new elements, including many radical working class forces, served to give the Leftward current greater bulk and speed. The shrewder sections of the party officialdom, could not afford the complete contempt for events and popular moods that characterizes the extreme Right wing whose position is assured by the institutions it bureaucratically controls. They saw the need of mixing a harmless dash or two of scarlet into the party's colors so as to make them more attractive to those restless elements seeking a revolutionary party of action.

This singular combination of forces operated to inflict the first serious defeat suffered by the Right wing of the socialist party since 1919. A new declaration of principles was adopted which, while it did not meet any of the requirements of a Marxian document, was nevertheless enough of a departure from the straitlaced reformism of yesterday to provoke angry screams from the Right wing statesmen who promptly predicted eternal perdition for the party if the document was ever ratified. Worst of all for the Right wing was the election to the National Executive Committee of the “Militant” slate of candidates.

Especially after the declaration of principles was endorsed in party referendum, and the Right wing launched an ominous crusade against the usurping infidels, a growing chorus of voices was raised to proclaim that the socialist party was now definitely on the high road to becoming *the* revolutionary working class party in the United States, and that in a very brief period of time.

In the first place, however, a genuine Left wing did not exist. In its stead was to be found one of the most motley collections of heterogeneous elements that ever composed a convention majority or took over the leadership of a party. The majority which dominated the Detroit convention and carried the declaration of principles on the floor and in the referendum, included conservative labor bureaucrats like James Graham; Right wing municipal politicians like Daniel Hoan who sided with the “Militants” because the practical politicians in Wisconsin chafed under the party domination of the “orthodox” and “un-American” (Yes!) New Yorkers; astute Centrists like Krueger and Sullivan who consciously advocate greater (but not too great) radicalism in the party so as to prevent a flow to communism; Norman Thomas, who is a radical in the French sense of the term, that is, a liberal in the American sense of the term; real militants who genuinely sought a revolutionary program but who were hampered by confusion and general lack of development; supporters of the Revolutionary Policy Committee who, under Lovestone's guidance, executed the grand manoeuvre of holding the stirrup-cups for Krueger in exchange for one seat on the N.E.C.; plus a variety of odds and ends who defy political description.

The first card of the Right wing in its campaign to regain power was not a split, but the *threat* of a split. Contrary to all the rules

of Hoyle, but in harmony with the relationship of forces, this one card has taken all the tricks up to now. With this single card, the Right wing came to the Boston meeting, after several months of systematic slugging in the party ranks, pressed the “Militant” leaders right into the corner and extorted from them one concession after another—to such a point, indeed, that the distinction between Thomas and Waldman is now more theoretical than practical.

It is true that the Right wing did not get everything it formally demanded. But then again, it did not expect to get that much. Here too, however, it showed itself vastly superior to its “Militant” opponents—if one may still use the word. It very impudently demanded, for instance, a constitutional amendment providing that the declaration of principles be inoperative in those states where the party had voted against it. It demanded that a number of its partisans be added to the National Executive Committee by the method of coöptation. It demanded a number of other things which it had no reason at all to believe would be granted it. But these demands were all part of the aggressive strategy of the Right wing, one element of which was to demand 150% in order finally to get 100%. This tactic of over-bidding on one's hand is, to be sure, a tactic of bluff. But in dealing with timid people and cowards, bluff is often highly effective and, one is almost tempted to say, justified. At all events, it worked wonders in Boston.

The Right wing came to Boston in full force and in many disguises: delegations from the New York Committee, from the “Socialist Unity Conference”, from the “Interstate Conference”, from Pennsylvania, Maryland, Connecticut, Indiana, Michigan, and from wherever else the Right wing could scare up some representatives who would come to Boston to scare the N.E.C. The sessions of the latter were a field day for the Right wing. On five distinct points, the Right wing scored a victory.

1. The united front with the communist party or the “splinter groups” was pigeon-holed.
2. The N.E.C. opened the way for a drastic revision of the declaration of principles.
3. The Revolutionary Policy Committee was condemned and an investigating committee established to track it down.
4. A committee was established to investigate the Oklahoma party organization's misconduct, an investigation demanded by Oneal and the Right wing primarily because the state voted 7 to 1 for the “Militants”.
5. The “Militants” had to undergo the mortifying experience of having one of their partisans resign from the N.E.C. under fire because this particular “Militant” leader, Dr. M. Shadid of Oklahoma, could not distinguish between Upton Sinclair, whom he congratulated by telegraph, and the socialist party.

The complete right-about-face on the question of the united front with communists is easily one of the shabbiest capitulations of recent times. Only a few weeks ago, the “Militant” leadership, headed by Norman Thomas, voted exactly the other way. The records of the N.E.C., as late as October of this year, show that “James Oneal moved that negotiations with Communist organizations should not be undertaken by the N.E.C. Motion lost by vote of seven to four. Favoring the motion were Graham, Hoan, Hoopes and Oneal. Opposed, Krzycki, Daniel, Hapgood, Krueger, Shadid, Thomas and Coolidge”. With no change in the objective situation, the Boston meeting of the N.E.C. reversed itself completely on the question. The Hapgood motion which was unequivocally for the united front, received only the support of Daniel, an R.P.C. man, whereas eight voted against. The Graham motion, just as unequivocally against the united front, was lost by the tie-vote of Hoan, Hoopes, Coolidge, Graham and Oneal in favor and Thomas, Hapgood, Daniel, Krzycki and Krueger opposed. One representative from each side—Krueger and Hoopes—then retired, and with the blessing of Norman Thomas, brought back the miserable “compromise motion”, which compromises and discredits only those who supported it. The “compromise” gives the Right wing just about 90% of what it wanted.

First, the national party organization is to conduct no negotia-

tions for a united front with the C. P. or with "the so-called splinter groups" (how tall they talk!) until the next convention. That is, the class struggle and the interests of the American working class must wait two years, until 1936, to be satisfied, just because the "Militant" leaders of the socialist party buckled up under the assault of their Right wing.

Second, even local united fronts on urgent specific issues, are now prohibited. In organized states, a local of the S. P. must first get the permission of the State Executive Committee; in unorganized states, of the National Executive Committee. This automatically means no united front in New York, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, New Jersey (which the Right wing has just recaptured), Maryland, Ohio, Indiana, Michigan, Missouri, Wisconsin, California—that is, in all those states, with the possible exception of Illinois, where the socialist party, and consequently the united front itself, has any significance and importance. As for localities under the direct jurisdiction of the N.E.C., it is highly doubtful that they will get permission for a united front in view of the frame of mind into which the Right wing has intimidated the "Militants".

The "compromise" motion was adopted by a vote of 7 to 3, Daniel and Hapgood voting against it because it rejected the united front, and the intransigent Oneal voting against it because it "permitted" local united fronts. In the course of the discussion on the motion, Thomas expressed his position in such a manner as made his position indistinguishable from that for which, in the past, the socialists have condemned the communists, namely, that they want the united front "only in order to expose us". The report of the *New Leader* reads: "Norman Thomas said he wanted to negotiate with the communists only to get the communist party on record, black on white. 'I believe we want a united front [What a singular way the N.E.C. has of showing it!—S.] and that it is the communists who make it impossible.'" Which means, it appears, that "we" have advocated a united front only in order to prove that it cannot be realized. When did Thomas make the sudden discovery that it is impossible? The resolution of the N.E.C. virtuously declares that

"Before proceeding with any negotiations with the communist party or the so-called splinter groups on the question of united action, the socialist party must be convinced by their actions that such policies and practises, particularly the theory of 'social-Fascism', the use of splitting tactics and disruptive methods in the labor organizations, are no longer in use and will not operate to discredit the cause for which united action is proposed."

We leave aside for the moment the question of which of the "so-called splinter groups" is supposed to be a defender of the theory of social-Fascism and the use of splitting tactics and disruptive methods, in order to ask another question: What has happened between the October meeting of the N.E.C., at which the Oneal motion to drop united front negotiations was voted down by the Thomas majority, and the December 2 meeting of the N.E.C., at which a similar motion was carried by the same Thomas majority? We, at least, are aware of no particularly new variation on the theme of social-Fascism advanced by the Stalinist party in these brief five weeks, or of anything out of the ordinary (for Stalinism!) in the realm of splitting tactics and disruptive methods in the same period of time. In order to produce this Thomasian somersault, we ask, just what new thing happened in the camp of Stalinism that wasn't there several weeks ago? Or just what is new in the objective situation? In all fairness to Mr. Thomas, let us quote at length from his explanatory letter to the *New York Times* of December 8:

"Since that time [the Milwaukee meeting of the N.E.C.], however, events have not moved auspiciously. The communists here and in other countries, for example Poland, gave new evidence both by word and by deed that they had not abandoned their intention of using the united front as a manoeuvre not only, or perhaps chiefly, to fight Fascism but to destroy the socialist party. At some points they seemed to intensify rather than abate their disruptive tactics in the American labor movement. Sentiment in the socialist party was clearly in large majority opposed, therefore, even to negotiations until such time at least as communist tactics might change [the 1936 convention of the S. P., perhaps?—S.] and until the party as a whole could pass on this important matter

through the regular machinery of the convention. For this reason the N. E.C. at its last meeting definitely ended all talk of united front negotiations with the communist party."

A marvelous country—Poland! The Jewish Khazars used her as a land to settle on when they were expelled from Constantinople a thousand years ago; the Mongols used her as a gateway to Hungary; for centuries she was the eastern outpost of true Christendom; her cavalry was used to save Vienna from the last Turkish attack; even the Swedes used her—or rather her later king, John III—to fight against Poland herself; Frederick the Great, Catherine the Second and Maria Theresa of Austria used her for territorial aggrandizement; in turn she gave Kosciusko to the American revolution, Dombrowski to the Paris Commune, Luxemburg to Spartacus, Pilsudski to Austria, and Karl Radek to Stalin; France used her as a vassal state from 1919 onward, and Hitler is now using her in his bloc. But never, never before has long-suffering and innocent Poland been used by anyone as a cover behind which to crawl out of a difficulty created by an internal party dispute, as a bridge between an October pro-united front position and a December anti-united front position!

The feeling of friendship which all liberty-loving persons, from Karl Marx's time down to the present, have felt for the integrity of Poland, rises in us, too, and prevents us from accepting her as a *deus ex machina* to help Mr. Thomas out of his unenviable plight. And indeed, there is no need to go abroad, or to import an explanation for the change of front by the socialist N.E.C. It is to be found right here, and it is a simple one. The Right wing, whom the paladins of the "Militant" group set out a year ago to challenge so recklessly, swooped down in full force, made a few menacing gestures, threatened to split away and deprive the party of its institutions, its wealth and its respectability—and the paladins crumpled up pitifully. The explanation for the change lies in the fact that the "Militant" leaders have a string of gelatine where their spine ought to be and an oil-drenched knee-hinge where a brace ought to be, that is, they have the physical as well as the political characteristics of Centrism.

How else explain the head-over-heels speed with which the December N.E.C. made so many changes in policy? How explain the *New Leader* report from Boston that "On Sunday, the committee voted to set up a committee to receive suggestions and recommendations in the matters of rendering the declaration of principles satisfactory to all sections of the party". Surely, not to all sections. Not, for example, to the Revolutionary Policy Committee. Not, for example, to the "Militants" themselves, for as we understood it they wrote it, adopted it in Detroit, and endorsed it in the national referendum. If we may venture a bold guess, the declaration of principles is to be made satisfactory to Mr. Louis Waldman, or Mr. James Oneal, who represent the only remaining section of the party that we know of. Why has it become necessary to satisfy them now, when their feelings in the matter were so impolitely ignored a few months ago? Knowing the integrity and firmness in questions of principle which is so characteristic of the "Militant" spokesmen, we would not even presume to think that their re-awakened sensitiveness to the injured feelings of the Right wing was evoked by the latter's rude prodding. It is probably attributable, let us say, in the words of Mr. Thomas, to the fact that "events have not moved auspiciously", and that the Trotskyists in Transylvania "have given new evidence both by word and by deed" that the declaration of principles requires a new rendering.

And the official condemnation of the R.P.C., and the decision to "investigate" it, which Mr. Thomas insisted upon—how explain that? The latter is reported to have said that he was "shocked beyond words" when parts of the R.P.C. program were read at the Boston meeting. It is difficult to add understanding to the sympathy that is elicited by such a reaction. The R.P.C. has made no particular secret of its point of view. Its program has been public property for months and those ready to be shocked could purchase it any day at the Rand School bookstore. Its position on the fundamental problems, as we thought was generally known inside the S. P. and out, is that of the communists, deeply discolored by Lovestone. Nor has there ever been much difficulty in establishing its—shall we say, intellectual?—kinship with the Lovestone group. Evidently, the "Militant" section of the N.E.C. is very

slow in learning what is happening under its very nose, and in broad daylight, inside the socialist party. The same perplexing conclusion must be drawn from Mr. Thomas' speech at the New Jersey state convention banquet, a week after the Boston meeting. Addressing himself anonymously to Francis Henson and Irving Brown, the R.P.C. leaders present as delegates to the convention (New Jersey seems to serve certain "revolutionists" either as a purgatory before entering the heavens of the S. P., or as temporary shelter from which, unlike other states, they cannot be expelled to the outer regions), Thomas launched a bitter attack, according to the *New Leader* account, "holding that there was no room in the party for any who as delegates, officers of the party, etc., acted on orders of any caucus or group within or without the party". Surely, it was wrong to conceal the fact from Mr. Thomas for such a long time that in all important sections of his party, delegates and officers, including some of his very closest political friends, have been acting on the orders of either the "Militant", the Right wing, the "Unity", or the R.P.C. caucuses and groups. In general, it may be said that had the N.E.C. been informed somewhat earlier of what it always knew, it would not now be confronted with the difficulty of explaining away its political contortions and capitulations by the rather obscure assertion that "events have not moved auspiciously", or that the Lovestoneites in Latvia "have given new evidence both by word and by deed" to prove that all R.P.C. supporters should be expelled, or any other explanation except the one that the "Militant" N.E.C. sank whimperingly to its knees at the first stiff blow dealt it by the Right wing gang.

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In his reports to the *New Leader*, its reporter, W. M. Feigenbaum, calls the Boston sessions "the longest, most exciting, and in many ways the most dramatic meetings of the party's highest governing body in over fifteen years". In essence, the time-spacing is correct and significant. Almost exactly fifteen years ago, the socialist party, faced with fundamental problems of the working class movement, split in two, and lost more than half its membership to the communist movement. From that moment began its political and organizational decline and its swing to the Right, interrupted only a couple of years ago. The new radical wing which came to the top in recent times—by far the most woeful the party has ever seen—did not take long to exhaust its radicalism. It has now inaugurated its period of capitulation to the Right wing, of conservatism, and according to present indications, it will even seek to outbid its reformist adversary of yesterday in the zeal with which the Left wing elements and tendencies are to be hounded. To be sure, all this is done under the hallowing cloak of "unity", which is, as a rule, an excellent thing in the working class movement. "It was felt by everyone present that nothing mattered more than finding some basis of unity and harmony," writes Feigenbaum. The situation could not be more admirably stated. Nothing matters now except unity between Waldman and Thomas, Krueger and Oneal. Nothing—not even the "Militant" position on the united front (thrown overboard), on the declaration of principles (on the rail and ready for the last shove), on the fight against reformism (thrown overboard), on the democratic right of expression for Left wing opinions (thrown overboard). Unity with Waldman, Oneal, Cahan and Lee is always possible, any time of the day or night, on such a basis, and that is the unity which is being established.

Here are some of the new signs of the times in the S. P.:

In Missouri, which voted six to one for the declaration of principles, the State Executive Committee has just defeated a motion to "consider a united front with the C. P. on specific issues". At the same time it adopted a motion to "support any consolation with Farmer-Labor, Sinclair Epic, Progressive and other parties only if the principles and aims of socialism are not compromised". The picture of such a consolidation is really too excruciating to contemplate.

The last meeting of the California State Executive Committee had before it two resolutions, one asking that the declaration of principles be revised by the N.E.C. and another proposing that California withdraw from the party. After the jabberwocky of the "Militants", the blunt English of the Right wing is like a cooling draught.

The post-Boston state convention in New Jersey, a state in which the Detroit declaration got 57% of the vote, defeated a motion to reaffirm the declaration and make loyalty to it the first test. By a clever Right wing motion, it prohibited the incoming state committee from taking any united front actions or from using the state paper, *New View*, for "factional" purposes, thus smashing another Left wing white hope.

The post-Boston Philadelphia city convention of the party urged the N.E.C. not to engage in any united front activity with communists, and called upon the national and state committees to expel members or supporters of the R.P.C. The immediate result of this resolution was that nine local leaders of the Revolutionary Policy Committee, including Felix, Hanson, van Gelder, Lee and Riemen-snyder, resigned from that body.

In New York City, the "Militants" and the Right wing are now working in tender solidarity. The last meeting of the local Central Committee "was the most peaceful held in New York in many moons . . . [it] . . . unanimously accepted the report of a special executive meeting which had elected a 'harmony committee' of five consisting of Alex Kahn, Emil Bromberg, Issay Minkoff, Jack Altman and Max Delson". At the same meeting, "action was taken—in the appointment of a 'harmony committee'—which bids fair to begin a new era". A new era, indeed!

What the new era will look like, beginning with New York, is visible from the decisions of the State Executive Committee. All party and Y.P.S.L. branches are strictly forbidden to enter united fronts with the C. P. "or any of the communist splinter parties or groups". In addition, the Committee has formally launched the first expulsion drive—not for violations of party discipline, but for political opinions—that the S. P. has known since 1919! "The State Committee voted unanimously to condemn all organized factions in the party and to prohibit party officials and delegates to be bound by instructions emanating from factions and caucuses. The S. C. also condemned the so-called R.P.C. and ordered the expulsion from the party of all members belonging to that organization or holding views of that faction condemned in the resolution of the N.E.C." (*New Leader*, December 15, 1934. My emphasis.—S.)

"Or holding views"!—that's as good as the Stalinist bureaucracy any day. In the words of a noted attorney-at-law, Albert Goldman, who recently announced his conversion from communism to socialism in a speech delivered at a Chicago S. P. branch forum: "A party that demands of its intelligent members not revolutionary discipline but silence on the pain of expulsion, is not a Marxian party but a caricature of such a party and represents a grave danger to the revolutionary movement." His legal skill is already urgently required to combat this grave danger, for his Marxian party in New York has just brought up several party and Y.P.S.L. members on charges of expulsion for "holding views" in favor of a Fourth International.

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Do the latest events in the socialist party mean that the whole organization will swing solidly to the Right? There is no reason to draw such a sweeping conclusion. Waldman and Co., it is true, will not be content until they have drawn everybody and everything to their position of extreme reformism. The "Militant" leaders, once started down the incline, will not be able, even if the will were there, to come to many halts before they reach bottom. Once they have shifted their fight from the realm of principles and tactics to the field of unity-at-all-costs, they are doomed to extinction in the strangulating embrace of the Right wing. As for the R.P.C., it has compromised itself hopelessly with the Lovestone group, forfeiting its right to lead a struggle for revolutionary policy by defending a Centrist group outside the party against a Centrist group inside the party. One has but to read the brackish articles in the first (and last?) issue of its quarterly, to see that its two outstanding leaders are drenched with Lovestoneism. Brown's exercises are poorly if elaborately re-written copy from the *Workers Age*. Henson, author of the recent statement—"I am a Marxist. I, also, am a catholic Christian" (which makes him the only living joint representative of Jesus Christ and Jay Lovestone)—seeks to break a lance with "Trotskyism" and finds that its "attitude toward the Soviet Union is perhaps the most reprehensible in the whole international radical movement", neither

more nor less. After its conduct in the past, what else is left to this group but for members to resign from it or to flee for safety across the river to New Jersey?

But besides the leaders of the various groups, there are still hundreds of workers and youth in the socialist camp who are seriously concerned with the revolutionary movement. They have been fighting for a revolutionary Marxian position. They will not easily retire from the fight because leaders about whom they entertained illusions have surrendered everything they stood for. The Cassandra of the Right wing, Oneal, lamenting the Boston decision, writes: "In every state where majority opinion is against the united front there will be a drive in some locals and branches for it, resulting in disputes and increasing bitterness. In states that

negotiate, those who are opposed will fight it—and with the same result." Oneal would, of course, prefer a papal bull prohibiting any member from opening his mouth to say anything about the united front or any other problem which conflicts with the petrified views of the Right wing. The hope for the progress of the revolutionary trend in the socialist party, however, lies in ignoring the preferences of Mr. Oneal and his associates. Ignoring them—and carrying on a vigorous, systematic fight against them. The royal road to unity, to revolutionary unity, cannot be found by making a truce with reformism, or by cowering before it. It lies in the direction of an unremitting struggle against the Right wing and the cowardly Centrists who have capitulated to it.

M.S.

## The Second Roosevelt Election

VIEWED superficially the November 6 election returns would indicate a glorious victory for bourgeois democracy. Apparently President Roosevelt sits on the top of the world. Certainly his administration is strengthened by the verdict of this national plebiscite on his popularity. His party has had its face lifted and many of its representatives who held firm to the President's coat-tails were carried along by the side.

With sixty-nine seats in the Senate, a gain of nine, and a representation in the House of 322, an increase of thirteen, with several new governorships, numerous conquests of minor offices and extended means of patronage, it is confirmed in power. But this does not at all reveal the real significance of the elections. The trends that are still hidden below these surface indications are of far greater importance.

These elections were proclaimed far and wide as a test of the "New Deal". It was taken to the country, so it was said, and it found an overwhelming approval. Is that really the case? Can the outcome of a parliamentary election be considered a sufficient verdict of a set of policies affecting in a fundamental sense the future course of American capitalism? Hardly. For a real test of the "New Deal" policies it is necessary to view the whole of the economic and political relationships existing since these policies were inaugurated. In the first instance must be noted the disputes over code regulations and collective bargaining agreements, the conflicts of company unions versus trade unions and the widely extended strike movements—in a word, the issues of the class struggle. And there need be little doubt that when taken as a whole, the test does not at all signify the overwhelming approval indicated on the surface of the election returns. It is this apparent contradiction that needs be explained.

The fact that these were the first national elections held since the recent changes in the national economic structure and its new relationship to the political state began, invests them with unusual importance. At the economic base these changes took shape in rapid form. The sweeping reorganization climaxed by the N.R.A., the strengthening of the main pillars of the structure to prepare American capitalism for new world conquests stimulated the process of transition. But the ideological regroupments that were bound to follow came at a much slower tempo. On the working class side they are manifested so far chiefly in the growing consciousness of union organization and the great, militantly fought strikes; but this has not yet crystallized into political consciousness or form. Due to this situation a political equilibrium was still possible in which, motivated by different and in some respects opposite reasons, the decisive sections of the big bourgeoisie, the petty bourgeoisie and the working class found themselves united in the elections behind the Roosevelt administration. In this is summed up the enormous contradictions of the highly advanced technology and political backwardness of the masses still existing within this mighty empire.

However, within its framework the process of class differentiation is already expressed in the trends hidden below the surface of this unanimous election verdict. It is possible to demonstrate on the basis of the returns: firstly, that monopoly capitalism is entrenching itself and strengthening its fences of reaction; secondly, that the middle class, the largest single voting bloc, is moving

Leftward and only partly adhering to the political leadership of the big bourgeoisie; thirdly that the working class has entered a process of radicalization leading it toward a separate identity as a class. In other words, behind this apparent election unanimity the real process of ideological regroupments and class differentiation is beginning to take form.

We do not propose to dismiss the Republican party from consideration. But for the purpose of this analysis it is of less consequence inasmuch as from a fundamental class point of view it offers no distinction from the Democratic party. Its defeat undoubtedly became so much more smashing due to its present position of negative criticism when action is expected. The proposed overhauling or liberalization of the G.O.P. is not due to give any further stability to the traditional two-party system. It is much more likely that this tradition will be broken up into new third party formations, or labor party formations, or both, not to speak of a coming Fascist crystallization. However, it is not the purpose of this article to make an attempt to delve into the future prospects of political constellations nor to probe into the possibilities of social reformism as such.

Owing to the past uninterrupted advance of the forces of production and the widening sphere of capitalist exploitation, capitalism, and together with it the parliamentary state, acquired a lasting stability. In the United States the institutions of parliament enjoyed an unusual prestige due to the widely extended right of franchise and the generally accepted idea that the son of the humblest citizen can become president and that this sovereign citizen can change conditions to suit himself by his power to cast a ballot on election day. Parliamentarism as a state system became the "democratic" form of the rule of the bourgeoisie which needed the fiction of a national representation to represent outwardly an organization of a "national will" standing outside of classes, but in reality functioning as an instrument of oppression and suppression in the hands of the ruling capitalists. It performed a certain progressive function as the weapon of developing capitalism. The American workers would fight their exploiters militantly on the industrial field but politically they would support, except for certain temporary interruptions, the perpetuation of the capitalist two-party system and remain under the sway of bourgeois ideology. The bourgeois politician set himself the task of balancing the various forces against one another. It may be said about President Roosevelt that he has raised the bourgeois parliamentary system to its highest point of perfection and accomplished this under new and more difficult conditions than heretofore. Today it appears as if the political state stands out more distinctly as the arbiter between the classes. In reality, it is, if anything, more completely an instrument in the hands of capitalist economy, which has assumed new functions in support of monopoly capital, and supervision of industry and class relations. In other words it is more distinctly an instrument of oppression and suppression in the hands of the ruling class. But American capitalism does not exist separately and independently. It is inextricably bound up with world capitalism as a system and the decay of this world system shows its disintegrating tendencies also in the American structure. American capitalism faces today the problem of emerging from its crisis at the expense of the other competitors in the world market

and at the expense of its own working class. It does not yet need to resort to Fascism as a form of state, but it needs a government that can resort to strong measures to overcome the dislocations in its economy and resort to certain reform measures to appease the brewing mass discontent. It needs a strong government in the sense of one able by demagogic means at its disposal to rally the necessary popular mass support.

Roosevelt, or the Roosevelt system, has been characterized openly as the savior of American capitalism, as the lone barrier against radicalism. Before the November 6 elections many of his liberal friends and advisers put the question in voices of anxiety: Will he go to the Right, or will he go to the Left? It is now reported that he himself thinks he is still a little Left or Center—that is, the bourgeois Center. Where he actually stands, in the opinion of the bankers and the industrialists, they have demonstrated by the confidence bestowed on his régime by the election of his supporters.

The Roosevelt program resorted at first to measures of the contemplated economic recovery and secondly to measures of social reform legislation. In governmental circles the terminology of the past of inspired lofty principles of abstract bourgeois democracy has become replaced by a terminology of economics. The "New Deal" is called planned economy. But it is an attempt at planned economy under capitalism, not based upon the supplying of the needs of the masses of the people in particular, but based upon capital investments in the branches of industry where the rate of profit is the highest. The enormous government expenditures, while aiming at the desired stability of purchasing power of the masses, had for its primary purpose the objective of lifting the loads of the crisis sufficiently to forestall a collapse of capitalist economy and set the wheels of industry into motion so that the flow of capital and the increase in the total aggregate capital, under new forms of intensified exploitation and an already vastly reduced standard of living of the masses might serve to check the tendency of the falling rate of profit. The increase of commodity prices was designed to help restore the profit inducement and together with the code regulations to safeguard "fair competition" and strengthen monopoly capital. Thus the program as a whole had for its primary purpose the restoration of the confidence of capitalism in the process of capitalist reproduction. The collective bargaining clause, which was made a part of the N.R.A., was thrown in for good measure to create a complete equilibrium, or to create the conditions for an "All American Team", as President Roosevelt expressed himself before the American bankers' convention.

Second in order followed the Roosevelt program of social reform legislation. For the present, however, this is to be limited, in addition to the already accomplished relief expenditures, to a state-controlled system of unemployment insurance to be financed by local contributions and not out of taxes. It is a social reform program inaugurated by capitalism without the assistance of a social reformist party. It cannot be denied that this is one of the unique American ways made possible by the strength still possessed by American capitalism and expressing as well the political backwardness of its working class.

In his recent interview with Stalin, H. G. Wells called the Roosevelt program socialism in the Anglo-Saxon sense. He said: "The effect of the ideas of Roosevelt's 'New Deal' is most powerful and in my opinion they are socialist ideas." Sure it is that this program has served to put the socialist party in a pathetic position and condemned it to a pitiful showing in these elections. Lacking any real semblance of a revolutionary program, the reform platform it advanced for the elections could be very easily and effectively outdistanced by the Rooseveltian politicians. Any further development of the latter's social reform legislation, taken together with the growing working class radicalization, will play its part in intensifying the internal contradictions of the socialist party. No less pitiful was the position of the Stalinist party in the election returns. In the general process of radicalization of the masses is discernible a trend towards communism. But this trend is not assimilated by the Stalinist party, neither in the sense of the new members who join its ranks and leave as rapidly as they enter, nor in the sense of furnishing a crystallizing pole of attraction in political events and least of all in influencing the trade union or strike movements. The Stalinist party lacks a realistic revolution-

ary policy. It repels the trend toward communism and heaps discredit upon the name communism. The "self-criticism" applied to elections by the party's Political Committee, published in the December *Communist*, will in no way serve to cover its disgraceful débâcle. In sum and substance this "self-criticism" once more asserts the infallibility of the line, but the unit organizers, the section organizers and the district organizers failed to do this or that sufficiently. As far as the official A. F. of L. leadership is concerned, it accepted its place on the "All-American Team" and pinned its hopes on the present capitalist controlled equilibrium. It supported, of course, the Rooseveltians in the elections and it is now attempting to make this support more real by carrying out its secret pledges to the no-strike-truce.

The banking fraternity, the directors of the Chambers of Commerce and the manufacturers' associations accepted their place on the "All-American Team" and went to bat in the elections in a big way. President Roosevelt started his régime by chastizing the bankers, digging up the old epithet of "money-changers" who knew only the "rules of a generation of self-seekers". He proceeded to pillory them by the investigations of Wall Street and sponsored restrictive banking legislation. This became popular with the mass of the voters. And, as is now clear since President Roosevelt appeared before the bankers' convention shortly before the elections, it helped to execute the grand manoeuvre of whipping the numerous clans of small town bankers (those left over from the terrific slaughter of the crisis) into line behind the directors of the great metropolitan financial institutions. The whole fraternity is now more firmly committed to the "New Deal" policies and the Roosevelt régime sits more firmly in the saddle. But it sits there on the definite promise of recasting the N.R.A. along lines favored by the owners of industry with less restrictions, less price-fixing and more emphasis on codes to strangle the small competitor; a treasury refinancing plan along conservative lines; a balanced budget, less government spending, lifting of bars against export of currencies and prospects of a return to the gold standard, together with just enough social reform legislation to preserve the capitalist class rule. In so far as the attitude to the working class is concerned, the directors of monopoly capital have already received their assurances in the various labor settlements, notably the automobile settlement, and the government's appearance in its real and authoritative expression in strikes, in the form of policemen's clubs, gas and guns and steel-helmeted soldiers. There need be no doubt that monopoly capital has become further entrenched.

The popular mass of the citizenry declared in these elections in unmistakable terms for the system of government spending. The large middle class bloc of voters showed its Leftward trend not only by this token but much more so by the examples of California, Wisconsin and Minnesota. Upton Sinclair rolled up over 800,000 votes for his diluted EPIC program. The La Follette new "Progressive" party swept the state of Wisconsin. Governor Olson, despite his abominable record in the Minneapolis strike, overwhelmingly defeated both Republican and Democratic opponents.

What of the working class radicalization? It is not yet crystallized into political consciousness. Certainly the workers did not vote for all of the implications of the "New Deal" policies. That is too clearly shown in the militant clashes with the armed forces of the state during the recent second strike wave. But the working class still follows in the main the capitalist political demagogue. It has not yet been offered the attraction of a decisive revolutionary force. It has not yet really tested its power. What will happen when the "New Deal" begins to show its teeth more sharply and the contradictions growing out of the present efforts to save capitalism come much more to the fore to upset the present equilibrium, as they inevitably will in the very near future? New big struggles are now looming on the horizon and the American working class can be expected to begin the writing of a new page in its history.

Arne SWABECK.

AMONG other articles to be printed in the next issue of our review is one by Sidney Hook, in which he continues with his examination of the relations between Karl Marx and the school represented by Moses Hess. The coming article is entitled "Marx's Criticism of 'True Socialism'".

# The Defeat of the Spanish October

THE ENTRANCE of the Christian-Fascists into the government was the signal for the insurrection to the Spanish working class. Having learned the lessons of the recent international experiences, particularly those of Austria, it well understood that there was no use in creating illusions for oneself. The hour for the armed struggle had arrived. Any delay, no matter what the pretext, would have weakened the position of the proletariat, giving the enemy time to prepare himself better, and besides, would have sowed demoralization in the workers' ranks at the time when its spirit was at maximum tension.

Reaction and the government in spite of the discoveries made of arms deposits, and the even more resolute attitude of the socialist press, did not expect anything like so rapid and serious a reply. The majority government was formed at 6 P.M. on October 4 and the general strike began at midnight.

The bourgeoisie never took the revolutionary threats of the syndicalists in all seriousness. The very prudent history of the syndicalists in the labor movement was known and it was no secret that when radical phrasology was resorted to, the object was to cover its shameful acts with a heavy veil of rhetoric. On the other hand, the socialists in their speeches, commenced to assume an ultra-intransigent position in direct contradiction to their daily behavior in action. This too awoke many doubts and was the result of the inability of the socialist party leaders, and their lack of decision when it came to taking a clear position in a given political situation. From the moment that their participation in the government came to an end, they announced a complete reorientation onto the revolutionary road, affirming that they were no longer interested in the course of "bourgeois" republican politics which according to them belonged to a world that the socialist party had forever renounced. The socialist party leaders pretended a disdain that they did not feel and which was contradicted by their daily acts, for all of the republican parties, for all possible government changes, for all electoral problems. As the legislation of the republican-socialist period was annulled, without the socialist party in spite of its verbal intransigence doing anything more than make the usual gestures, the bourgeoisie continued arrogantly to assert itself in the belief that this revolutionary hysteria on the part of the socialist party might be the result of offended pride for having been displaced from power, a means of intimidation, or else a propaganda stunt intended to attract the masses but certainly no firm revolutionary determination. The recent discoveries of arms deposits, many at the homes of leading socialists, again commenced to sow the seeds of alarm among the bourgeoisie at a time when the latter had thought the danger of a socialist revolution to be past.

But one well acquainted with the socialist movement could, in spite of its inconsistent policy, have formed an even clearer idea of the direction of its policy, than the socialist party leaders themselves. This, in spite of the pedantic skepticism of the doctrinary elements of the working class (Stalinists, anarchists) who were fortified by an entirely negative attitude towards the social democracy, and the ironical reserve with which the most conscious elements of the bourgeoisie received the warnings of the revolution. As the situation became more acute, it was increasingly evident that the socialist party was really determined not to allow itself to be beaten down by Fascism. This was the only thing that was clear: the other revolutionary gesticulations had not crystallized into anything concrete.

The youngest and most enthusiastic elements formed an exaggerated idea of evolution of the party, which they assumed had broken or was about to break forever with reformism. The Leftward evolution, manifested in the international social democracy after the victories of the counter-revolution in Germany and Austria, was sharper and more rapid in Spain than anywhere else. This was due to the special political situation of the country and not to any real essential difference. We well know that under the present circumstances of the labor movement the possibilities of victory over Fascism depend in the first place on the degree to which the social democracy has evolved towards the Left. This is especially so, in view of the uselessness of expecting anything

progressive from the Communist International, that paralyzed appendage of the diplomatic policy of the U.S.S.R. which now perhaps is about to disappear from the political arena. It would however be a mistake to suppose that the social democracy, through internal evolution, can transform itself into a truly revolutionary party.

If reaction had ceased to advance, the radicalization of the socialist party would have become limited to a diversity of opinions and tendencies inside a party that was stalled in its traditional reformism. At the same time that the socialist party on the one hand was energetically preparing to fight Fascism, it kept open to the very last moment a means of retreat, whereby it might be able to take refuge in a democratic solution. It is here that we must look for the immediate and concrete causes of the failure of the October 5 insurrection. That is where the explanation lies and not in the insurrection having come too late as in Vienna or an act of treason by the organization responsible for the movement. If a reformist party, because of its reformist character did not decide to resort to the insurrection until it saw the enemy actually taking over the power, this does not mean that a revolutionary party placed in the same position would have rebelled at an earlier date. But it would not have arrived at the day of the insurrection in such disadvantageous condition, it would have utilized thoroughly every recourse at its disposal in order to alter the course of political developments, without ceasing to prepare for the worst. Although it is true that the Spanish socialist party had progressed somewhat compared with its international colleagues, it allowed the months to slip by, remaining passive, taking no advantage of excellent, perhaps decisive opportunities for influencing the immediate course of national politics and for the future of the revolution. But not one of the dominant points of view existing in the socialist party could understand the necessity of partial struggles. Those who dreamed of a formula for democratic concord were afraid of barring the road to this possible solution by antagonizing the Rights with their audacity. And those who dreamed of the revolution, which to them was summed up in the single word "insurrection" looked down from the heights of their dreams with nothing but disdain for the partial struggles; they considered the latter to be of little significance, fearing that the final triumph might be compromised by the expenditure of energies in partial combats. But in view of the advances of reaction there was no other way out than through the armed insurrection. In this respect the socialist party cannot be accused of having been too soon or too late. If the revolution failed, or rather, if at the decisive moment in Madrid, there was no insurrection—which according to many probabilities would have been sufficient for victory—this is because in the decisive days the S. P. policy, ever vacillating between the insurrection and the hope of a miracle that could have made possible the establishment of a democratic equilibrium, had catastrophic consequences.

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Lacking the broad revolutionary Marxist conception, the socialist party canalized the whole revolutionary movement onto conspiratorial grounds, making it solely and exclusively a question of secret and meticulous preparation of a *coup de main*. All of the reasons given above pushed the S. P. in just that direction. This natural inclination was still further stimulated by one of the most brilliant jewels of international sensationalist literature which put the finishing touch to the narrow concept that the S. P. held of the revolution. We refer to the book *Coup d'Etat—the Technique of Revolution*, by the Fascist writer Curzio Malaparte. The strange thesis that for the conquest of a modern state, a previously instructed minority capable of seizing a few key points, is sufficient, adds to an already sufficiently narrow idea of the revolution, a still narrower concept of the insurrection. The socialists found their inspiration in this text—one of the greatest "technical" nemeses that has enlightened contemporaneous thought—believing that they had come into possession of "Trotsky's tactics", as they themselves stated. Malaparte, it must be noted, attributes to Trotsky the discovery of the recipe that makes it possible for a minority to win

revolutions irrespective of the political situation or of the masses.

The Malapartist "technique" has not, it is clear, had any important effect on the course of the revolt, nor could it have had at the decisive moment. If we refer to it at all, it is only in order to point out the extent to which the more solid conceptions of social revolution had been overshadowed by conspiratorial ideas. No one proposes to deny the need for trained cadres with definite objectives. If the insurrection had taken place in Madrid, the militia would without doubt have been the most important element in the armed struggle, although not to the extent of making superfluous the intervention of the great masses. The problem consists in determining why it was, if an insurrection had been planned, that so far as Madrid is concerned, it was limited to a general strike with skirmishes doomed to failure.

In the first place, the leadership lacked energy, not daring to launch the movement in its full intensity. When the order was given for the general strike it was said that it should commence peacefully in order to resort to the insurrection afterwards. Such an order could not have been due to any technical consideration, which would have been stupid. It reflected a moment of weakness on the part of the leadership. In spite of this order having been given at the last moment it is not likely that it would have been of much consequence if the militia had been in readiness for action. Being in complete disagreement with the plan, such an order would have arrived too late to have influenced the activity of the militia.

But the militia were without arms. The party held on to the guns until the last moment in the hope that the government crisis would be solved without the entrance of the Christian-Fascists in the cabinet, in which case there would have been no armed struggle. There were a number of reasons for hoping that the crisis might be solved in a manner unfavorable to the Rights, although none of these reasons was a very sure one. The socialist party placed itself on the sidelines, conditioning the movement on the outcome of the crisis, without on the other hand, doing anything to influence this outcome. When the solution given to the cabinet crisis became known, the movement was decided upon. But the task of arming the militia at that time, in the space of a few hours, was extraordinarily difficult, not to say impossible, especially for a leadership that was already vacillating on the matter of the intensity of the attack. It was enough for the armed forces of the state to come out into the streets, repeatedly searching passersby and vehicles, in order to cut the movement to pieces. The insurrection in Madrid was limited to a long strike, sustained by the proletariat with exemplary enthusiasm and discipline.

At the same time in the province of Asturias, the miners proceeded with extraordinary rapidity and energy to sow demoralization and panic among the bourgeoisie, being able actually to gain control of the entire province. Aside from the inevitable excesses, there was nothing chaotic about the revolution in Asturias, that is to say, it was not a movement that had gotten out of control. No; the Asturian workers restricted themselves to making the revolution victorious in their zone. If Madrid had responded in like fashion, the insurrection, supported by the general strike in most of the towns, would have gained in extent and depth. The probabilities of victory would have been great.

What occurred can be attributed to nothing else than the desire not to have the proletariat armed in case the leadership, enabled to find a democratic solution, wished to renounce the struggle. This position, maintained tenaciously and carried to repulsive extremes, wound up with catastrophic consequences. In the activity of the S. P. during the preparation for the armed struggle, the most important consideration was that of assuring the retreat if there were occasion for it, rather than taking measures to assure victory if a struggle took place. All of its tactics were motivated by a restraining attitude towards the masses. From this emanated its exclusivist obsession in the question of leadership, its immeasurable will to control, carried to the point of attempting to control the uncontrollable, to flinch at what must be dared, to back down for fear of losing. Under this cloak of exclusion in the leadership were concealed no high revolutionary considerations, but prudent calculation worked out with an eye to possible settlements. The care that was taken to leave no channel open for the revolutionary spirit of the proletariat, in case the party wished to take refuge in some compromise formula, ended by closing the road to victory

when the encounter between the classes became inevitable.

We can be certain that there will be many socialists who refuse to accept this interpretation. But how then are these events to be explained? How can the fact that the insurrection was limited to a strike be explained, if the movement commenced precisely under the circumstances chosen by the leadership and with the unconditional support of the working masses? Where was the catch? These questions can only be "explained" by unloading the responsibility on one scapegoat or another, by accusing so-and-so of desertion, another of treachery, etc. Had this been so, had the failure of the movement resulted from the failure to carry out orders coming from the leadership, some essential cog in the machine would have broken down completely. But everyone feels that there was no such betrayal or desertion. The working class was unable to act because it was not allowed to prepare itself to do so in advance. If we add to this the last minute wavering of the leadership, which under other circumstances might perhaps have been overcome, we have the full explanation of the pitiful spectacle presented by the revolution in Madrid.

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The Catalonian developments should be dealt with separately. Here the leadership was in the hands of the autonomous government. Between the government and the workers' organizations, or rather the Catalonian workers' organizations, there was no connection at all. Furthermore the Catalonian working class movement was divided into two great groups—the group of organizations affiliated to the Workers Alliance, and the C.N.T. The latter, of its own volition, withheld from the conflict entirely.

Relations had been broken off between the autonomous government of Catalonia and the central government in Madrid, although in some regards, the appearances of discipline were maintained. This situation prevailed as the result of the agrarian law passed by the Catalonian parliament. The Catalonian reactionaries utilized the central government which declared the law annulled. The autonomous régime however attempted to apply the law in defiance of Madrid. This intransigence of Catalonia created a situation that could only be solved by violent means, or else by displacing the Rights in Madrid and reestablishing harmony between the two governments.

Objectively, Catalonia was the point most to be feared by Spanish reaction. The Rights feared it even more than they did the labor movement itself, for here the enemy was a government that could count on the support of the urban petty bourgeoisie, of the peasants who were its strongest support, of the proletariat which while not adhering to the Catalonian government, did owe its allegiance to the revolution, and on all of the moral and material resources that go with state power. Having at its command its own official forces, the support of the overwhelming majority of the population, and every facility to prepare itself, the revolution in Catalonia should have been invincible. But to the petty bourgeois composition of the government can be attributed the reason why Catalonia, mainstay of the revolution, was the one to succumb first and with the least resistance.

The agrarian conflict over the land cultivation laws went no further than a discussion on the jurisdiction of the one government as opposed to the other, a dispute among lawyers, in which the Catalonian government maintained its positions magnificently, but without at the same time preparing for the struggle that was inevitably approaching for fear of being accused of revolutionary activities or of assuming a subversive attitude. This attitude was in radical contrast to the socialist party which had been preparing many months for the armed struggle, although when the struggle did take place such deplorable use was made of the valuable previous preparations. The Catalonian government held itself strictly aloof from the labor organizations and even from the peasant organization that supported it wholeheartedly and with which it could have no serious differences, in view of the fact that the peasants only wished to expropriate the land without indemnification. The government wished the peasants to confide blindly in its benevolence, and to hold their peace. Upon what forces then did the Catalonian government expect to rely in the struggle? The answer is not difficult: the official forces under its command and the hope—founded on we know not what—that the army of the central government would support it. Only thus can one explain

an attitude that in other circumstances would have been comical. A plenary session of the Catalonian *Generalidad*, meeting in its own official hall, on the 5th of October, proclaimed the Catalonian Federal Republic . . . and right there the whole *Generalidad* continued to sit as if it were functioning in the most normal of times, sending out calls by radio to a populace which had not armed itself and which at that particular moment, had no intention of preparing for battle.

Martial law was declared and the army, charged with suppressing the uprising, called on the Catalonian government to capitulate. This demand was rejected, upon which the army commander announced without any sign of haste that the government palace would be bombarded at dawn. The bombardment took place according to schedule and, realizing the ridiculousness and uselessness of resistance, the autonomous government surrendered. In different parts of the city small skirmishes took place in which there were few casualties. Thus the Catalonian movement was suppressed.

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Let us now look into the rôle played by the other labor organizations. Given the absolute hegemony of the socialist party in the movement, together with its unwillingness to share or concede the leadership or any part in it, the dilemma became quite clear for the rest. They could either join the movement, attempting to strengthen it and give it increased impetus, or else hold aloof from it, which would have simply meant to betray the revolution. Examples of both these attitudes were to be seen. The first was the position of the tendencies making up the Workers Alliances, and the second was the position of the C.N.T. which did not participate in the Workers Alliances excepting in Asturias.

Why didn't the Workers Alliances play a more important rôle? Why did they limit themselves to following the socialist party? On a number of occasions the doctrinaires of all countries have accused us of playing not only a pitiful but even a dismal rôle for playing up these Alliances that in general have no strength of their own and no real independence of the socialist party. There was no one in the Alliances but knew of this situation, but they only knew that there was only one way of overcoming this dependence. This could only be by giving impetus to the development of the Alliances, being willing at the same time to make all the concessions necessarily imposed by the relationships of forces. Step by step the correctness of this position has been demonstrated to the enemies of the Alliances. After having emptied their batteries against the Alliances, after having attempted to utilize the fact of the establishment of the united front between the C. P. and the S. P. in France, in order to set up in Spain also, a direct pact between Stalinists and socialists, the Spanish Stalinist party a few days prior to the insurrection finally decided to enter the Workers Alliances. The C.N.T. placed itself in a similar position, adapting to the anarchist language the self-same sectarianism. The C.N.T. first condemned the Alliances as a pact among politicians arrived at in order to deceive the masses, later it showed itself inclined to cede on the condition that the united front be limited to trade union organizations to the exclusion of the political parties. Its original intransigence was visibly reduced to the position of a legal formula, to an intellectual artifice that might serve as a fig-leaf to cover up the abandonment of an erroneous position. The current in favor of the Alliances gained ground daily in the ranks of the C.N.T. In defiance of its superior committees, the C.N.T. of Asturias joined the Workers Alliances. If the whole organization on a national scale had done likewise, the rôle played by the Alliances in the uprising would most certainly have been very different. At least the C.N.T. would not have covered itself with shame, as it did during these events, with the honorable exception of Asturias.

The socialists accepted the Alliances inasmuch as this would extend their authority over masses without mortgaging their political independence as leaders of the movement. The overwhelming majority of the proletariat was already in the socialists' ranks so that for them the Alliances could be nothing but an addition wherewith to augment their prestige. On the other hand, to have attempted at this time to alter the relationship of forces, breaking contact with the socialist party which could easily have been done by proposing united front conditions unacceptable to them, would have shown a desire to waste time to the great detriment of the

revolutionary movement. The experience of those who have attempted to do this is conclusive, and we are quite sure that it could not have been very different even if they had carried on their propaganda more intelligently. This is why the socialist party, strong in its organized numerical superiority, was not interested in carrying the Workers Alliance movement to its ultimate goal—the national united front. The dispersion of the existing Alliances assured the socialists of the support of the various tendencies without need of making any concessions in the national leadership of the movement. The only way in which the socialists could have been forced into a national united front, with all that this implies, was to strengthen the Alliances within the limits already accepted by them—local and regional. Then the national united front would be imposed by the Alliances themselves, and it would be but a matter of time to decide in what manner this would be established, whether by a National Congress of the Workers Alliances or by an agreement among the national committees of the organizations. Thus the moment would have arrived, as a consequence of their own development and because of the hold that they had among the workers, when no party, not even the strongest would be in a position to counterpose itself to the Alliances without seriously cracking. But this impetus could only come through the joint effort of the Left wing, and it is quite clear that the Workers Alliances could not put themselves in shape in time to play an important rôle in the insurrection, if during the nine or ten months of their existence, they have had to spend in warding off the blows directed against them by the most considerable sections of that very Left wing—the anarchists and the Stalinists. The socialists limited themselves to reporting to the Alliances the most important decisions that they had taken, listening to the opinions of the latter, reserving to themselves the right to accept or reject these opinions. In those Alliances where the socialist influence was greatest, such criticism as was not accepted by means of a friendly interchange of views, had no chance of winning by votes.

However it should not be supposed that the rôle of the Workers Alliances was nil or of little consequence. They contributed powerfully to raising the morale of the proletariat, giving it a palpable and growing idea of unity of action. The only conscious activity of the workers in Catalonia, assuring them of contact with the rest of the country, was due to the Workers Alliance. The slight influence that the Workers Alliances were able to exert over the socialist party, was of real benefit, contributing to break down some of its most dangerous prejudices. Finally, as we have already said, the only force to remain outside of the Workers Alliances was the C.N.T. whose aloofness has been of such a nature that we cannot end this article without saying something about it.

The C.N.T. has gone through this whole period with its back turned to the danger of the Rights, devoting itself to combatting the Catalonian government and the socialists. Bearing in mind only the repressions it suffered in Catalonia and the persecutions through which it had gone during the first period of the republic, it converted itself into an instrument that could be readily used for the benefit of reaction. It cannot be denied that the most influential and least conscious elements of the C.N.T. preferred the Lerroix régime to the political situation that had existed previously, although these preferences were covered up by the verbal repudiation of "all politicians" equally. Badly broken as a result of its previous actions, the C.N.T. was no longer a danger to the reactionaries whose principal purpose was to defeat the socialist party, which for the moment had become the point of convergence of the majority of the labor forces. The régime of relative tolerance, that the Rightist reaction consciously conceded to the C.N.T. was sufficient to definitely decide them in their ill-concealed preferences. Wherever its forces were weak the C.N.T. gave a lukewarm support to the insurrection, but where its forces were greatest, it gave no support at all. It would seem that what was at stake in this struggle was not the life or death of the labor movement, but rather, they said, a "socialist movement".

As a culmination, after such an indescribable attitude, the C.N.T. attempted on November 7 to declare a peaceful general strike of 24 hours as a protest against two executions carried out in Asturias. The strike was of no great importance nor could it be in view of the weakness of the organization. But the date set for the strike was precisely the day when the legal period following the

state of martial law would normally expire. The government was able to utilize this unimportant strike as a pretext to extend martial law for another month.

On certain details of the attitude of the anarchists, no definite opinion can yet be given; but what there can be no doubt at all about is that, during this period, the anarchist organization was the most fertile field for all reactionary speculation.

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With the crushing of the workers' insurrection an intermediate

situation which cannot be of great duration has been created. The defeat of the working class has not been translated immediately into a complete victory of reaction, as would certainly have happened had the insurrection taken place later than it did. The victory of the government was received very frigidly. This extremely singular situation must be explained, but such cannot be the purpose of this article.

L. FERSEN.

MADRID PRISON, November 12, 1934.

## The Socialists' Errors in Spain

FOR A revolutionary movement to be successful, it is absolutely necessary to have a pre-conceived plan and a general strategy to be followed out with secondary variations, adapted to the circumstances of the moment, and that can be worked out only in the course of the insurrection itself. If this is not the case, not only does one incur the risk of falling short of the goal, but by taking a series of measures that have no concrete and well-defined object, the road leading to victory is likely to be blurred, making impossible an immediate triumph and setting back to a future period the hour of proletarian emancipation.

If the Spanish proletariat had heeded these Marxian principles, it would today be the dominant class in Spain. But the leaders of the movement, lacking in intelligence and decision did not know what they were doing. They had no military plan adapted to conditions in the various regions, with the result that they maintained a waiting attitude, waiting for what might happen in other regions, and above all, waiting for something to happen in Madrid.

Once again in the history of the labor movement, the petty bourgeoisie (*Esquerra*, socialist leadership, leaders of the "Basque Labor Solidarity") has shown itself incapable of leading a revolutionary movement to its conclusion. The moment chosen for the armed uprising was premature; but once commenced, it became necessary to carry it through to the end. The defeat of the revolt was caused by having maintained a defensive attitude in most sections of Spain instead of launching an immediate offensive. The insurrection is not a game for children; it is an art that must be understood in minutest detail. When two forces meet in battle formation, it is necessary to know the precise state of morale of the enemy, his forces and his plans as well as his weak points in order to hurl the main attacks of the revolution against them. At a time when the balance inclines in favor of the adversary, experienced and intelligent strategists must be able to retreat in an orderly fashion so as to keep the forces under their command as intact as possible.

When the Samper ministry resigned on the night of October 5, no advantage was taken of the weakness and vacillation of the ruling class. As soon as the railway workers union of the U.G.T. found itself incapable of paralyzing traffic, the insurrection was already lost. It was recognized that the railway strike must be the backbone of the general strike. The attempt to tie up the railways having failed due to the suicidal stupidity of the anarcho-sindicalists, the government was able to mobilize the necessary materials and personnel for the transportation of loyal troops to the vital centers of the revolt. The cabinet ministers wept with joy when they saw that the anarchists were not supporting the movement, and demoralization was spread among the lukewarm and semi-sympathetic elements by means of the radio.

The general impression among the reactionary forces and especially among the Fascist officialdom that directed the repressive apparatus of the state, was that if on the night of October 5 to 6 (Friday-Saturday), the insurgents had thrown themselves into the armed struggle with determination, the victory of the revolt would have been inevitable. They also commented that if there were three Asturias in Spain, the revolution would have swept everything before it. On Friday night it would have been possible to win the army for the uprising by means of the conspirators among the army officers. On the other hand, by Saturday morning this had already become impossible because the officers and soldiers involved in the conspiracy had been placed under arrest and the morale of the troops had altered completely. On this occasion a phenomenon

observed in other insurrections was repeated. First, there is a moment of neutrality on the part of the army; then it becomes clear which way the balance inclines, at which moment the regular army takes an active part in the service of the stronger force.

Fundamentally the Spanish revolution was a sectarian movement based exclusively on the members of the socialist party. It rested on Secret Committees instead of basing itself on the most advanced class; on officials of the army instead of on the soldiers and the revolutionary will of the toiling masses. This sectarian uprising has brought defeat to the Spanish proletariat, with the particular circumstance, however, that the labor movement has maintained itself intact in most localities, due to the fact that the working class was held in reserve. The proletariat's energies were not utilized, it was kept waiting for orders and instructions from the socialist chiefs—instructions that never arrived.

The united front organizations, that is, the Workers' Alliances with their combat organizations—the workers' militia—composed of all proletarian tendencies united for the common purpose of combatting the enemy class, did not exist excepting in a minority of localities. And where the Alliances did exist they were as yet without a history, without a tradition—they had not as yet attained any moral ascendancy over the masses. Asturias, however, was an exception. Here they played a very important rôle. In many places, last minute attempts were made on Friday the 5th, to organize and popularize the Workers' Alliances. In such cases, however, they did not function because neither the leaders, the militants or the masses had understood the rôle of these Alliances beforehand. The rôle that should have been played by the Workers' Alliances in the insurrection, had been hidden from them. As a result, the leadership of the movement was in the hands of Secret Committees, the functions of which were usually concentrated in the hands of a single individual with very few assistants. There were cases in which the chairman of the Secret Committee was arrested on the first day, leaving the whole network in the hands of a couple of comrades who were unacquainted with the arrangements and connections with the other committees, there being nothing else for them to do but await orders from Madrid and give evasive answers to all questions asked them.

The discrepancies between the motor forces of the revolution and the leadership of the movement, became very evident. The leaders followed democratic will-o'-the-wisps and the masses sought the social revolution. This is why the former backwatered from the first moment, curbing the enthusiasm of the masses and failing to call out the troops under the officers who had promised their support. No party was in a position to reach the masses with an analysis of the state of the movement throughout the country in order to counteract the demoralizing influence of the radio which, by its lying and biased reports, was one of the best instruments at the service of the counter-revolution.

The socialist and Basque *Solidarian* leaders, as well as the *Esquerra* and the *Estat Catala*, had a mortal fear of the communist, socialist and anarchist masses. The leaders of all the organizations showed their inability to lead the masses. The socialist leaders showed indecision, a low political level and cowardice. Those of the communist party, with their organizational weakness, demonstrated their incapacity and tail-endism. The Basque *Solidarians*, the *Esquerra* and the *Estat Catala* covered themselves with ignominy and treachery, and the anarchists, wherever they had greatest influence and control, proved to be traitors with no

[Continued on page 151]

# Karl Marx and Moses Hess

NO ACCOUNT of the intellectual development of Marx would be complete unless it considered Marx's relationship to an influential group of German radical thinkers who called themselves "true" or "philosophical" communists. So important and dangerous did Marx regard their views that for years both he and Engels carried on a fierce polemic against them in the radical periodicals of the time. This was brought to a climax and finish in the special section of the *Communist Manifesto* devoted to "*der deutsche oder der wahre Sozialismus*" (IIIc) in which after a short summary and refutation of their views, Marx accused the "true" socialists of being allies of the feudal reaction.

The understanding of the situation is complicated by the fact that the leading figures of "true socialism" stood closer to Marx and Engels than any other radical German group in the '40's. We know that Moses Hess, the chief theoretician of the movement, converted Engels to communism, and Zlocisti, Hess' biographer, claims that Hess was not without influence on Marx, too. More interesting is the fact that Hess collaborated with Marx in writing *Die deutsche Ideologie* (1845); part of the manuscript is in his handwriting. Hess was also an ally of Marx in his struggles against Bruno Bauer, Ruge, Stirner, and Feuerbach. After the first critical writings of Marx and Engels against "true socialism" appeared, Hess avowed himself convinced by their arguments, forswore his past literary habits and plunged into a study of political economy (Letter to Marx, July 28, 1846). His essay—*Die Folgen der Revolution des Proletariats* (1847)—published before the *Communist Manifesto* was written, is Marxian in tone and analysis, save on some organizational issues. Yet the *Communist Manifesto* published early in 1848 unmistakably concentrates its fire on Hess, making allowances neither for the actual development of Hess' views nor for his revolutionary integrity.

Another factor which has made it difficult for some to understand Marx's criticism is the general acknowledgment that, personally, Moses Hess was a man of singular purity of character. He was sensitive to every form of injustice, passionate in his devotion to principles, and almost saintly in his every-day behavior. He was unable to hate even those who had harmed him. Although subjected to a life-long poverty, even more grinding than that of Marx, he never wavered in his allegiance to revolutionary ideals. He was very active in the First International where he joined forces with Marx against Bakunin. Early in life he broke away from his orthodox Jewish home and married a prostitute—"in order to atone for the evil society had done"—with whom he lived in happy marriage until his death. His friends nicknamed him "the communist rabbi".

Both the vehemence and justice of Marx's denunciation of the "true socialists" have been challenged by students of the period. Koigen, Hammacher, and Zlocisti\* have maintained that Marx himself was at one time a "true socialist" (about Engels' "philosophical socialism" there is no question at all), and that historically there is no more justification for believing Hess to be a precursor

of Marxism than for accepting Marx' characterization of him.

Mehring, Bernstein, and G. Meyer\* do not maintain that Marx was a "true socialist" but they are unequivocal in stating that Marx and Engels did less than justice to "true socialism" in general and to Hess in particular. Riazanov takes a middle ground; but Lukacs† defends Marx in every particular and even asserts that far from being a "true socialist", Marx was not even a genuine Feuerbachian.

For our purpose it is immaterial whether Marx was a "true socialist" or whether Hess was a forerunner of Marx. That they shared a great many positions together is indicated by their common derivation from Hegel and Feuerbach on the one hand, and their common struggles against other oppositional tendencies on the other. More important are the differences which manifest themselves between them. Even if it should turn out that Marx was a "true socialist" and that the views he argued against were those that he himself had earlier embraced, it would still be necessary, in tracing Marx's intellectual biography, to consider his criticism of "true socialism" as self-criticism.

I

## THE PHILOSOPHY OF MOSES HESS

"In Frankreich vertritt das Proletariat, in Deutschland des Geistesaristokratie den Humanismus."—Hess.

"True socialism" was a pseudo-political tendency among a certain group of literary men, publicists and philosophers in Germany, all of whom had been influenced by Feuerbach. It was not a system of thought. In a sense, every "true socialist" had his own philosophy. Hess, Grün, Lüning, Kriege, Heinzen, each developed his position in his own way so that no general exposition can be an adequate account of all the "true socialists". If one must choose a representative of this tendency, there is no choice but to turn to Moses Hess. He was the recognized leader of the group. By virtue of his unremitting activity in behalf of revolutionary ideals, he had already won the title of the "father of German communism". Unfortunately, the philosophy of Hess is not a unified doctrine. It is futile to look for system or consistency in it. Hess was by turns a Spinozist, an Hegelian, a Feuerbachian, a Marxist, a natural science monist, and a combination of them all. It will therefore be necessary to select for exposition only those of his views which Hess held in the Forties and which were in large measure shared by his "true socialist" comrades. Marx's criticisms will then be more intelligible.

1. *The Social Status of the German Intellectual*. It was Heine who first proclaimed that the Germans had succeeded in doing only in thought what others had already done in fact. This was a pointed way of saying that although the Germans were lagging behind other western nations in their social and political development, their philosophical theory from Kant to Hegel had already given an adequate ideological expression of the needs and ideals of bourgeois society. In Germany proper, however, the bourgeoisie had not yet come to power and the class relationships were obscured by a host of traditional, religious, sectional and political factors. The country was predominantly agricultural; the semi-feudal estates provided a food supply sufficient not only for the domestic market but for export. Political power was largely concentrated in the hands of the nobility. This power had been challenged by Napoleon in two ways. First, by a direct attempt to introduce democratic and constitutional customs in those parts of

\*The first in *Aus dem literarischen Nachlass Marx-Engels*, Vol. 2, pp. 348, 390-392; the second: "It is objectively unjustifiable to describe Hess' writings as 'foul and enervating literature,'" (Marx's characterization of "true socialism" in the *Communist Manifesto*) quoted by Zlocisti, *op. cit.*, p. 260; the third in *Friedrich Engels, Eine Biographie*, Vol. I, p. 106 ff.

†Riazanov: "Up to a point, the severe criticism of German or 'true' socialism contained in the *Manifesto* is a self-criticism . . . of Marx's own philosophical development." (Explanatory notes to *Communist Manifesto*, Eng. tr. p. 213. Italics mine. To what point is however not indicated.) Lukacs: *Moses Hess und die Probleme in der Idealistischen Dialektik*. Leipzig, 1926. (Sonderabdruck) p. 27 ff.

\*Koigen's *Zur Vorgeschichte des modernen philosophischen Sozialismus in Deutschland*, Berne, 1901, p. 149; Hammacher's *Zur Würdigung des wahren Sozialismus*, in Grünberg's *Archiv für die Geschichte des Sozialismus und der Arbeiterbewegung*, Vol. I, p. 89 ff; Zlocisti's *Moses Hess, der Vorkämpfer des Sozialismus und Zionismus*, Berlin, 1921, p. 232 ff. The whole of chapter IX should be read in this connection. Zlocisti's biography of Hess is frankly partial towards its subject, but it contains a very lively account of Hess' social and intellectual milieu. His discussion of the relation between Marx and Hess is viti-

ated by a stubborn misunderstanding of Marx on salient points. For example he is capable of writing the following: "Although Hess placed himself decisively in the Marxian camp, one thing distinguished him from the 'leader' [Marx], viz., activity. For in the last analysis the Marxian conception excluded in a priori fashion every organization directed to the achievement of specific goals. Everything develops out of the relations of production according to rigidly determined laws. It is this development alone which undermines itself by its own laws; so that capitalism collapses of itself" (p. 255).

Germany which he had conquered; and second, by the indirect effects of the imposition of the Continental system, which by barring English manufacturers from Germany called into existence a German industrial class (cf. Engels, *Der Status Quo in Deutschland*, *Marx-Engels Gesamtausgabe*, Sec. 1, Vol. 6, p. 231 ff.). With Napoleon's defeat the first danger was removed—(except for the *promise* of a constitution which the Prussian King had made in order to spur his subjects on against the invader). But the second danger remained. The German bourgeoisie which had grown strong enough to dominate the domestic market during the Napoleonic wars, continued to grow. Manufacturing, mining and shipping were developed on a wider scale. The bourgeoisie demanded a tariff-union (*Zollverein*) for all the thirty-nine German states and got it. It demanded a protective tariff for Prussia, and got that too. At every step, however, it encountered the opposition of the landed feudal interests whose wealth and power had been adversely affected, first, by the Napoleonic wars which had closed the French and English markets, second, by the English Corn Laws, enacted after the restoration of peace, and third, by overseas competition in agricultural and grazing products. The struggle between the rising bourgeoisie and the nobility was mediated by the monarchy which tolerated the bourgeoisie because it increased the national wealth and supplied new sources of revenue. Politically, however, the monarchy favored the landed nobility because it feared that the development of industry would force the surrender of absolutism and accelerate the national unification of Germany. Meanwhile, the consequences of the agrarian reforms of Stein had increased the number of independent peasant-proprietors who, together with the local hand-workers, small tradesmen, etc., constituted a class of petty bourgeoisie. Its interests were as much opposed to the large landlords as to the industrial capitalist. A small, inarticulate and newly created class of proletarians, which accompanied the growth of industry, suffered an intensive exploitation that often takes place when a country is first opened to manufacture.

In this confused social and political scene, government was possible only with the help of a great bureaucracy of officials who administered the complicated laws and regulations which grew out of the conflicts of so many different interests. In the course of time the bureaucracy began to consider itself an independent class with independent interests. But since by training and origin it was feudal in outlook, it was unsympathetic to the bourgeoisie. With growing resentment the latter found that the red tape, and the bribery necessary to break it, were interfering with normal industrial expansion and adding to the costs of production. Its economic interests demanded the overthrow of the absolute monarchy, but it was itself so strongly infected with the semi-feudal *Staat- und Ständes-philosophie* that it preferred to truckle to the nobility and bureaucracy rather than to risk an open fight. Its only possible allies were the proletariat and a part of the petty bourgeoisie. The first was too weak, and the second—in Germany—more royalist than the king. And so the German bourgeoisie hoped to win its much needed reforms not by open class struggle but by (1) involving the nobility in the net of its investment schemes, (2) by making the government dependent upon it for its finances, and (3) by petitioning the king and his bureaucracy for a liberal constitution in the name of "social progress", "humanitarianism", and "philosophy".

It is against this background that the "true socialism" of the radical German intellectuals must be understood. They were acquainted with the great French socialist writers without having acquired a clear insight into the class stratification of their own country or a consciousness of the specific needs of the proletariat as a class.\* As a group the intellectuals could only function either by direct or indirect service with the bureaucracy—which meant going over to outright reaction—or by expressing the demands of an opposition class. In the Thirties the Young-Germans and the Young-Hegelians had frankly adopted the point of view of the German bourgeoisie and had agitated for all the constitutional rights which England and France were enjoying. But with the

\*"To these *true socialists* belong not only those who call themselves socialists *par excellence* but also the greater part of those literary men in Germany who have accepted the party name of communists. These last are, if that is possible, even worse than the true socialists." (Engels, *loc. cit.*)

disintegration of these schools of thought and with the dissemination of French socialist ideas, the German intellectuals lost their enthusiasm for the bourgeoisie. Instead of continuing with them in a common struggle against the absolutist monarchy, they turned all their weapons against bourgeois culture and politics, criticizing the social consequences of industrial production. In their most advanced phase they spoke in the name of the proletariat, but the only proletarians they knew were the ones talked about by the French socialist writers. Or what was even more confusing, they sometimes proclaimed that "*Das Proletariat ist die Menschheit*" (the proletariat is humanity) so that it would appear, as Marx once caustically observed, that in struggling to abolish classes, the communists were striving to destroy humanity.

In fact, whatever revolutionary consciousness developed among the German intellectuals took place quite independently of the development of the German proletariat. Hess was not only unacquainted with the German working classes, he was even unaware of the existence of communistic groups among the German workers in Paris. "When I came to Paris," he writes, "I was no more aware of the existence of communistic groups of German journeymen than they were of me." (*Sozialistische Aufsätze*, ed. by Zlocisti, p. 122.) And Engels in one of his letters to Marx, writing of the great interest in communism which he and Hess had succeeded in awakening by public meetings, admits that they were winning converts among all classes except the proletariat.

"All of Elberfeld and Barmen, from the money aristocracy to the *épicerie*, was represented. Only the proletariat was not there. . . . Things are going fine. Everyone is talking about communism, and we are winning new followers every day. Wuppertaler communism is *une vérité*, yes, almost a force. . . . The dumbest, most indolent and philistine of people who are interested in nothing in the world are beginning to become enthusiastic [*schwärmen*] about communism." (*Gesamtausgabe*, Sec. III, Vol. 2, p. 14.)

Engels, himself, had already perceived the limitations of a theory of communism which took its point of departure from abstract ethical principles without relating them to the concrete struggles of the working class. In the preface to his *Condition of the English Working Class* (1845) he admits that one of the aims of his book is to put an end to all communist "*Phantastereien und Schwärmereien pro et contra*" and to provide a factual analysis of the economic realities which were shaping the social destinies of the proletariat and determining the conditions of their emancipation. The majority of the radical German intellectuals, however, were insensitive to the existence and importance of social class divisions. Imbued with the ideals of a *perfect* society, they were unable to join the bureaucracy which administered *present* society. They also refused to make themselves a vehicle for the specific temporal demands of the bourgeoisie or proletariat. The only standpoint from which they passed criticism upon society was an allegedly classless ethics whose values expressed not the immediate need of this or that class but the *essential* needs of the whole of society. They felt themselves to be the prophets of the good society whose organization could be deduced from the "true nature" of man. They were concerned with the sufferings of the proletariat and the disparity which existed between their present life and their life as it ought to be. But they had no conception of what constituted the proletariat. The proletariat was identified with an abstract category of distress. The "true socialists" sympathized with the proletariat as they would sympathize with the cause of any underdog. They claimed to be socialists as much for the sake of the *ultimate* welfare of the nobility and bourgeoisie as for the sake of those whom these classes oppressed.

It should now be clear why such a position tended to strengthen the belief that it was possible to find an objective social philosophy which was valid for all classes of society.

2. *Communism as Humanism.* The philosophy of Hess was born of a desire to find fundamental principles of social organization which would make possible the elimination of all conflict between man and man, and class and class. Early in his career, as a follower of Spinoza and Hegel, he believed that valid principles of social order could be derived only from a knowledge of the metaphysical structure of existence. The good life is a life based upon the insight into the unity and necessity of all things. Virtue arises from the *knowledge* of our status and function in the all-embracing totality—called by both Spinoza and Hegel, God. Two

difficulties, however, compelled Hess to modify his original Spinozism. First, its contemplative outlook upon life conflicted with his *consciousness* that a great many things had to be done, that problems were pressing for a solution which could not be found by viewing them *sub specie aeternitatis*. Secondly, a consistent Spinozism and Hegelianism seemed to imply that in the complete vision of the order and connection of things, everything was blessed with necessity, and that evil was non-existent. This would call into question the very reality of the social problems of evil and oppression which irked Hess' sensitive nature and which had furnished the starting point of his whole philosophical enquiry. The practical upshot of this philosophical ethics was to identify religion with morality and to make the problems of daily life which confronted him, unimportant and unreal.

Hess' task was now to find a philosophy which would justify the autonomy of moral *activity*. Like most of the Young-Hegelians, Hess turned to Fichte. The active personality of Fichte, his early enthusiasm for the French Revolution, and his apparent social and political liberalism had initiated a kind of Fichte Renaissance among the Young-Hegelians. Since it was from him that Hegel had taken over and developed the dialectical method, the Young-Hegelians could with good philosophical grace couple their allegiance to the hero of the *Atheismusstreit* with their school loyalty to Hegel, the philosopher of the restoration. About the same time that Hess was writing his pieces in the *Rheinische Zeitung* and his essay, *Philosophie der Tat*, Köppen, the close friend of Marx, published an article on *Fichte und die Revolution* in which he declared: "Now that the impulse to free political development has again come to life in us Germans . . . the voice of the purest, most determined, and strongest character among German philosophers will be better understood and will find a readier reception than ever before."\* Hess, however, was more interested in grafting Fichte's metaphysics of activity upon Spinoza's doctrine of substance (something which Hegel had already done) than in Fichte's explicit political doctrines. "Not being but action is first and last. . . . Now is the time for the philosophy of spirit to become a philosophy of activity. Not only thinking but the whole of human activity must be lifted to a plane on which all oppositions disappear. . . . Fichte in this respect has already gone further than the most recent philosopher." (*Philosophie der Tat, Sozialistische Aufsätze*, p. 37, p. 50.)

In invoking the Fichtean principle of activity to supplement the Spinozistic doctrine of Substance, Hess was expressing in an esoteric way the conflict which he had already described in more popular fashion as the conflict between religion and morality. The religious outlook, he contended, was essentially one of acceptance—an acceptance of the order of the universe, whether it be called God, Nature, Reason, or Spirit, of which human beings were a part, and whose mysterious and purposive ways could only be dimly apprehended by faith and intelligence. The standpoint of morality, on the other hand, was one of assertion—an assertion of what ought to be and what is not, an imposition of a new order and not merely the recognition of an old. The root of religion was man's feelings; the source of morality was the practical necessities of life. So long as human beings strive after ideals of perfection, there can be no completely irreligious men; so long as they live in society, they cannot be completely immoral. Irreligion is simply a word for other people's religion; immorality, a term for behavior different from our own. The essence of religion is *worship*; the essence of morality, *conscientiousness*. (*Religion und Sittlichkeit, ibid.*, p. 28.)

The conflict between religion and morality, Hess went on to say, can only be avoided if both observed a proper division of labor. Religion had no business in politics or with the concerns of the state. It is a private matter—an affair of the individual soul faced by the immensities of the cosmos. The field of politics belongs to ethics; its object is the general interests of mankind. "Let religion educate, edify, and elevate the *individual soul*. Let it support the weak and console the suffering. But in public life let man show

himself not in his individual but in his general character. Public life—the state—demands not weak but strong, courageous and independent men."

But now Hess found himself confronted by even greater difficulties. If religion could not serve as a basis for social peace, how could ethics take its place? In affirming the Fichtean principle of activity, Hess was subscribing to the view that individuality is a brute metaphysical fact. Principles cannot act in time and be acted upon; only individuals can. In the social field, individuality expresses itself in the different personalities whose relationships constitute the social order. But, if virtue be no more than *conscientiousness*, if each individual is to fulfill the law of his own nature, what is the guarantee that social peace and freedom can be secured? Hess is asking how genuine social morality is possible. A social morality based upon convention or contact between personalities breaks down as soon as an individual or a group becomes sufficiently powerful to violate the compact with impunity. A social morality based on authority or revelation is compatible with the autonomy of moral action. Yet a social morality *must be grounded on some objective order*. It cannot be the order of nature. And at this point, Hess turns to Feuerbach. Morality must be grounded on the "true" nature of the human species—on Man viewed not as a series of isolated individuals or as one abstract universal—Humanity—but as a living unity whose different parts have developed from a common source and which are bound together by a feeling of natural kinship. But man cannot live as man—and here Hess improves on Feuerbach—unless he recognizes that his human needs require new institutions; that all the social and political conflicts of the past and present have grown out of the root evils of private property; that money plays the same rôle in distorting man's practical life that religion plays in distorting his intellectual life. Having read Proudhon and the Utopian French socialists, Hess tries to link up their conclusions with Feuerbach's method:

"The essence of God, says Feuerbach, is the transcendent essence of man, and the real theory of the divine nature is the theory of human nature. Theology is *anthropology*. That is the truth, but it is not the *whole* truth. The nature of man, it must be added, is social, involving the coöperative activity of all individuals for the same ends and interests. The true theory of man, the true humanism is the theory of *human society*. In other words, *anthropology is socialism*." (*Loc. cit.*, pp. 115-116.)

The logical corollary of this position was that the struggle for human freedom and social security must be waged not in the name of the proletariat, but in the name of humanity.

3. *Communism as the Ethics of Love*. The specific content with which Hess filled this abstract humanism is not hard to guess. It was a variant of the Feuerbachian ideal of love. Although the full realization of communism depended upon the existence of certain social conditions (about whose nature Hess at this stage was rather vague), communism as an *ideal* was already implicit in every altruistic tendency which stirred within the human breast. The historical development of society, he held, may be legitimately viewed as a result of the conflict of two great passions—*egoism*, manifested in individual self-assertion against others, and *love*, as expressed in all action inspired by the consciousness of the essential identity of the individual with mankind. Egoism or selfishness is the final source of all social oppression and exploitation. Cruelty, fraud and robbery, feudalism, chattel and wage slavery, pauperism and prostitution are possible only because men draw a circle around themselves and their nearest of kin, and focus attention so strongly upon the field of their immediate vision that they become indifferent, and ultimately blind, to the interests and the very existence of those who live beyond the line. Social institutions are such as to place a premium upon selfish behavior. And although this behavior is hedged in by rules of law imposed by the state, these rules themselves represent the organized selfishness of dominant groups. Capitalism or "the system of free competition is the last word of egoism". It distorts and perverts every phase of culture—religion, art, education—by substituting for the ideals of the collectivity, private interest and private satisfaction as controlling factors.

Although the history of society has been the progressive replacement of the egoism of one group by the egoism of others, it is significant that all groups come to power by professing allegiance

\**Anecdota* . . . Vol. I, 1843, p. 154; for more complete documentation of the Fichtean tendency among the Young-Hegelians, see Speier, *Die Geschichtsphilosophie Lassalles*, in *Archiv*

für *Sozialwissenschaft*, Vol. 61, p. 118 ff.; as well as for a convincing interpretation of Lassalle as a "wahre Sozialist" (p. 360 ff.)

to theoretical principles of love and humanity, freedom and equality. The more altruistic their declaration, the more consistent—as the history of the English and French bourgeoisie illustrates—their egoism. The fact, however, that in order to move great masses into action, vehement lip-service to the ideals of *love* and *humanity* is necessary indicates that “the real nature of man” recognizes that these ideals alone are ultimately valid and yearns for their fulfillment. But they can only be fulfilled when private property and the arbitrary power which its possession gives over other human beings, is abolished. “Communism is the law [*Lebensgesetz*] of love applied to social life.” It is not enough to preach love to realize communism, as Feuerbach does; nor can it be brought about by preaching hate. Love must be organized into action; recognition of the identity of the real interest of all mankind must be carried over into every phase of personal and social life:

“You have been told that you cannot serve two masters at once—God and Mammon. But we tell you that you cannot serve either one of them, if you think and feel like *human* beings. Love one another, unite in spirit, and your hearts will be filled with that blessedness which you have so vainly sought for *outside* of yourselves, in God. Organize, unite in the real world, and by your deeds and works you will possess all the wealth, which you have so vainly sought, in *money*. So long as you do not strive to develop your own nature, so long as you strive to be not *human* but *super-human* and *inhuman* creatures, you will become inhuman, you will look down contemptuously upon human nature, whose real nature you do not recognize and treat ‘the masses’ as if they were a wild beast. The beast which you see in the people is in yourself.” (*Ueber die Not in unserer Gesellschaft und deren Abhilfe, Sozialistische Aufsätze*, p. 149.)

Hess left it unexplained how this belief in the essential unity of mankind could be reconciled with his characterization of those who did not share his belief. Perhaps it is too much to expect this of one whose first interest was not in social analysis—but, like the old Hebrew prophets, in social justice.

If anthropologically, communism was humanism, and ethically it was humanitarianism, it followed that the appeal to action would be framed not in terms of material interests but in terms of culture, creative activity, peace, honor, justice, and other ideal goods. The “true socialists” took the field against all those who pretended that the communist movement was exclusively or even primarily a movement of the proletariat, and who spoke as if its demands centered around the needs of the stomach. How could communists preach the ideal of classlessness and still appeal to *one* class against another? How could the ideal values of communism be regarded as the concern *only* of the proletariat when they really flowed from the real nature of man? Hess admitted, to be sure, that in France the movement was proletarian, but he explained this by saying that the French proletariat was communistic “not out of egoism but out of humanity”. The proletariat becomes communistic out of love of mankind. But why should one, asks Hess, who out of love of mankind is already a communist, regard himself as a proletarian? And in fact there are communists who are not proletarians and there are proletarians who are not communists. All that one can say is that since the proletariat suffers most from the effects of organized egoism (which Hess identifies with capitalism) it is more likely than any other group to feel and understand the unity of mankind, and the necessity of establishing communism to realize it. Hess makes a point of correcting Lorenz von Stein, an Hegelian of the center, whose book, *Der Sozialismus und Kommunismus des heutigen Frankreich* (1845) introduced, so to speak, the theories of French socialism to the German public. Despite his reactionary tendencies, Stein had made some surprisingly realistic analyses of the French revolutionary movement. He had grasped the importance of the class struggle in French history and had distinguished between the “proletariat” as an historical category bound up with capitalism and the “poor” and “unfortunate” to be found in any society.\* Hess insists that Stein has given a misleading account of communism. “It is an error—and this error is due

\*As far as the mooted question of Stein’s influence on Marx is concerned, it is sufficient to point out that Stein prophesied that the existing proletariat

would develop in Germany. Responsibility for the existence of the proletariat is laid at the door of the *Weltgeist*. Cf., *op. cit.*, p. 29.

to the egoistic narrowness which cannot rise to a truly human outlook—yes, it is an error diligently spread by the reaction, and by Stein above all, that socialism develops only among the proletariat, and among the proletariat only as a question of fulfilling the needs of the stomach.” (*Sozialistische Aufsätze*, p. 129.)

Socialism is not a question of bread, although it may be that, too. It is in the first instance a question of man, of moral values, especially of human dignity. These values Hess formulates differently at different times. Sometimes it is simply *truth* which is the communist ideal; only under communism will social parasitism and the civilization of lies based on it disappear. Sometimes it is creative work in which effort and enjoyment will always be found together. Sometimes it is character or virtue, defined by Hess, as the “freedom to follow the law of one’s own life” (and which dangerously approaches the ideal of bourgeois freedom). But through the entire scale of ethical variations developed by Hess, there sounds one fundamental theme: the social revolution presupposes a *moral* revolution.

4. “True Socialism” as Reactionary Socialism. Had the “true socialists” restricted themselves to declarations of brotherly love, they probably would have been remembered only as another Utopian socialist sect. But they prided themselves upon having advanced beyond their master, Feuerbach. If thinking flowers in action, then political thinking must concern itself in the most intimate way with the contemporary issues of politics. As has already been indicated, the German bourgeoisie was struggling against the nobility and bureaucracy for the democratic rights already enjoyed by the bourgeoisie in France and England. The “true socialists”, posted on French communist theory, knew that in a bourgeois democracy the proletariat was exploited even more openly than in an absolute monarchy, that the *formal* rights of press, assemblage, trial by jury, etc., could not be effectively exercised where glaring social inequalities prevailed. Speaking, then, for the proletariat—for the future of humanity—the “true socialists” repudiated the demands of the bourgeoisie, attacked their spokesmen as hypocrites, and succeeded in confusing the intellectual strata of the petty bourgeoisie who had regarded the change from an absolute monarchy to a constitutional republic as genuine social advance.

In this crusade against bourgeois liberalism the chief offender was not Moses Hess but Karl Grün and after him, Otto Lüning. But Hess was not without faults. He paraded an indifference to the political program of the democrats and was quick to accuse them of compromise, insincerity and cowardice. Even communists were suspect if their origins were bourgeois. The badge of real ethical purity was proletarian. “Most communists,” he wrote, “who stem from the bourgeoisie go no further than general phrases and attempts at compromise [between the older order and the new]; it is only the proletariat which carries things to a decisive break with the existing order.” (*Rheinische Jahrbücher*, Vol. II, 1846, p. 65.)

Hess maintained that the real cause of social distress was economic and to agitate for political reforms was therefore a waste of time. All governments, except revolutionary ones, were indifferent to the welfare of the proletariat. Addressing German liberals, he wrote:

“Has the King of Prussia shown less concern for the misery of the poorer classes than the French Assembly or the French king? So convinced are we by reflection upon the facts and upon the real causes of social distress that this is not so, that all liberal political strivings appear to us as immaterial, even as downright disgusting” (*formlich zum Ekel geworden sind*).

It was Karl Grün, however, the man upon whom Marx poured out the vials of his wrath, who formulated the anti-liberal attitude of “true socialism” most sharply. The promise of a constitution which the King of Prussia had made in 1815 was long overdue. At every opportunity, the bourgeoisie reminded him, his counselors, and his successor, of his unredeemed pledge. Every incident of domestic unrest was capitalized by bourgeois and liberal opinion to point out that constitutional safety-valves of popular resentment were better than none. The clamor for a constitution became particularly strong after the revolt of the Silesian weavers. It was in answer to this that Grün wrote:

“Who in Prussia wants a constitution? The liberals. Who are the liberals? People who sit within their four walls, and some *littérateurs* who either themselves own property or whose horizon

is bounded by the wishes of the worthy factory owners. Does this handful of owners with their literary hacks constitute the people? No. Does the people desire a constitution? Not in its dreams. . . . Had the Silesian proletariat a consciousness . . . it would protest against a constitution. The proletariat has no consciousness but we . . . act in its name. We protest." (*Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 98-100.)

Lüning was more interested in awakening the proletariat to its great mission of social salvation than in drawing it into supporting the political demands of the bourgeoisie. "There is only one way of making the proletariat conscious of its humanity, that is through the organization of education." (*Dieses Buch gehört dem Volke* [a periodical], Vol. II, 1846, p. 102, quoted by Speier, *loc. cit.*, p. 126.) And so the "true socialists", each in his own way, helped the reactionary nobility in its struggle to retain sole political supremacy in Germany.

5. *Communism and Nationalism.* Hess was the first socialist of his day to link up the question of nationalism with the theory of communism. Nationalism is of two varieties, just as internationalism is of two varieties. True nationalism, which may be defined as pride in the distinctive character of local culture, has been perverted into the false nationalism of modern states by the institution of private property. So long as competition and war between individuals prevail within communities, it is inevitable that the same principles be applied by the organized groups which constitute states in their relations with each other. The struggle between nations takes more gruesome forms—wars, massacres, etc.—than the struggle between individuals within the nation, because there is no consciousness of common ties of local culture to diminish the cruelty towards others called forth by a conflict over the means of life. Just as it is necessary to find a rule to regulate the distribution of goods within the community in order to give each one an opportunity to develop his personality, so it is necessary to find a rule which will apply between nations so that each nationality will be able to develop its distinctive culture. "The problem of the elimination of national hate is intimately bound up with the problem of egoistic competition. International war cannot cease until individual war, *competition*, ceases. All the problems, all the difficulties, all the contradictions which have arisen in this country, flow out of this fundamental question."\*

Commercial nationalism generally gives rise to a spurious renaissance of national culture. Everything becomes "national" and therefore the concern of the true patriot, e.g., "religion and a protective tariff for monopoly enterprises; freedom and cotton; mediæval ruins and modern industry; gravestones and railroads." In this way, national cultures which are the bearers of unique value, become claimants to total and exclusive value. They no longer are content to live peacefully side by side faithful to their own national genius and yet tolerant of others; they seek to impose their own culture upon others in the name of a militant and holy nationalism. They thereby destroy not only the unique value of other cultures but their own.

False nationalism breeds a false internationalism—cosmopolitanism. True internationalism recognizes the necessity of distinct cultures and nations. "But only the individual is real", and nationality is the individuality of a people. It is no more possible for humanity to exist without particular peoples and nations than to exist without particular individuals.

Like most of his contemporaries Hess had a strong belief not only in the existence of national traits and character, but in their fixity. National traits may be an historical product, but the kind of development which is possible to each nation is determined by its essential nature. The German is essentially contemplative, the Frenchman passionate, and the Englishman practical. These traits will be found reflected in their revolutionary movements too. The German is a communist out of philosophy; the Frenchman, out of his strong feeling for justice; the Englishman, because of material interests. All three elements are necessary; but in the struggle for socialism, the Frenchman will give the signal for action.†

6. *Transition to Realism.* It would be a great injustice to Hess to close the exposition of his thought at this point. For his "true socialism" phase lasted only a few years. By 1847 Hess had already abandoned his appeal to humanity and the essential nature of man and had undertaken a study of political economy. His essay, *Die Folgen des Revolution des Proletariat*, no longer speaks of ideal presuppositions of communism but of material conditions, not in terms of the development of the spirit of humanity but of the development of productive forces. In this essay of Hess will be found, with a clarity and precision quite foreign to his other writings, the theory of the concentration and centralization of capital, the theory of increasing misery, the theory of overproduction to account for the periodicity of crises, the doctrine that the collapse of capitalism is inevitable, and the view that the development of revolutionary consciousness is a simple and direct outgrowth of economic distress—theories which were to receive classic formulation, together with a denunciation of "true socialism", a few months later, in the *Communist Manifesto*. The change in tone and subject matter is so striking that mere paraphrase cannot convey it. I quote therefore some characteristic passages.

"A revolution of the proletariat presupposes before all things the existence of a proletariat—presupposes a struggle, not merely about abstract principles but about concrete and tangible interests, presupposes that the very existence of the great majority of the workers is threatened, that these workers know who the enemy is they have to fight, and that they have the means in their own hands to achieve victory. . . . It remains to ask what must social relations be in order to produce uniform oppression of the workers as well as the instrument of their liberation? . . . We have already indicated how free competition—in the last instance free-trade—makes wages equal. But before free competition can reach the highest phase of its development . . . a certain series of economic facts must precede it. . . . Machines must be discovered, instruments of production must be perfected and multiplied, work must be subdivided, more must be produced than consumed, business crises must arise as a result of overproduction and threaten to ruin an entire country in case the obstacles which remain in the way of industry are not removed. . . . Once social relations have reached this revolutionary height, nothing can stop the proletarian revolution. All measures to revive and develop private interest are at last exhausted. . . . It is large industry which, as we saw, in the last instance provides the means and conditions for the overthrow of the existing social order based upon private industry, private trade, and private property. It is large industry which creates a revolutionary class and unifies it against the ruling bourgeoisie. It is large industry which makes the proletariat subjectively conscious of the necessity of shaking off its yoke in that it gives the proletariat a consciousness of its position. . . . What fetters production today? The business crises? How do crises arise? Through overproduction. Why is more produced than can be consumed? Have, then, all the members of society more than enough of what they need? By no means, most of them lack the barest necessities of existence, not to speak of everything else which man needs for the development of his natural dispositions and capacities. . . . Why, then, this overproduction, this distress in the midst of plenty? Well we have seen: the more progress private industry makes, the more capital accumulates in private hands, the more those who are propertyless are compelled to sell their personal labor power [*Arbeitskräfte*] in order to secure the necessary means of life. The worker, however, who is compelled to sell himself or his labor power, becomes a commodity. Its value obeys the same economic laws as other commodities." (*Sozialistische Aufsätze*, pp. 215-216.)

It remains to ask where Hess derived these views, especially since in some of his later writings, the echoes of his earlier doctrines are still to be heard. There can be no question but that Hess read Ricardo and the Ricardian socialists in the light of Marx's views as expressed in the *Anti-Proudhon*. It is a legitimate inference that these views were developed for Hess by Marx in their last period of collaboration. As we proceed to Marx's criticism of Hess, it is necessary to bear constantly in mind that for all his dislike of the personal characters of Marx and Engels, after 1847 Hess regarded himself as a Marxist.

Sydney HOOK

\**Sozialistische Aufsätze*, p. 86. In his *Die europäische Triarchie* (1841) a work which brought him to public attention, Hess already proclaimed the necessity of a federated national unity of England, France and Germany,

without interpreting nationalism as an expression of material egoistic interest.

†For an amusing contrast between the French and German type of revolutionist, cf. *Sozialistische Aufsätze*, pp. 156-157.

# Passports to Utopia—II

“WHAT, THEN, to sum up the whole in a few words, does your Reporter now propose to his fellow-creatures? . . . He offers to exchange their poverty for wealth, their ignorance for knowledge, their anger for kindness, their division for union. He offers to effect this change without subjecting a single individual even to temporary inconvenience. No one shall suffer by it for an hour; all shall be essentially benefitted within a short period from its introduction; and yet not any part of the existing system shall be prematurely disturbed. . . .”

These words, with which Robert Owen concluded his famous report to the Gentlemen of the County of Lanark in 1820, remain the classic statement of Utopian Socialism. Owen's coöperative community and its host of successors failed to conquer capitalism. Capitalism, on the contrary, swallowed them all; waxed great; and today rules supreme everywhere in the world except the Soviet Union.

There the foundations of the socialist society that Owen dreamed of were laid only after a World War, two revolutions, and three years of violent class struggles. Nevertheless, the Utopians are still among us, with their artful schemes for bringing universal peace, prosperity, and brotherhood to mankind by outwitting the capitalists and building a socialist society behind their backs. Not all of these worthy people, unfortunately, live in capitalist countries.

## *Technocracy*

Before the collapse of 1929, “permanent prosperity” was the fondest illusion of the American middle class. The crisis shattered this Utopian myth beyond repair. New illusions were needed. In the darkest days of the depression at the end of 1932 along came Technocracy to inflame the imaginations and revive the hopes of the petty bourgeoisie.

The oracles of this up-to-date American model of Utopia cloaked their revelations in an impressive garment of pseudo-scientific jargon, embroidered with charts, formulæ and graphs. They spoke with the magistral authority of scientific investigators, who had been engaged for ten years at Columbia University in a survey of the energy resources of North America. The theoretical conclusions of these engineer-economists were extremely bold and radical.

On the one hand, the Technocrats informed the world that capitalism was on its death-bed. Modern technology and power production had dealt “the price system” one smashing blow after another and would shortly dispatch it entirely. Meanwhile, unemployment and mass misery would increase at a rapid rate.

On the other hand, the Technocrats brought forward the results of their survey of “the continental capacity of production” to prove that either the existing or potential plant (they did not state which) could manufacture enough goods for everybody. Poverty was an anachronism. America stood upon the threshold of a New Age of Plenty, in which no-one need work more than four hours a day and all would have an increase equal to twenty thousand dollars a year.

Surely the average level of economic life could be raised to unprecedented heights, once the fetters of capitalism were struck from the nation's productive forces. But the particular cases cited by the Technocrats, and their estimates as a whole, were grossly exaggerated, vague and incomplete. Their statistics were promptly riddled by technical experts, and, when it was thought that they advocated the abolition of capitalism, the Technocrats themselves were disavowed by the Columbia authorities.

The ideas of the Technocrats were of the same shoddy character as their statistics. They attempted to explain the course of history and the causes of great social changes by a simple-minded technological determinism: the dominant mode of motive power in production was the motive force of history. They enthroned one factor among the forces of production and submitted the whole historical process to its sway. This enabled them to set aside any consideration of the social relations of production and the class struggles issuing from them, and to give easy answers to the most complex historical questions.

They explained the inevitable collapse of capitalism, for example, by pointing to four salient features of its decay: the disparity in

the rates of growth of population, production and debt; the steady decrease in the number of man-hours per unit produced, manifested in technological unemployment; the mounting burden of debt claims upon industry, and, finally, the progressive tendency toward further mechanization, rationalization and electrification of industry. To a Marxist all these phenomena are aspects of that historical tendency of capitalist accumulation in which, under the spur of competition, constant capital increases at the relative expense of variable capital. To these petty bourgeois ideologists, however, they appeared as revolutionary discoveries, and were used by them as a weapon to beat the bourgeoisie.

The practical proposals of these radicals were tame and lifeless. They repudiated political action and announced that they were preparing for the automatic collapse of capitalism. When Doomsday arrived (and it was close at hand), the representatives of the people would dispossess the owners of industry and call upon the Technocrats to take charge of production for the common good, instead of for the profits of the privileged few.

The Technocrats talked while American capitalism slid downhill. It hit bottom when the banks closed on March 4, 1933. Alas for the Technocrats! On the very day American capitalism came to a standstill, Technocracy disappeared. Instead of turning to the Technocrats, the incoming Democratic administration beckoned to the big bourgeoisie and its agents. Between them, the New Deal was improvised—and the hullabaloo about Technocracy was drowned in the ballyhoo for the New Deal.

A new Messiah approached in the person of President Roosevelt; a new rainbow on the horizon in the shape of the New Deal. The pragmatic middle classes hastened to forget the pipe-dreams of Technocracy to follow the pied-piping of the President. And, as a final touch of irony, the only class that dared to challenge the capitalist control of industry was the aroused working class, whom the Technocrats had contemptuously dismissed as economically obsolescent and politically powerless.

## *Utopia, Incorporated*

The New Deal gave monopoly capital its long-desired opportunity to control production and fix prices by suspending the anti-trust laws and encouraging “self-rule in industry”. It gave the working class an impulse to organization through Section 7A of the N.R.A. To the discontented urban middle classes it gave nothing more substantial than fresh hopes and new illusions.

These found expression in an efflorescence of Utopian schemes and cults on a mass scale. Los Angeles, the home of every conceivable aberration of the human mind, became the center of these cults. Los Angeles is the capital of the petty bourgeois. The proletarian population is comparatively small in Southern California and composed of oppressively exploited and disfranchised Mexicans in its lower strata. The overwhelming majority of the people consists of small farmers, merchants, pensioners and *rentiers* from all over the United States, social parasites of every kind. There are, in addition, over 350,000 people in Los Angeles county alone on relief.

Out of this soil there sprang up overnight, independently of each other, the Townsend Old-Age Revolving Pension Fund, the Utopian Society, and the EPIC crusade of Upton Sinclair. The Old-Age Revolving Pension Fund, the invention of a Dr. Townsend, offered all Americans over sixty \$200 a month on condition that they withdraw from work and spend the entire sum within the month. By subtracting ten million old people from industry and adding twenty-four billions to the annual national income, the doctor promised to multiply prosperity fourfold. Since the scheme requires that the twenty-four billions be raised by taxation—a blow that would completely cripple American capitalism—we can safely leave the Old Age Pension plan revolving in the heads of Dr. Townsend and his patients.

The Utopian Society is Technocracy, stripped down to Utopian essentials; mixed with ideas derived from earlier Utopians, Plato, More, Bellamy, etc.; and organized along the lines of a secret society. The Utopians aim to abolish the profit system and replace it by a system of production for use. They look forward to volun-

tary labor of a few hours a day, old-age, sick, and disability insurance, no taxes, no mortgages, no debts, no poverty—in a word, no capitalism.

They dramatize their doctrines very effectively by conducting candidates through a series of pageants, portraying the pilgrimage of the petty bourgeoisie through capitalist to Utopian society. They depict the middle class Mendicant's exploitation by the Merchant; the enslavement of both by the Money-lender; their imprisonment by the Magistrate; and their timely rescue by the Hermit Reason, who frees them from economic superstitions and leads them into the Promised Land, administered under communist principles.

This combination of Masonic secrecy and showmanship enabled the Utopians to grow in a few months from a handful to over half a million dues-paying members. Although they claimed to be nothing more than an educational organization, a society of half a million zealots, dedicated to sweeping social reforms, was a powerful political force. Without concluding a formal alliance, the Utopians became the backbone of Upton Sinclair's EPIC campaign, which marked the entrance of the Utopian movement into the political field.

#### *Sinclair's EPIC Plan*

Upton Sinclair has always been a Utopian Socialist. It is hardly surprising that, under the spell of the New Deal, he should have quit the socialist party and run as Democratic candidate for governor on the slogan: "End Poverty In California."

The EPIC Plan can best be described as a malicious petty bourgeois caricature of Stalinism. The Austrian socialists attempted to build socialism in one city; the Russian Stalinists are straining to build socialism in one country; Sinclair is out to build socialism in one state. He has a Two-Year Plan, which is to abolish poverty in California. This is to be followed by a second Two-Year Plan, at the end of which capitalism will be abolished.

The EPIC program contemplates no alterations in the existing capitalist economy. The new competitive socialist society is to be set up wholly outside the unregenerate capitalist régime. The state authorities will take over all idle land and factories where the unemployed can work and live under ideal conditions. Through a system of mutual exchange, the state farms and factories will constitute a completely self-enclosed and self-sustaining society.

This part of the plan was for the unemployed, but the middle classes and the workers were not forgotten. These were promised \$50 a month pensions; tax exemptions on properties assessed under \$3,000; heavy taxes on large incomes, inheritances, and public utilities; repeal of the sales tax; and the release of Tom Mooney.

At first sight the EPIC appears to be a clever scheme for establishing socialism peacefully and gradually. Capitalism is not to be overthrown by assault (these are Russian tactics), but undermined by "the current of coöperation" until it crumbles to pieces (the American way).

Nevertheless, the problems involved in the seizure of power and the overthrow of the capitalist class are suppressed only to reappear elsewhere. The EPIC plan is supposedly to be financed by taxation and bond issues. In other words, Sinclair is asking the California capitalists to pay for the rope that is to hang them. The example of Fascist Germany should warn him that, before the capitalist class will consent to its own execution, they will finance Fascist parties to crush their hangman.

Suppose the California capitalists should agree to their expropriation. There are still factories and farm colonies to be constructed and operated and millions of dollars of materials to be purchased outside the state. California is not, and cannot be, self-sustaining on either a capitalist or socialist foundation. These could be paid for only by confiscating the private property of capitalist producers. If the California farmers today in the Imperial Valley use armed force against Mexican workers who demand a few cents more a day, will they resist less when all they have is endangered?

At every step Sinclair's EPIC involves the use of force, interference with industry, expropriation, extension to a national scale—all of which it was designed to avoid.

If the Epicites do not see this, their opponents do. At the Democratic convention, Sinclair was forced to eliminate all the "socialist" features of his platform. His revised "Immediate EPIC" re-

tained only the barter arrangements and the self-help coöperatives, which are already in existence elsewhere without undermining capitalism an iota. What was hailed as an advance towards socialism turned out in reality to be a step backward to the primitive economy of pioneer days. One can safely say that Sinclair's coöperative tent colonies will resemble Hitler's labor camps more than the garden of Eden.

Sinclair's program antagonized many workers, who feared the loss of their jobs from the influx of unemployed, as well as large sections of the propertied middle classes. The forces of reaction were solidly against him and mustered every means that a four million dollar campaign fund could buy to discredit and defeat him. They succeeded by a narrow margin. The first assault of the Utopians upon the citadel of capital had been beaten back.

The Utopian crusade has been checked, but by no means crushed. Today, the Utopians constitute the left wing of the Democratic party. They cling to the skirts of the New Deal and look to the Great White Father in Washington to realize their dreams. Tomorrow, as their movement gains momentum and support from the millions of unemployed and other discontented elements among the masses, the demands of these radicals will collide head-on with the defensive policies of the Democratic leadership. A split between the two sections of the party is inevitable. Whenever the break occurs, it seems not unlikely that the issues around which Sinclair's campaign was waged will be the major issues of the 1936 elections.

#### *The Commonwealth Plan*

Not to be outdone by Sinclair, who had not only deserted the socialist party but had also taken a majority of its members with him, Norman Thomas, the head of the socialist "Militants" and Paul Porter, secretary of the L.I.D., have put forward their own blue-print of Utopia, the Commonwealth Plan. It is, to be sure, more realistic in its approach to the political problem and in its details than the other Utopian documents. But it suffers from the same defects.

More significant than the plan itself, which anyone with pen, paper, and a vivid imagination could outline in a few hours, were the statements of these socialist leaders about it. The plan is not visionary or Utopian, asserted Porter, because the United States is ripe for socialism. "The exceptional support Upton Sinclair has been obtaining for his EPIC—*naïve though both he and the plan are*—emphasizes the importance of stating a genuine socialist program as a unity which can be widely comprehended."

Without doubt, the United States is ripe for socialism, *so far as its objective economic development is concerned*. What delays the coming of socialism is not the lack of carefully worked out schemes of socialist reconstruction (these can easily be elaborated after the seizure of power by the working class), but the absence of the most elementary means for overthrowing the capitalist masters of America. These are, first and foremost, a class conscious proletariat and a strong Marxian revolutionary party, deeply rooted in the masses. A step towards this goal has been taken in the formation of the new Workers party. But, without these indispensable prerequisites, the most perfect paper plan cannot hasten the arrival of socialism by a single minute. Certainly, not all the naïveté on this score is confined to Upton Sinclair.

Norman Thomas' variations on the same theme exhibit an equally appalling childishness. "The Sinclair victory and a number of related events," he said, "is at once encouraging and discouraging. It is enormously encouraging because people in California have waked up to the fact that they must have certain changes. *But they are trying to accomplish them with one man rather than with a revolutionary party*. That is a blow to socialism and it is brought about by the desire of the American people for short cuts. We offer an entire plan, rather than one man's ability, to obtain a socialist program and prevent Fascism." (My emphasis.—J.M.)

A ludicrous business! Thomas chides the American people for chasing after Sinclair's short cut to socialism—and then offers them a short cut of his own, a bigger and better plan for the nation as a whole. But Sinclair cannot be beaten at this game. He later raised Thomas and took the crackpot by announcing an EPIC Planet, "End Poverty in Civilization." Thomas asserts that Sinclair's EPIC must fail because it is not a party, but a one-man, enterprise. But Sinclair was the Democratic party candidate and

polled almost as many votes for Governor as the socialist party did for President at the height of its influence. If the number of mandates secured at the polls is the test of advance towards socialism, Thomas' criticism is simply the sulking of a disappointed suitor of the electorate. His statement that the socialist party is a revolutionary party is an empty phrase. A revolutionary party aims at the overthrow of capitalism, not its reform.

Thus the leaders of the socialist "Militants" reveal themselves to be petty bourgeois Utopians of the same stripe as Sinclair. Apparently, only the lack of a suitable opportunity has so far prevented them from following his course. The heads of the European social democratic parties had at least an acquaintance with the realities of the class struggle through their close connections with the trade unions and parliamentary activities. Their American counterparts have nothing better to offer the working class at this critical stage of its political education than an outline of Utopia in competition with half a dozen other panaceas. And some erstwhile revolutionists see in such people the leaders of the future revolutionary party in the United States!

The Utopian crusade is a heterogeneous, confused movement, led by the radical petty bourgeoisie but including the unemployed and large sections of the workers in its ranks. To describe it as Fascist or social-Fascist, as the Stalinists sometimes do, is nonsense. The Utopians direct their attacks against the big bourgeoisie, not against the working class.

The radical section of the middle class has always been the leader of the American working class in its political struggles. The proletariat has yet to appear upon the political arena as an independent agent. Two facts will suffice to prove this point: the predominant influence of the farmers in all the major political contests since the Civil War and the absence of any working class party in this country equivalent to the English Labour or European socialist parties.

The progressive political rôle played by petty bourgeois radicalism during the upswing of American capitalism is at an end. The conditions of capitalist decline forbid another extended period of reforms and concessions but provide instead the preconditions for class conflicts of unprecedented dimensions. Such movements as the Utopians can imitate but cannot carry through an attack upon monopoly capital. At most, they may give a stimulus to the politically backward working class, propelling its most advanced sections farther along the road to independent political action.

A turning point is at hand in American history. The working class is beginning to awaken from its long slumber. It has already tested its strength in severe industrial conflicts. These labor struggles must soon thrust themselves into the political arena. If the workers find a party that will speak clearly and decisively in their own behalf, the political relations between the two classes will quickly be reversed. The workers will become the leaders, and not the followers, of the lower middle class. The history of the forthcoming period will be shaped in no small measure by the ability of the new party to formulate and voice these working class demands; knit together an alliance with the most radical sections of the petty bourgeoisie; and influence events in a revolutionary direction.

This can be done only by pursuing an independent working class policy in respect to the petty bourgeois parties, not by clinging to their tails and mimicking their confusions à la Norman Thomas.

The danger of Fascism will arise not from the Utopian movement but from its failure. The Fascists will win over the demoralized lower middle classes only if the vanguard of the working class proves itself incapable of taking up the struggle against the masters of monopoly capital and convincing the petty bourgeoisie that its only salvation lies in overthrowing their exploiters and establishing a workers' republic in the United States.

John MARSHALL.

# Marxism: Science or Method?

A Critical Approach to *Towards the Understanding of Karl Marx* by Sidney Hook

## I

**T**OWARDS THE *Understanding of Karl Marx*, is the first serious attempt, by an American Marxist, to answer analytically questions about Marxism which thinking proletarians and middle class people have been constantly asking. It is distinguished from texts of the usual orthodox variety by its effort to reach the core of Marxism, not through quotation, but through independent critical analysis. Comrade Hook has sought to explore and extract the essence of the method Marx used to solve economic, political, philosophical and cultural problems, for he thinks this method is, in essence, more important than any of Marx's particular conclusions, with which one can disagree without impairing Marxism.

Such a startlingly novel approach has aroused suspicion even among our own comrades. The Stalinists, without even attempting to understand what Hook was trying to do, immediately launched charges of blasphemy at his head and issued a bull excommunicating him. One good reason, nevertheless, for this suspicion is the tradition. We accept and live in the tradition; Hook does not. If we want him to accept the tradition, we will have to prove it to him. What of it, if Marx said so? Marx made mistakes. The real problem, he urges, is to determine the viewpoint of Marx, the spirit in which he investigated problems. In effect, therefore, he leaves the impression that, Marx or no Marx, if the tradition is inconsistent with the facts as Hook interprets them, then it deserves to be chucked overboard. It is this feeling that he is quite ready to slough the entire body of Marxism, if necessary, in order to retain its spirit, which is largely responsible for our unhappy feeling. But the suspicion unfortunately finds confirmation in the fact that Hook does throw overboard many long-cherished conclusions of Marxism. If the doctrines discarded had been minor matters, the suspicion would lose its force, but Hook attacks central Marxian principles: Marxism is degraded from the high position of a science to that merely of a method; histori-

cal materialism is limited only to class societies; Engels and Lenin are sharply separated from Marx on the theory of knowledge; truth is asserted to have no class basis; and even the labor theory of value, a corner-stone of Marxism, is repudiated.

Thus Hook, who feels himself the living flame of Marxism, has thrown a challenge at orthodox Marxism. He demands that we re-orient our approach from that of passive acceptance of a tradition to that of active defense. Criticism of Hook, therefore, becomes no simple task. We cannot quote Marx, Engels, Lenin or Trotsky to him. For critical purposes, therefore, we will have to hold fast to a central distinction: (a) What did Marx actually say, and (b) Is what he says true? We make this distinction for two reasons: In the first place, Hook often insists that Marx meant certain things rather than others; and upon the point of what Marx meant often hinges the entire force of Hook's argument; in the second, where Hook states the Marxian position correctly, he often argues against it; and here the second question becomes important: Is Marx right?

## II

As a critical spirit entering the domain of the faithful believer, comrade Hook finds it necessary to issue a preliminary warning. Those who unguardedly accept all of Marx, Engels, Lenin, and Trotsky ought to know that a distinction exists between *method* and *conclusions* which cannot magically be waved away. The conclusions of science constantly undergo changes; the method by which science approximates to the truth remains.\* This distinction, as applied to Marxism, adds Hook, does not involve a separation between method and conclusions. "To distinguish between

\*We ourselves do not accept this undialectical approach. M. R. Cohen—and here Hook seems to follow this thinker—thinks of scientific method as unchanging. But a proper dialectical approach would recog-

nize not only a transformation of conclusions, but the conclusions themselves as ultimately transforming the method. This problem will be dealt with in another issue of THE NEW INTERNATIONAL.

Marx's method and his results is *not* to separate the two any more than to distinguish between the essence of scientific method and the scientific findings of any particular day—which are sure to be faulty and incomplete—is to deny any organic connection between them" (p. 6). Why, then, the distinction? Is it not because Hook may want to dissociate certain conclusions of Marx or any of his followers without implicating the method of Marx? Distinction without separation would not allow this. On another page, we find a passage which confirms our belief that this is exactly his intention. On page 5, Hook says, "Just as it is possible to dissociate the Hegelian method from the Hegelian system (as Marx and Engels repeatedly insist), so it is possible to dissociate the Marxian method from any specific set of conclusions, or any particular political tactic advocated in its name." Hook states here very plainly that he meant his distinction not merely to *distinguish* but also to *separate*.

Still a problem remains for Hook, which he does not even attempt to solve, perhaps because it does not exist for him. Does he assume no limit to the possibility of separating conclusions from method? Neither Marxists (assuming they are not scientists) nor scientists (assuming they are not Marxists) would be satisfied with such a possibility. For Marxists, in particular, it would be disastrous. Imagine retaining Marx's method, and possibly rejecting the law of the accumulation of capital, the dictatorship of the proletariat, and the conclusion that a socialist society will do away with all the contradictions of capitalism. We must admit, therefore, that Hook is justified in asserting an organic connection between method and conclusions. In certain cases, it cannot be assumed, for even a moment, that the making of this distinction implies a separation, since the denial of a conclusion may mean the denial of the method, or the denial of the method, a denial of these conclusions. But which of the numerous conclusions of Marx involve this organic relationship, and how to establish the truth of their organic unity are questions which are answered only indirectly by Hook.\*

The answer to the above problem, nevertheless, grows out of a more fundamental one: whether it can be said that method is always method, and conclusion, conclusion? Hook—without any specific statement in answer to this question—seems to take the attitude that the method of Marx is always one thing, his conclusions another; that method, in other words, is always method, and conclusion, always conclusion. Nor does he attempt to define either. He seems to assume their meaning to be self-evident. Instead he devotes a chapter to the dialectic method, which apparently for him is the method of Marx as distinct from his conclusions. Here he declares that the dialectic (p. 74) "is a method of dealing with what is both constant and variable in every situation. It is the logic of movement, power, growth, and action". No one, of course, will disagree with Hook for saying that Marx uses the dialectic as his method of approach to reality; but this hardly helps to resolve the question, which we can now put more concretely: whether the dialectic is not itself a conclusion, and, at least for Marx, to be tested by the very conclusions which he derives by its means? The principle of the class struggle, for example, first discovered and stated by the bourgeoisie, was raised by Marx, after detailed investigation, to the position of a fundamental historical law. Yet this conclusion becomes the method by which he finds insight into the nature of the Second Republic of France. As Engels remarks, "It provides Marx with the key to the understanding of the Second Republic of France." But Engels' additional comment is illuminating as to how this method, this "key", to understanding history, as well as the Second Republic, is itself tested by the conclusions derived by means of it. "The 18th Brumaire," continued Engels, "served Marx to test and to prove this law. Now, after the lapse of thirty-three years, we have to admit that the proof has stood the test of time."

It seems, therefore, evident—and the single example should, in itself, be conclusive—that Marx and Engels made no such sharp distinction between method and conclusion as Hook seems to imply. For them, method was conclusion, and conclusion method; and only under specified conditions, were principles considered as one or the other. The precise conditions, when this is so, cannot be discussed here. But one thing of importance does stand

out. We cannot, on the above analysis, accept any longer the formulation of the question we asked Hook: what conclusions are inevitably involved with Marx's method, or, conversely, what method is involved in accepting certain of Marx's conclusion. This formulation was made on the basis of Hook's sharp distinction between method and conclusions, which has been shown not to be Marx's and Engels'. Yet the question has significance even as badly formulated. There is no doubt that revision of Marxism—in Lenin's meaning of the word—will occur; and certainly certain ideas of Marxism will be further delimited, clarified, or even possibly discarded in the future; and this, without, in any way, affecting fundamentals. There is, therefore, a need for reformulating the question so as to retain this fundamentally correct idea. The question, it seems to us, should really be: what criterion does Marxism employ to alter its doctrines?

### III

Hook's insistence that Marxism is purely a method makes him unwilling to admit that it is a science. In fact, he offers the subtitle of *Capital*, as one of four reasons for saying this. Marx, Hook thinks, could not consider his economics a science because he criticized bourgeois economics from the viewpoint of the proletariat. To write from the point of view of this class, was implicitly to use value judgments as a focal point for analysis; and so his economics could only be a *class* economics, not one which scientifically describes and predicts social development. "It cannot be too strongly insisted upon that Marx did not conceive *Das Kapital* to be a deductive exposition of an *objective natural system of political economy* [my italics. R. G.] but a critical analysis—sociological and historical—of a system which considered itself as objective. Its sub-title is a *critique der politischen Oekonomie*. Criticism demands a standpoint, a position. Marx's standpoint was the standpoint of the class conscious proletariat of Western Europe. His position implied that a system of economics at basis was always a *class* economics. An implicit value judgment becomes one of the abscissæ in terms of which its analytic equations are written." Hook's argument that a *class* economics can not be a scientific economics may possibly be true; but this is hardly how Marx himself viewed his economics. (We have here carefully excluded Engels for the reason that Hook accuses him of giving Marx a characteristic twist.)

The reader may have noticed a certain expression, underlined in the citation from Hook, to the effect that Marx did not consider his economics to be a deductive exposition of an objective system of political economy. We quote, therefore, the following extract from Marx's second preface to *Capital*. "My standpoint," he says, "*from which the evolution of the economic formation of society is viewed as a process of natural history* [my italics. R.G.] can less than any other make the individual responsible for relations whose creature he socially remains, however much he may subjectively raise himself above them." It is not the latter part of this sentence which interests us, but that part which declares that Marx viewed the economic development of society as a process of natural history; in other words, the economic development of society is viewed in exactly the same way as an astronomer views the history of the planetary system, as a *process of natural history*. Marx apparently considered the truth of his economics so little a question of a subjective class bias, that he adds: "Every opinion based on *scientific criticism* [my italics. R.G.] I welcome." Obviously such scientific criticism can come from any class. If it were scientific, Marx would welcome it. While the above citation can be twisted cleverly, if one wills, the next cannot. Marx, in the same preface, quotes approvingly the interpretation of his point of view made by a Russian critic in the *European Messenger* in May 1872. If he had felt that the critic was not expressing his point of view, he would have criticized him sharply in the same preface, or, at least, corrected his distortions. This is what the critic says: "Marx only troubles himself about one thing: to show, by rigid scientific investigation, the necessity of successive determinate orders of social conditions, and to establish, as impartially as possible, the facts that serve him for fundamental starting points. For this, it is quite enough, if he proves, at the same time, both the necessity of the present order of things and the necessity of another order into which the first must *inevitably* pass." (My italics. R.G.)

The second reason Hook gives for considering Marxism not a

\*Such an answer as he indirectly will be discussed at another time. furnishes to these questions.

science is this quotation from Marx: "that political economy can remain a science only so long as the class struggle is latent or manifests itself only in isolated or sporadic phenomena". And he adds that Engels never properly commented upon it so far as he knows. In showing that Marx's meaning is entirely different from Hook's interpretation, we will vindicate Engels from what must be declared to be a very unjust accusation.

In making this statement, Marx certainly did not mean that political economy can never be scientific while the class struggle is sharp and well-defined. What he meant was that the bourgeoisie could be scientific economists only while the class struggle between themselves and the proletariat remained latent or broke out sporadically. This scientific period occurred while the bourgeoisie were struggling for power. As soon as they conquered power, or rather power was handed over to them, and the class struggle within the newly established order itself became a day-to-day reality, then they turned from science to "apologetic". The following quotation which shortly succeeds Hook's in Marx's preface, makes this irrefutably clear. "In France and England the bourgeoisie had conquered power. Thenceforth the class struggle, practically as well as theoretically, took on more and more outspoken and threatening forms." Marx means here that the proletariat now began to turn against its former ally in the struggle against feudalism. To continue, "It was thenceforth, no longer a question whether this theorem or that was true [my italics. R.G.] but whether it was useful to capital or harmful, expedient or inexpedient, politically dangerous or not. In place of disinterested inquirers, there were hired prize-fighters; in place of genuine scientific research, the bad conscience and the evil intent of apologetic." Generalizing from the particular cases of France and England, what Marx meant to say is sufficiently plain. It is his intention expressly to point out (1) that the truth or falsity of a "theorem" is not dependent upon a class attitude, but (2) that class attitudes facilitate vitally or obstruct catastrophically scientific research into the truth or falsity of any theorem. The bourgeoisie's fear of the proletariat turned them away from truth-seeking to "apologetic".

Science, therefore, for Marx could not mean, as Hook claims,\* something different from what is ordinarily meant by it. For Marx, his economics was science, in the ordinary sense of the word; and its laws were the laws of society viewed as a process of natural history. As further proof, we need only quote from Engel's *Anti-Dühring*, which Marx himself helped to write. I translate from the original edition published in Leipzig in 1878.

"Political economy, in the broadest sense, is the science of the laws which govern the production and exchange of the material means of subsistence in human society. . . . The conditions under which men produce and exchange, change from country to country, and in every country from generation to generation. Political economy, thus cannot be the same for all countries and historical epochs. . . . Political economy, therefore, is essentially an historical science. It concerns itself with an historical, that is, a perpetually changing stuff; it, at first, investigates the particular laws of each peculiar stage of the development of production and exchange; and it is only at the close of this investigation that the few, altogether universal laws applying to all production and all exchange can be posited. . . . Political economy, as the science of the conditions and forms under which different human societies have produced, exchanged, and distributed their products—political economy, in this extended sense, is yet to be created. What we possess so far, is limited almost exclusively to the genesis and development of the capitalist modes of production: it begins with the analysis [*Kritik*] of the remnants of the feudal forms of production and exchange, shows the necessity of their replacement by capitalist modes of production and their corresponding forms of exchange from the positive side, that is, from the side, according to which they promote the common aims of society; and concludes with the socialistic analysis [*Kritik*] of the capitalist modes of production, that is, with the presentation of their laws from the negative side, by showing that the modes of production, by their peculiar development, are driven to the point where they make their own existence impossible [den Punkt zutreibt, wo sie sich selbst unmöglich macht]." (pp. 121 ff.)

\* What Marx meant by science on the observable tendencies of is not what is meant by the word today, but criticism based social development." (p. 67.)

Notice that both Marx and Engels here seem to think that, at least, for capitalism, they have formulated the laws both of its genesis and development. It is certainly not a criticism of tendentious social development.\* Moreover these laws have the fatal effect of driving capitalism to a point where it makes its existence impossible. In other words, these laws act like all laws. They have ascertainable effects which can be computed and accounted for by these laws. The fact that this economics favors the proletariat in its conclusions rather than the bourgeoisie, is not something which followed from Marx's own class desires or preferences, but from the simple fact that concrete investigation led inevitably to such conclusions. And because these conclusions favored the proletariat, it was inevitable that they should be fought tooth and nail by the bourgeoisie. For the same reason, it was inevitable that the proletariat would espouse Marxism. It is, therefore, the antagonism between the two classes, and the persistent refusal of the bourgeoisie to accept Marxism for sufficiently well-known class reasons, which has made it a class science, and not because it has been—so to speak—manufactured to suit the values and growing desires of the class conscious proletariat. That certain sciences, like physics, chemistry, and biology, have been class sciences, that is, sciences, particularly espoused, identified with, and developed by one class: the bourgeoisie, and savagely attacked, its investigators imprisoned, excommunicated, and sometimes killed by another class, the feudal landowners, especially represented by the Church, because these sciences helped the former in its struggle against feudalism, and almost destroyed the latter, is still illustrated in such relatively backward countries as Mexico where the Catholic Church is very strong. The fact, therefore, that a particular class, the proletariat, espouses Marxism, because its conclusions favor that class, is no reason for saying that it is incompatible with its being a science.

There is a third reason for Hook's opinion that Marxian economics is not a science. Hook admits that the two general tests of a science are its ability to predict and—if possible—to control events. "Ultimately the validity of scientific method depends upon its power to predict, and wherever possible, to control the succession of natural phenomena" (p. 6). Yet he is unwilling to declare Marxian economics a science. It must, therefore, be because it is incapable of responding to these tests. Thus the question is: Is Marxism incapable of either?

Before going on to answer this question—the answer to which, after so much historical experience, should be obvious to everyone—it is necessary to emphasize one fact: that a science is still a science, even though it is incapable of controlling the succession of events. Even if it is *only* able to predict, it is a science. Astronomy is an instance of a very exact science which exercises—so far as I know—no control over the heavenly bodies. Marxism, therefore, if it were capable of prediction, would still have title to the name of science even if it were unable to control the succession of social events.

One other distinction ought to be mentioned here. Not all prediction need necessarily be quantitative, or specific as to time. There is no doubt that this ability is highly desirable, but the lack of it does not sufficiently affect the status of a science as to exclude it from the domain of the sciences as a fully qualified citizen. The reasons may be various. First, the laws themselves may be qualitative; secondly, the facts necessary to fill in specific unknowns of a quantitative law may be lacking. This is certainly one great trouble of Marxists today. Essential statistical material or other data is often kept hidden away in archives by capitalist governments for good and sufficient reasons of their own. (I say this, without, in any way, implying that such knowledge would necessarily transform qualitative into quantitative laws. But it might help considerably in making predictions more definite as to time than they are today.) Thirdly, it might be due to the relative infrequency of occurrence of certain events. Frequent repetition

\*I have especially avoided asking myself what Hook could possibly mean by "criticism based on the observable tendencies of social development." But if it means the analysis of society as an objective natural system of political economy, then it contradicts his other conception of Marxian economics as a criticism of theoretical economic systems which consider themselves objective. A search, throughout his book, for equivalent descriptive expressions which might throw light upon his meaning has yielded me nothing.

often makes possible the determination, within a very narrow margin of error, of the time it takes for a certain act to be performed, or when a particular reaction or event will take place. In truth, if it were maintained that a science, to be a science, must be capable of exact quantitative prediction, then the biological sciences would be in a very bad way. No biological laws, even in the field of genetics, are capable of more than very broad approximations towards exact prediction of the date of any occurrence.\*

Turning, then, to the essential question of prediction, is Marxian economics capable of prediction? No one who has read the *Communist Manifesto*, the *Eighteenth Brumaire*, *Capital*, or Lenin's *Imperialism*—to cite a few examples—can have any doubt of it. What is amazing about Marxism is how it has been able to predict so much. If we apply Marxism to a specific time, to America from 1933 on, we can see for ourselves how predictive Marxism can really be. It is valuable here to compare the predictions of New Dealers with ours. The New Dealers declared that the New Deal would renovate the entire American economic structure. It would bring planfulness into economic chaos. The workers would once more have large full dinner pails and silver coins jingling in their pockets; the farmers, profitable farms. Unemployment would practically disappear. In short, the New Deal promised us again the America of 1927-8-and-9 and better. Marxists, on the other hand, declared that the large manufacturers and financiers would constantly gain at the expense of the small. The Darrow report verified this. Greater concentration of wealth and consolidation of industry would result. The recent report on incomes of private individuals and large corporations, and the constantly occurring mergers verify this. The middle classes and lower bourgeoisie would suffer considerable losses. The same report on incomes shows exactly this. The working class would suffer a permanent reduction of income amounting to almost 60%; and there could be no significant reduction of unemployment. Analysis of the income of the working class from 1928 to today proves the former, the A. F. of L. report the latter. In short, they declared that there would be no more economic planfulness in 1933 and 1934, than in 1932. This comparison, therefore, of the predictive worth of New Deal and Marxian economics, illuminatingly reveals the difference between science and demagogic magic—the science of Marxian economics, and the demagogic magic of the New Deal.

The objection which might be raised that Marxian economics is no science because it makes mistakes in prediction or cannot predict everything, can not be taken seriously. Such an objection would be ruinous to the reputation and standing of even such a science as physics. As early as 1870, it would have been necessary to declare Newtonian physics unscientific because it could not predict everything. In such realms as astronomy where it was supposed to have almost absolute predictive certainty, it continually failed to predict or explain the deviations in the movements of the planet Mercury. In truth, such an objection would demand of a science that it be infallible. Yet that is, at least, by implication the objection raised by Hook. "What Marx is really offering is a philosophy of political economy based upon all of the important observable facts and suggestive of a method of fundamentally transforming the existing order. His theory of political economy cannot be used as a guide to play the market or make safe investments any more than a treatise on the fundamental causes of war can be used as a manual for military operations on the field of battle" (p. 192).

In the first place, the analogy is false and misleading. There is nothing of practical or theoretical significance for military operations in a treatise on the causes of war, but there would be if it were a treatise on the laws of military strategy. Would Hook so glibly assert that the latter can not be a guide to military action? Has Marxian economics as little connection with the actual economic practices of capitalism as a treatise on the fundamental causes of war with actual military operations? Can he actually say it offers no explanation of the operations of the stock market and investments? If he believes this, it is no wonder that he thinks

\*We even include such trivial approximations to exactness as the time of birth of a baby, which certainly occurs often enough—one every minute in the U.S.—to make relative ex-

actness possible. But even here the physician can not approximate very closely the time of birth from the moment of impregnation.

Marxism is merely method. Simply to ask these questions is to expose the absurdity of his position.

In the second place, Marxian economics is actually used for the purpose of playing the stock market or making safe investments. In the case of one comrade, whose name for obvious reasons it is impossible to give here, I can assert definitely that he used his knowledge of Marxian economics for just this purpose. He invested the money of the large manufacturing company which employs him where that money was safest; he bought foreign money on the exchange in anticipation of a rise or a fall; and he made suggestions to restrict or expand production in terms of a Marxian analysis of prospective developments. To give instances of the adequacy of Marxian economics, this comrade predicted, with its aid, the bank holiday of March 1933, and withdrew his firm's money from the bank just a few days before the holiday was declared. He anticipated the U. S. going off the gold standard, and bought foreign currency with U. S. money before the latter, after the official notice, slumped on the international exchange.\* But suppose it were true that Marxism could not be used for such trivial purposes, would it, therefore, be no longer a science? Are these the criteria of an economic science? Is it therefore reduced to a *philosophy*? Again this is to ask of a science that it be able to explain and predict everything.

At this point Hook will introduce his last, and, for him, his most telling objection. No set of doctrines can be a science, where consciousness, man's activity, plays an important rôle. Man's consciousness must always act as an unsolvable unknown in the social equation, since it makes a difference to the future which cannot be determined beforehand. Consciousness as the unsolvable unknown is, in fact, the basic reason for Hook saying that Marxism is "neither a science nor a myth, but a realistic method of action" (p. 114). And after all, there seems to be force to this objection. So many Marxists, caricaturing Marxism, have assumed that human action makes no difference to social consequences. They have disregarded this important fact because they have been overwhelmingly impressed with the other equally important fact that Marxism defines a system of laws binding upon the social order.

The strange thing is, of course, that both are irrefutably true. Marxism does define a system of laws which cannot be overcome, within the present order, by any class. The law of the accumulation of capital is the iron law of capitalism. Neither the existence of unions nor the establishment of Fascism prevents that law from affecting all established classes. The existence of unions does not affect the inevitable fall in the rate of profit; it often enables workers to get a greater percentage of the surplus value. It is in fact because the law functions so inevitably that the capitalist class finds itself compelled, in its effort to maintain the falling rate of profit, to attempt to eradicate permanently the existence of working class organization. And it is precisely for the same reason that the proletariat, to protect itself from the increasingly adverse affects of this law, ultimately seeks the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat as its only way out.

Does this deny consciousness? Does this mean that mind plays no part in the struggle for power? Of course not. It is the conscious desire of the capitalist class to overcome the affects of this law which makes it inevitably seek its only solution through Fascism and through war. It is the conscious desire of the proletariat, to escape forever the inexorable consequences of this law, which makes it seek its solution through the dictatorship of the proletariat.

But still consciousness has limits. The existence of consciousness by itself can no more affect the flow of objective events than Archimedes' wish for a lever to move the earth can move it. Even where we are able to predict, as in astronomy, and the sequence of events may be well known for years in advance, nothing we might do can affect that sequence. It is from such sciences that we get a humiliating sense of the inexorability of natural law and its consequences. But in other fields, where a measure of control is vouchsafed, in society, for instance, certain consequences may be temporarily delayed, the process slowed down, even though the end

\*That Marxian economics is able to predict the sequence of economic happenings for relatively short stretches of time, should not be taken to mean that it can predict the movement of stocks up and down from day to day.

is inevitable. For example, the capitalist class, in its efforts to retain power, tries every means at its disposal to overcome the effects of the law of accumulation. But to no avail. Everywhere it turns, it sees its rate of profit grow smaller, its productive base narrow down; more and more unemployment; and the subsistence level of society, as a whole, sink lower and lower. Does it desire these consequences? Let us say subjectively not. But neither consciousness of these facts nor all its efforts to overcome them alters the inevitability of these consequences within the framework of capitalism. Marxism gives a perfectly consistent explanation of these facts. But will capitalism accept it? No! It cannot, because this explanation involves consequences even more tragic for it. Therefore, these inevitable affects of capitalist development remain for it tragic mysteries, the secret work of malevolent forces.

The limits, therefore, within which consciousness can make a difference are very definitely set off by objective economic circumstances. But if an economics is really a science, it can objectively determine not only the confines within which a given consciousness must express itself, but also the possibility of the success of such expression. Marxism has that scientific character. It is able to define the limits, possibilities, and determinate results of conscious action for all classes. It is able to explain why the bourgeoisie, whatever it does, is unable to overcome the contradictions of the social order over which it rules. Why, too, it must refuse to accept Marxism. This same theory explains, also, why the proletariat must inevitably turn to it as the theoretical lever with which to overthrow capitalism in order to gain its freedom. Consciousness, therefore, can only be a historical unknown in societies where no social science exists, for, if no understanding exists of the limiting historical environment within which men must act, no actions of men or their effects can be foretold.

We have now reached a point where we can answer the other question: whether Marxism makes it possible for the proletariat to control events. If we consider merely the experience which comes to us out of the past of the proletariat, who can doubt it? On this score, Hook is in agreement. Unfortunately, he asserts and denies this at the same time. On his assumption that Marxism is a realistic method of social action, men's actions and their effects on history can be previously determined and afterwards controlled. But by his conviction that consciousness makes a difference which can not be determined beforehand, he denies that men can control historical events, since consciousness, men's actions, are the one thing which can not be accounted for in advance.

Hook's dilemma is rooted in a theory—implicit with him—that prediction of outcome is less certain where control is possible. Where this is true, every situation develops a complex of real alternatives, none of which can be ruled out by an orthodox Marxist gesture. In truth, he seems the neurotic victim of his theory. Everywhere he looks, the historical horizon looms with dark, foreboding possibilities; everywhere he goes, gaunt, hungry, blind possibilities grope dangerously for him. But the truth is the exact opposite. Where control is possible, prediction, for human beings, becomes more certain.

Rubin GOTESKY.

## The Socialists' Errors in Spain

[Continued from page 139] understanding whatever of events.

Using the organizational weakness of the C. P. as an excuse, the socialist leaders in many localities refused to allow a communist party representative on the Revolutionary Committee. The socialist leaders, in their sectarianism, wanted to know nothing of the thoughts of the masses which, in the last analysis, they were only interested in using as cannon-fodder. This truth became quite evident from the very outset. In times of peace and slight risks, the Stalinist party placed itself, or claimed to place itself, at the head of the movement; but when the day arrived to stake everything on the trump card of revolution, the communist party became the tail of the socialist party, without any initiative of its own, and entirely devoid of revolutionary decision, surprising everyone by its attitude, not least of all its own membership. The masses in their enthusiasm asked that someone, any organization at all,

should place itself in the leadership of the movement, that it lead them into the fight, for there had never been a better opportunity of achieving victory. But there was no revolutionary party to lead the working class and the movement was run into the ground. The masses strained at their bonds and their leaders feared they might get out of hand. The combativity of the Spanish workers was much greater than was the initiative of their organizations. The Spanish proletariat has showed itself to be one of the best prepared working class of the world, but all of its organizations have treated it like an infant, belittling its impulsive spontaneity, its combativity, class consciousness and initiative. They have always judged it to be a mass that struggled only when forced to do so, a mass that could be easily led and easily restrained, with the understanding that it would follow blindly wherever it was led. Revolutionary reality has given the lie to all this. In truth, the leaders have fallen short of the stature of the masses. The Spanish proletariat has come of age, it is ready for decisive actions while its leaders fall into senility and infantilism.

There is no doubt whatsoever that the workers had an abundance of armament hidden away in many different places. But as soon as the movement was recognized as lost (and this was evident from the first day), the location of the arms deposits were revealed at once. There is considerable evidence that the information leading to these discoveries came from socialist leaders themselves. No sooner was the material transferred to the workers' neighborhoods for distribution among the militants, than the police came rushing to the scene, surprising the workers in the act of arming themselves or in time to frustrate the distribution. Rats and tale-bearers appeared as thickly as crows after a slaughter. The misleaders did not wish to suffer the consequences of the defeat. Rather than arm the people or prepare an orderly retreat, they preferred to turn their services over to the disposal of the police.

In no section of Spain did the peasants support the general strike. It was a movement of the proletariat, the urban middle class and the industrial bourgeoisie. How is this defection of the peasantry to be explained when the democratic bourgeois revolution in Spain has not as yet been accomplished? First, by the inherent anarchic mentality of the peasants who never see beyond the immediate horizon; secondly, because the propaganda of the Agrarians and Popular Actionists [C.E.D.A., the bloc led by Gil Robles] against the movement, when it was in preparation. Wherever they had any influence throughout the countryside, the reactionaries represented the revolt to be a separatist movement of Basque and Catalan bourgeois nationalists with socialist support, a movement tending to destroy the unity and economic stability of the fatherland; thirdly, as a result of the incurable lack of understanding by the socialists of the problem of nationalities. So long as they occupied government posts, the socialists denied the very existence of this problem only to take it up afterwards as a means of agitation for the purpose of regaining their lost influence; fourthly, due to the influence that the anarchists have always enjoyed in the Spanish countryside, and which they regained as a result of the agricultural workers' strike provoked by the socialists on June 6, 1934 for the purpose of embarrassing the Samper government and which failed miserably because of the lack of either economic objectives or decent loyal leadership.

Thus the members of the Federation of Toilers of the Soil, a mass organization composed of hundreds of thousands of agricultural laborers, peasants and semi-proletarians, did not join the general strike, nor did they do anything to aid the industrial regions that had rebelled against the central government and the national bourgeoisie of Spain proper.

TRANSLATED BY RUSSELL L. BLACKWELL

OVIEDO, November 1934.

Juan ARENILLOS.

WE GO to press just as the news comes that Gregory Zinoviev, former chairman of the Communist International, and Leo Kamenev, former chairman of the Political Bureau of the Communist party of the Soviet Union, together with a number of other leaders of the former "Leningrad Opposition" of 1925-1927, have been arrested for alleged complicity in a White Guard plot to overthrow the Soviet Union. In the next issue of our review, we shall print an extensive comment on the significance of the arrests and the events with which they are connected.

# The Struggle for the Saar District

ONLY A FEW days are left until the vote is cast on January 13, 1935. To an increasing extent the question of the Saar is moving steadily towards the focus of everybody's attention; greater and greater grow the efforts on both sides, in the anti-Fascist camp as well as and particularly in the camp of the Hitler régime.

In the Reich, the question of the Saar has been shoved to the center of Fascist propaganda. Tremendous sums are being put at the disposal of the Saar battle. The question of the Saar has become a first-class prestige question for Hitler Germany and Hitler Germany is determined to win a victory in the Saar by any available means. The Saar vote has been selected as a demonstration of confidence, and it thereby becomes an important political weapon for Hitler. Fascism urgently requires a victory which will appreciably raise its standing and hamper or terminate the development of forces hostile to Fascism. By means of a terrorized "free and secret vote", it is to be shown that the Saar population is voluntarily and yearningly submitting to the Hitler régime and that it would rather live under a Fascist system than under one that is democratic. Inner-politically, the Fascist clique is promising itself to regain confidence already lost. From the standpoint of foreign politics, a Fascist victory in the Saar likewise would serve as proof that Hitler has the confidence of the whole people and would thus contribute to raising the international political importance of the Third Reich. If we mention in addition only the significance of the Saar district as a military deployment district and as a door through which to invade the West, then it will be clear to all that were the Saar vote to result favorably for him, Hitler will truly have gained an exceedingly great victory.

With an investigation into the significance of the outcome of the vote for Hitler, however, the question is at the same time amply clarified as to what would be the significance of a vote cast *against Hitler Germany?*

This problem may be briefly summarized as follows: A decision for the *status quo* would be an extremely heavy blow against the Fascist dictatorship (not against the German alone!) and a truly significant victory of the anti-Fascist forces. The lies about "the people's confidence in the Führer" would be thoroughly exploded before the widest world public; the standing of the Fascist dictatorship would surely decline in Germany and thereby the anti-Fascist struggle would gain in impetus. The dissatisfaction and the demoralization inside the Fascist ranks themselves would

grow, but still more would grow the courage and reliance of all anti-Fascists and especially of the revolutionary forces.

Both camps, Fascism and anti-Fascism, face each other in the sharpest and bitterest struggle. It is a decisive battle for a decisive victory. *Such* struggles are not fought through in a day, a victory thus fought for is not gained in a day. The decisive day is not merely January 13, 1935—the decision has depended upon every hour and every day for the past months and in the coming weeks.

Rarely in the history of parliamentary decisions and votes has it been more plainly apparent that the most important decisions occur in the *extra-parliamentary mass struggles*. Even a vote must be *fought for*, and it requires the highest intensification of one's own and one's allies forces.

And above all: the mass struggle is no battle of words, no parade with brass bands, no paper war. Its alpha and omega, its very heart is the genuine activity of the masses, actions, beginning with the smallest up to the largest, which must be carried through uninterruptedly, day in and day out, boldly.

This A B C of the struggle has been excellently grasped by Fascism. It too knows that the decision of January 13 must be prepared for and won beforehand. And these preparations are being made by Fascism in its own way—it bears down on the whole country with its terror. A far-reaching organizational network has been created, touching every street and reaching into every home. Almost every single resident is thus put under Fascist control and under Fascist pressure.

The task of the workers, as well as of all anti-Fascist organizations, confronted with this situation, is quite clear and unambiguous: to break the Fascist terror at all costs. Against the Fascist terror, the anti-Fascist mass struggle! This is not the least of the great importance of the present struggle in the Saar: to give the entire world, the labor movement of all countries, an example of how the audacious activity of the working class and the proletarian mass struggle put a thorough end to all Fascist terroristic attempts, exterminated them without mercy and swept them away. To the labor organizations of the Saar has fallen the task of being an exemplary picture for the entire world proletariat in the destruction of the Fascist danger. The thing is for the labor movement of the Saar district finally to understand this. They are taking upon themselves the heavy burden of guilt who neglect or even sabotage the active mass struggle of the Saar proletariat, who want to replace it with hopes in the League of

Nations or by nice parades and still nicer speeches. The requirements of the struggle, however, are: Away with theatrical speeches of bureaucratic windbags—up with the active mass struggle of the united front! This necessity is urgent—for the sake of the lives of the working class. The goal deserves the very greatest efforts. An anti-Fascist victory in the Saar is simultaneously a victory of the German and the whole international labor movement.

It is imperative to keep constantly in mind that the Saar question is at the same time an international question, the Saar struggle an international struggle. Although this fact is hardly disputed, no consequences are drawn from it. To be sure, the appeals and declarations of the Internationals, for example, are very fine, but practically they are less than unimportant. And apart from these platonic declarations of sympathy by the Internationals, there is no noticeable real, active international support given to the Saar struggle. And yet it is the Saar proletariat which is today at an internationally advanced post, it has every claim to the greatest possible international aid and support. Against the miserable and disintegrating horse-trading of the League of Nations, the Saar working class must be firmly supported at the rear by international solidarity. The enemies of the Saar proletariat are numerous and strong; they are imperialism, nationalism, Fascism. But the fact that the solidarity of the world proletariat and of proletarian internationalism are stronger still—that can and must be shown to the entire world today in the Saar struggle. Should this be the case, the strength of the Saar working class—and of the world proletariat—would be vastly augmented; if not, the Second and the Third International would greatly increase their already enormous guilt. Tirelessly they are digging their own graves.

It is a bad and stupid consolation to think that against the millions upon millions spent by the Fascists for propaganda, the anti-Fascist organizations cannot do their job. Stronger than the Propaganda Ministry of Göbbels, in any case, is international solidarity. Fascist corruption is strong only when faced with passivity and helplessness; it is weak and inadequate when faced with proletarian mass activity. Both together—the active united front and international solidarity—will assure the achievement of the *status quo* and moreover be an important step in the fight for a socialist Europe. It is the highest time to cast aside the hopes placed in the secret diplomacy of the League of Nations and to launch the proletarian united front for active struggle.

SAARBRUECKEN, November 1934. O-R.

## A Letter to the Independent Labour Party

TO THE Independent Labour Party,  
London.

Dear Comrades:

You have made the proposal to convene an international conference in order to establish a fighting united front on an international scale. The Communist party of France has consented in its October letter, under the condition that the so-called "Trotskyist" organizations should not be allowed

in. This restriction is decidedly astonishing: on the one hand, the sections of the Comintern give assurances on every occasion that the organizations of the Bolshevik-Leninists ("Trotskyists") are of "trifling size". On the other hand, the most important section of the Comintern makes its participation in a world congress dependent upon the admittance or non-admittance of "extremely insignificant group-

ings". Every conscious worker must say to himself: the "trifling size" of the Bolshevik-Leninists is not at all neglected by the Stalinist organizations. It is perhaps possible that their qualities may not be neglected.

The reason which the French section of the Comintern alleges for its attitude is that we Bolshevik-Leninists are "proved enemies" of the U.S.S.R. This reason can

only provoke the greatest amazement. The Comintern conducts negotiations with the leaders of the Second International, Vandervelde and Fritz Adler, and the French Stalinists pursue the united front with Jouhaux. Vandervelde has always been the opponent of the October revolution, the official attorney of the terrorists who had prepared the *attentats* upon Lenin and Trotsky. Jouhaux draws no fundamental distinction between the Soviet government and the capitalist governments. In practise, he is always ready to support his government against the workers' state. All these facts in no way prevent the Stalinists—at least after their latest turn and till a new command—from realizing or aspiring towards the united front with these proved enemies of the Soviet dictatorship. As we see, the only argument brought forward by the Stalinists against sitting down at one table with the Bolshevik-Leninists, cannot be maintained. But it must be added, and this is the decisive point: far from being proved or unproved enemies of the Soviet state, we are and remain its most resolute defenders. Both our international organizations and our sections have always excluded from their ranks those elements who were unable to discern beneath the nationally limited and conservative Soviet bureaucracy the basis of a workers' state which can and should support the international revolution and thus evolve triumphantly to the construction of the socialist society.

Our real crime—and the only one—consists in that we always make a distinction and we teach the workers to make a distinction between the bureaucracy—which, feeding on the defeats of the world proletariat, has become a monstrously baleful ulcer on the Soviet state—and the workers' state itself.

The bureaucracy of the Comintern has not only constantly refused to permit of such a distinction, but it has never allowed a single one of its members in the last eleven years to express the slightest supposition, for even a moment, that the Soviet bureaucracy can ever make any kind of mistake. Our mistake is also that, although we always defend the U.S.S.R. as a workers' state, we will have no part of the Stalinist dogma of the infallibility of the Soviet bureaucracy, which has freed itself from the control of the masses in order to subject itself to an entirely personal régime. We do not intend to dwell upon the additionally undisputable fact that all that has been progressive in the activity of the Soviet bureaucracy (industrialization, collectivization, five-year plan), was only borrowed from the ideas and programs put forth by the Bolshevik-Leninists, even if it borrowed them belatedly and distorted them bureaucratically. Every conscious worker can verify this by comparing the documents and files, year by year and month by month.

But as it is a matter of the international conference, then it is above all important to underline the fact that the Comintern and its sections require the principle of the infallibility of the Soviet leaders only in order the better to assert their own infallibility. You know just as well as we that internal criticism no longer exists in the Stalinist organizations. The most unexpected turns are inaugurated without the slightest precedent discussion, often at telegraphic or telephonic command. The abandonment of the theory of the "third period" and social-Fascism, as well as the turn to the united front, are indisputably facts of

progress. But every conscious worker can and should say to himself that tomorrow these reforms can just as unexpectedly be replaced by opposite reforms, since the bureaucracy, freed from control from below, listens only to the commands from above and lays claim to infallibility.

The Marxian method of the united front assumes that every party has the right to express its critical opinion about the conduct of its ally. This is, moreover, the only way to educate oneself in action and to guarantee the progress of the consciousness of the masses. The Stalinists have made the united front dependent upon neglecting mutual criticism, thus neglecting the most elementary teachings of Lenin and Marx. Furthermore, it is this means alone that they possess in order to preserve the myth of their infallibility and right here is where one must look for the explanation of their hatred and their fear of the "extremely insignificant" "Trotskyists", whom they do not neglect at all.

For eleven years now we have followed the whole policy of the Comintern, step by step. Be it a question of the alleged "workers' and peasants'" parties in the East, of the Chinese revolution and the subjugation of the proletariat to the bourgeois party of the Kuo Min Tang, of the Anglo-Russian Committee, of the behavior of the Polish Communist party which supported the *coup d'état* of Pilsudski in 1926, of the policy of the "third period" with its sinister adventurism, of the theory and practise of social-Fascism which ended with the German catastrophe, of the same policy in Austria and in Spain where it condemned the sections of the Comintern to impotence, finally of the present policy of the Communist party of France which resists the creation of the workers' militia—in all these decisive questions and in many other important cases we always put forward the Marxian policy against the Stalinist policy and foretold the ruinous consequences of the latter. Let every conscious worker compare our proposals and our forecasts with the course of events and he will know on whose side lies the truth. It is especially this state of affairs that makes it unacceptable and impossible for the Stalinist sections to confront us before an international proletarian forum. Just as soon as crevices appear in the wall of infallibility, the whole bureaucratic apparatus will fall to pieces. That is why the Stalinists, as they are today, must at any cost avoid contact with an organization which knows from the bottom up their history, their mistakes and even their crimes.

But however much it is possible to understand their attitude from a psychological standpoint, it remains quite inadmissible politically. The meaning of the united front consists in that one does not demand of one's allies that they acknowledge in advance ideas and evaluations which they do not share. If the "Trotskyists" are proved enemies of the U.S.S.R., then this fact will inevitably appear in the course of the joint action, and we will thus fall into discredit in the eyes of the proletarian vanguard. Were the Stalinists really to believe what they put forward, then they would congratulate themselves on the fact that we are to appear at their side at the international forum of the working class. But no, they are far from adopting this road, and they are right—not as a revolutionary organization but as a conservative bureaucracy: an open and free discussion would not leave

a trace of the spell of their infallibility.

The international vanguard of the proletariat has the greatest interest in forming a clear opinion on this question, on which depends to a large degree the development of the world revolution. By the fact that the Comintern apparatus abuses the prestige of the Soviet state, which we are the first to recognize and support, and has at its service practically inexhaustible material means, it blocks the road to any revolutionary education, which can be begun only by means of free criticism and in an atmosphere of loyalty.

We would look in vain for such loyalty in the conduct of the Stalinists, even after their latest turn. Only yesterday they still asserted that the Socialist party of France is the twin brother of Fascism and that the I.L.P. is Left social-Fascism. Today they denounce our French brothers who have joined the S.F.I.O. in order to work there loyally on the basis of their principles and their methods, as destroyers of the socialist party. "Fraternally" they warn Léon Blum and Paul Faure that our alleged manoeuvres threaten the unity of the S.P. and at the same time they denounce us in the official publications of the Comintern as lackeys of Léon Blum, and thereby also of Doumergue, and so forth.

We believe that also those organizations which are entirely hostile to the ideas of the Bolshevik-Leninists have the highest duty to reject the arrogance of the Stalinists which consists in putting the working class world before the revolver of ultimata and in poisoning the atmosphere of the united front by means of calumny and despicable intrigue, instead of purifying it by means of free criticism and loyal collaboration.

At all times, and especially now after the enormous defeats, the proletarian vanguard needs revolutionary clarity. We are far from the idea of disputing the right of the Stalinists, even the bureaucrats, to take part in the joint actions, but they must cease to regard themselves as an *ex officio* nobility looking down upon the proletarian plebs. And above all they must employ arguments and not insults. In the name of all our sections, whose number is increasing and whose influence is growing in almost every country in the world, we declare ourselves ready to confront the Stalinists and their charges before any national and international forum of the proletariat.

The International Secretariat,  
International Communist League  
(BOLSHEVIK-LENINISTS)

GENEVA, November 1934

THE attention of all readers interested in the publication of Marxian literature is called to the plan now being worked out by the Pioneer Bookshop. This bookshop is now in charge of the sale of all literature of the Workers party, as well as of all other publishers, including Kerr and International. It has in mind the publication of works by Marx, Engels, Lenin and Trotsky, as well as new contributions to working class literature by American Marxists. Its aim is to start the publication of a series of pamphlets and books of interest and importance to the labor and revolutionary movements. Communications are requested from all interested persons and groups. They should be sent to the manager of the Pioneer Bookshop, at 102 East 11th Street, New York, N. Y. He will reply, giving more details about the publication plan.

# The Evolution of the Belgian Labor Party

WITHOUT wanting to start the history from the beginning, let us call to mind that Belgium is one of the countries in which reformism, the distortion grafted on Marxism, has flourished the most. Without fear of contradiction, one may say that the P. O. B. [*Parti Ouvrier Belge*: Belgian Labor party] has, at the present time as much as ever, ninety percent of the real influence over the working class. Until quite recently, this crushing influence paralyzed the latter, prevented it from reacting to the incessant attacks of the reaction, which was reducing the working and living conditions of the toiling masses to an unbelievable level.

Having at its disposal a disciplined and cohesive bureaucratic staff in all its parts, the P.O.B. rules over the trade unions, the coöperatives, the mutual aid societies and imposes upon them its reformist policy, which is, as is known, so injurious as to provoke a writhing paralysis in the workers' muscles.

Then is the reformist fortress invulnerable? Is it hopeless to think that one can succeed in introducing the active germs of the class struggle? These questions have always held the attention of revolutionists who felt that at all costs it was necessary to arrive at a point where a positive answer was possible, if they were to break the chains which keep the labor movement in a state of quasi-immobility on the road to socialism. Patient efforts had been expended at a previous period, efforts which Stalinism, triumphing in the Third International, eventually destroyed. . . .

Reformism remained upright, holding in its hands the reins of the labor movement, and facing a skeleton-like Stalinist party that is sadly ineffective. Reformism could say, and it believed: "I am younger than ever!" And the problem of problems seemed to remain unanswered, the problem of finding at any price the means of freeing the tongue of the workers and investing them with an audacious will to take an effective stand against the injurious effects of reformist policy.

But as it goes its way, history does not disdain to play a pretty trick, sometimes, on political currents! That very degeneration of the Third International, about which the reformists are so jubilant, and which tenacious efforts could neither avert nor attenuate, that very degeneration repelled from Stalinism growing strata of workers, especially young workers, who for want of better, remained in the ranks of the old party, in the lap of the old social democratic mamma. We are happy to record the steady rise of the Young Socialist Guard, for example, which from a few thousand in 1926 rose to 6,000 in 1929, to 9,500 in 1931, to 13,900 in 1932 and to 25,000 dues-paying members in 1933! We told ourselves that this fresh and youthful current would soon find itself hampered by reformism and that it would launch some furious assaults upon the latter. This rise took place, when the dates are compared, parallel to the accentuation and aggravation of the crisis of the régime. And in July 1932, when the workers, anguished by encroaching misery, came out into the streets with their wives and children, behind red tatters nailed to sticks, when a ground-swell broke over the Hainault, sweeping away reformism, repression

and all other barriers, then proletarian blood flowed on the pavements!

The youth became conscious of themselves, felt—if they did not understand thoroughly—that it was necessary to act quickly and act well so that events like those of 1932 should no longer end as they did.

It is at this time that the *Action Socialiste* was born, at first composed only of a few thinking minds. But contrary to the examples of the past, there was in this journal of the new Left wing something different from mere clamoring, something beside a platonic love for the Russian revolution which obligates one to nothing. In the calm and reflected style of the articles one felt a well-determined will to help the working class, without disdain, without thinking themselves supernatural supermen just because of it. And the *Action Socialiste* gained increased sympathy. And that was one of the most comforting facts! The P.O.B., till then a monolithic bloc, thus revealed fissures towards the Left, fissures which showed that events are the main aid of the Marxian current. And only limited and dried-out minds, like those of the Stalinists, can continue gargling words and pasting the same label on the P.O.B. as five or ten years ago. For there is still something else. At the Christmas 1933 congress, the P.O.B. had on its agenda the question of "discipline within the party" and the "Labor Plan", conceived and presented by de Man, a well-known old figure, to be sure, but a de Man driven out of Germany by triumphant Fascism and who brought back in his hastily strapped trunks the firm conviction, among other things, that traditional reformism had outlived itself, that it was necessary to put up against Fascism something else than the stereotyped old phrase: "In time of crisis, there is nothing to do but wait for better days. . . ." And the congress ended with a unanimously voted resolution by which the P.O.B. demanded the power on the programmatic basis of the Labor Plan, by which it promises the masses a way out of their material and moral sufferings.

Our position towards the Left wing and the Young Socialist Guard, and all the powers, was that it was necessary, by means of mass struggle which in our epoch is practically the only way left open, to bring the P.O.B. to power, for the realization of its Plan program, giving this struggle and this program the maximum of revolutionary character. Months passed, during which indispensable concrete material was brought to light. The defeat of the Verviers strike by the open treachery of the textile union bureaucracy, and numerous other facts, aligned the Right and Left wings against each other. The trade union bureaucrats demanded the head of the *Action Socialiste*. They put ultimata to the General Council of the P.O.B., stating that they would disaffiliate the unions from the party unless the editorial board of the *Action Socialiste* were thrown out of its ranks. All kinds of pressure were exerted, open and covert. And the Left wing, sure of its base, demanded a congress and declared that it would submit to no decision unless it was taken in accordance with all the democratic regulations, with consultation of the membership, and after free discussions.

All of us then felt that a mute struggle was dividing the general staff of the P.O.B., that two sides were aligned against each other. On the one side, the trade union bureaucrats, frightened by the echos awakened by the *Action Socialiste* in the mass trade unions and furiously determined then and there to stifle this voice. On the other side, the Plan men, with Vandervelde, who could not, because of the Plan policy itself, weaken themselves politically as against the bourgeoisie by cutting off their Left wing which links them to the masses, who feared to upset the internal equilibrium of their party in favor of the Right wing. The consultation of the membership, imperfect though it was, brought them all to agreement! In certain towns, the trade union bureaucrats were assisted to a more serious reflection by the fact that the fists of angry workers were brandished under their noses! Local majorities pronounced themselves against the resolution of the General Council. And—significant fact—the Thiers federation, which is two-thirds agricultural, voted unanimously for the position of Buset, the right-hand man of de Man, who rejected the split. At the last minute, the Borinage district, famous for its heroic traditions, voted in bloc for the Left wing.

The past is the past! The hundred percent reformist Right wing which once ruled as uncontested master, has before it a Left wing which is kept on its feet by the effects of the crisis of the régime and its consequences, and a Center which is animated, in its fashion, by the desire to avert Fascism. We put the question: "Are these not two of the surest fulcrums which can allow the lever of the class struggle to set the Belgian labor movement in motion?" The answer will be forthcoming. E. DUMA.

BRUSSELS, November 1934.

## The S.L.P.

OUR attention has been called to an editorial in the official organ of the Socialist Labor party, *The Weekly People*, of Sept. 29, 1934. One of its paragraphs deserves the widest dissemination. It is the most compact and conclusive statement of S.L.P. policy that has ever come to our notice. Defending itself from the charge of lack of influence, the editorial observes that

"The S.L.P. is getting a hearing today among the workers as it never had before, but—and this a magazine-story-making professor would never be able to appreciate—the greater the influence of the S.L.P. becomes, the less that influence will be noticeable by the seeker for sensational and saleable copy, because the greater will grow the conspiracy of silence with which every publicity agency surrounds the S.L.P., and also because in the same degree that the workers grasp the significance of S.L.P. propaganda will they withdraw into the silence of study and contemplation, until finally the S.L.P. principles and tactics have been thoroughly and widely understood as to find expression in Revolutionary Industrial Organization and revolutionary action. And, then, won't the Simpsons who have been expatiating on the S.L.P.'s lack of influence experience the shock of their lives!"

# Archives of the Revolution

DOCUMENTS OF THE HISTORY AND THEORY OF THE WORKING CLASS MOVEMENT

## A Letter by Karl Radek to Klara Zetkin

DEAR Comrade Zetkin:

It is only now that I have read the stenographic report of the plenary session of the Executive Committee of the Communist International. I learn to my great astonishment that in your speech you too have attacked me by declaring that I have broken with my old friends Thalheimer and Brandler. As to who has broken with whom—will be dealt with further along in this letter. Here I should like only to call to your attention that the breach is an objective one. Whereas you were able to attack me, I was unable to reply either to you or to Ernst Meyer, who upbraided me for belonging to the "unprincipled bloc". The praesidium of the congress rejected the proposal to give me the floor. As a characterization of the situation let me call your attention to the fact that the praesidium's letter of reply to me was signed by the highly respectable comrade Pepper. The creature of the Austrian War Department Press Service, who forbids me the floor with the concurrence of comrade Smeral—this very glaringly characterizes the question of the objective significance of the rupture. I hope that, although you were a member of the praesidium and sat in it, the infamy occurred behind your back, without your knowledge. Without this conviction I would find it impossible to write you this letter. I hope too that you will not receive this letter either as an interference in the affairs of the International, which, as you know, has just been forbidden me again after twenty-five years of party work, or as an attempt at faction formation. I wish only to attempt an explanation as to why I regard what Brandler, Thalheimer, and even more so, Ernst Meyer are doing, as a break with our common past, and why I cannot go along with it.

The central question of the development of the party is the question of the splitting of the party. Everybody who sees things politically and does not allow himself to be blinded by hatred, knows that Ruth Fischer, Maslow, Urbahns, Scholem represent a whole stratum of communist workers. In the first post-war years this stratum represented revolutionary impatience. We had to combat it, in order to make clear to the communist workers that a hopeless minority is in no position to capture power. But we did not want to separate ourselves from this mass, for it represented the hope of our class. Levi did not understand this. Against my warnings, he organized the Heidelberg congress, and then broke with the party on the occasion of the March Action, which was a result of the same moods. Now he is in the social democracy. When the hopes for an immediate victory disappeared, the moods of the Left wing workers expressed themselves in under-rating the importance of our struggle on the basis of daily problems. There arose the Berlin and Hamburg opposition. We had to combat it, for without a sustained struggle for daily demands we would not have been able to win the majority of the working class; in general we would not have been able to preserve the mass character of

*Karl Radek's letter to Klara Zetkin is published here for the first time in any language. Although the German copy in our possession bears no date, it was obviously written in Moscow towards the very end of the year 1926. On December 13, 1926, Klara Zetkin delivered a speech at the seventh plenum of the enlarged Executive Committee of the Communist International, in which she joined in the attack upon the Opposition Bloc (Trotsky-Zinoviev), and offered a veiled defense of Brandler and Thalheimer. Her political and personal sympathies for the latter were quite well known throughout the International, even after 1923, when they both fell into disfavor with the ruling group in Moscow. As the letter indicates, her speech attacked Radek for splitting with Brandler and Thalheimer because of his solidarity with the Russian Opposition. Radek's reply, which gives the fundamental reasons why every revolutionist was duty-bound to support the position of the Bolshevik-Leninists, is cogent to this day, despite the subsequent capitulation of Radek himself.—ED.*

our party without these struggles. But we should not have broken with the Left wingers, for they were the constant warning against an over-simplification of the party, against its conversion into a reformist party of daily struggle. That is why, on my own initiative, I insisted at the Leipzig convention of the party that Ruth Fischer should be put on the Central Committee; the latter rejected the proposal. I wanted the Left wing representatives in the Central Committee so that they might constitute a counterbalance against the pure-and-simple daily politicians, against the comrades who did not understand the difference between a U.S.P.D. and a communist party. I wanted the voice of warning heard in the Central Committee. You did not. You saw only the surface, the immaturity in the ranks of the Left wing. When, after the Leipzig convention, I attended a meeting of the Berlin party functionaries and party committee, I declared to the praesidium of the Comintern that the party is at the brink of an abyss unless it succeeds, by means of joint work, in bridging the gulf between us and the Left. The stenogram of this speech of mine lies before me.

Later that summer, when Brandler, Thalheimer, Pieck, Guralsky and other members of the Central Committee wrote a letter to Zinoviev, Bukharin and me to demand the removal of Ruth Fischer and Maslow, and Brandler declared in a private letter to me that the patching-up will no longer work, I told him that I cannot go along with such insanity. He climbed down. But there was no collaboration with the Left wing. And thus it came about that after the defeat in Saxony we stood at the edge of the precipice. The retreat of the party on October 21, 1923 was, after all the mistakes made, a necessary one. I saw that as soon as I arrived in Dresden on the 22nd. But the cleavage of the party, the lack of any collaboration with the Left wing, transformed everything into panic

and catastrophe. As the representative of the Executive, I had to decide in this situation if I was to separate myself from Brandler and let him alone bear the responsibility for the defeat. As to how I judged the Central Committee, you know very well from my reports to the Executive. These reports also lie before me now. I sought to keep Brandler not out of friendship, although I value him highly and as a man he stands close to me, but because I was convinced that the Left wing comrades alone are not in a position to lead the party and to maintain its contact with broad masses. A communist party without the Left wing workers is threatened with the danger of becoming a U.S.P.D. A communist party without the collaboration of people like Brandler, Thalheimer, Walcher and the thousands of the old Spartakus people courts the danger of becoming a K.A.P.D.\*

My position in January 1924 was the continuation of the line of the struggle against the splitting of the communist party into two polar wings, one representing the present, the struggle against daily need, and the other the tomorrow, the struggle for communism. I was aware that the line that I defended was the continuation of the line of Lenin, who likewise fought against both Right and Left deviations, and who saw the future of the communist party in the fusion of the best elements of both generations. The struggle inside the Russian party which blazed up at the same time led to my disappearance into the wolves' glen. The Left wing by itself got the leadership into its hands, and what I feared, happened. They pursued a policy which alienated them from the masses. Our work in the trade unions was destroyed. The national and provincial elections showed the decline of our influence. Inside the party, the Left wing leadership sought to drive the most tested comrades of the *Spartakusbund* out of the party or else to gag them. I fought against it as best I could, and for me it was a question once more of the defense of the unity of the party: not a unity of tagrag and bobtail, but of elements whose separation meant the death of the party. Then the leaf was turned. At first, the Executive tried by means of its Open Letter to correct the mistakes of the Left wing Central Committee, which I considered correct, for it only repeated what I warned against at the fifth congress of the Comintern and the thirteenth convention of the Russian party.

Then came the sharpening of the struggles in the Russian party, the solidarization of the Left opposition in Germany with the Russian, and I saw the coming split in Germany. In the spring of 1926 I wrote an article "The German Communist Party in

\*The U.S.P.D. (*Unabhängige Sozialistische Partei Deutschland*: Independent Socialist party of Germany) was a Centrist organization which finally joined the Third International; the K.A.P.D. (*Kommunistische Arbeiter Partei Deutschland*: Communist Labor party of Germany) was an ultra-Leftist organization which finally quit the Third International—ED.

Danger", which I wanted to publish in *Pravda*. Brandler and Thalheimer, to whom I showed the article, agreed with me that to kick out the Left wingers would be a blow at the party. Only, they believed I was overestimating the danger and they advised urgently against my making the article public. Since they promised at the same time to counsel our friends in Germany to declare against the expulsions and for the unity of the party, I refrained from publishing the article. What I was afraid of has now occurred. Short-sighted bureaucrats console themselves that it is not a split, but only a little chip that has fallen off. You, however, comrade Zetkin, with your great political experience, must understand what it means when the spiritual leaders of the Left wing and a few hundred active workers are expelled from the party, and the spiritual leadership of the party finds itself in the hands of two former Zionists and Heinz Neumann. From a human point of view I understand that my old friends have not forgotten the persecutions at the hands of the Maslow-Ruth Fischer Central Committee. But politics mustn't be composed of malicious joy. Meyer and Becker are going through with this policy unconditionally. Böttcher and probably Walcher and other friends of ours are not in agreement with it. They are demanding a concentration in the party from Thälmann to Brandler. This means nothing but the declaration: if we are amnestied for our fight for a correct policy, inclusive of party democracy, we are prepared to renounce party democracy, and instead of the policy of solving party antagonisms by fighting them out ideologically, we shall pursue the policy of bludgeoning down all party conflicts. What has been said suffices to illuminate the question of whether or not I have remained true to myself.

You will reply to me: Yes, but the German Left opposition conducted a counter-revolutionary agitation against Soviet Russia which we cannot tolerate in our ranks. I am in complete agreement with you that whoever disseminates the assertion among the working masses that Soviet Russia has ceased to be the state of the proletarian dictatorship, whoever fails to summon the workers to defend Soviet Russia—has nothing to look for in our ranks; he must be fought as a foe of the proletarian revolution. Korsch and his similars did this, and I stand for his expulsion. The comrades around Urbahns did not do this. I read their declarations of principles and the first three issues of their organ: they solidarized themselves with the Russian opposition, but I do not believe, comrade Zetkin, that you are for the expulsion of the Russian opposition, although I know that you do not share our views. Then why are you for the expulsion of comrades who have solidarized themselves with the Russian opposition? If our views are incompatible with the principles of the Comintern, in the elaboration of which we participated to a greater extent than even comrades Pepper, Volk, Heinz Neumann, Martinov, Shubin and the other present-day luminaries of the Comintern, then of course you must demand the expulsion of Trotsky, Zinoviev, Kamenev, Piatakov and my humble person. You do not, and you will not. Then why are you in agreement with the expulsion of the German comrades who are in solidarity with us?

With regard to your opinions about the Russian opposition, I must confess that I

read your speech and article with the deepest amazement. Surely I don't need to discuss with you about our "lack of faith in socialism" and about all the other petty, agitational shibboleths that have been coined. We have been too close to each other as humans for you to believe in that. You may be of the opinion that we overestimate the dangers imperilling Soviet Russia—that is the subject for dispute, although you who, together with Rosa, lived through the tragedy of the German social democracy, must have understood us better than many Russian comrades when we say: Beware even of the germs of the danger.

On the anniversary of the death of Karl and Rosa I spoke at a meeting of the Moscow Youth League, at which you too were scheduled to speak. I prepared for my speech, thumbed through old articles by Rosa, and it is my deep conviction that we Left Radicals in Germany awakened not too early but too late, fought against the dangers not too sharply but too weakly. You will probably say indignantly, how it is possible for me to compare the Russian Bolsheviks with the German social democracy. I do not compare them, although they did not sing *Deutschland, Deutschland über alles* at the cradle of the German social democracy. The Bolsheviks have a past which arms them better against the dangers of degeneration than the German social democracy. That is why I am also deeply convinced that the Russian party opposition, in spite of all the difficulties, will gain the ear of the large majority of the Russian party, and that the majority of our old leaders, who now regard us as pessimists, will be convinced of the correctness of our views. I am convinced that the lessons of reality will force them to turn the front much more sharply against the growth of the capitalist elements in Russia than they have done up to now, that in order to carry on the struggle against bourgeois democracy in Russia they will have to establish democracy in the communist party so as to mobilize the working masses against bureaucratism. The assurance that the party, under the coercion of facts, will conduct the struggle against the dangers, does not release us from the obligation of pointing out these dangers today. The more emphatically we do it, the more speedily will the party take the right position. We must not console ourselves with the thought that the dangers are removed. It is enough to bear in mind that Russia is predominantly a peasant land, that it is surrounded by a capitalist world which encircles Russia not only militarily but also economically, to say to oneself: it is the duty of a revolutionist not to drift along with official optimism, but to be vigilant. He who, like myself, grew up politically in the struggles of Left Radicalism in Germany, in the struggle against the soporific theory of the officialdom, can do nothing else than stand on the side of the Russian opposition.

In 1924, dear comrade Zetkin, you had no argument against this; all the more inexplicable is your indignation today. Can it be that your attitude towards the German Left wing has disarranged your perspective? For my part, I deem it the duty of every communist who holds dear the Russian revolution, to support the Russian opposition. The future of the Russian party, the future of the Russian revolution are, beyond a doubt, the central problem of the Comintern. Even though the correct position in the questions of the Russian party,

does not, by itself, mechanically produce a correct judgment of the vital questions of the brother communist parties, nevertheless, I am convinced, there can be no correct position in the questions of the International, if one does not take a decisive position for those tendencies in the Russian party that seek to arm the party against all the dangers which threaten the proletarian character of the state.

Brandler and Thalheimer who always expressed their solidarity with me in judging the dangers of the lack of internal democracy in the Russian party, underestimate the dangers that threaten the proletarian character of the Russian state from the side of the big peasant and in general the bourgeois elements. The source of their mistake consists in this, that they mechanically compare the wealth of the German big peasant with the Russian. Since the Russian big peasant has not yet attained the level of the Württemberger, they feel they can rock themselves to rest. Nor do they understand the Leninist axiom of the connection between the organizational policy of the party and its general political line. Before the war, we combated the growing bureaucratism of the social democracy in Germany, but not separately from the general policy of the social democracy. It was the result of the growing opportunistic tendencies, and in turn, it enhanced them. The growth of bureaucratic tendencies in Russia is an emanation of the growth of opportunistic tendencies. That is why it is so dangerous. When Brandler and Thalheimer declare that they are against the bureaucratic tendencies in the party but agree with its economic policy, it means that they want to fight against a foe whose social significance they do not understand. Naturally, against a foe whose social roots you do not see, you can conduct only battles in the air. Such a battle bears on its forehead the brand that it is a phrase. Of course, Thalheimer and Brandler may content themselves with this phrase, because they are cut off here from any party life. They need only duck out when the voting occurs in their party cell, and the standpoint is finished. Our party friends in Germany, who must give an accounting of themselves to large party masses, cannot content themselves with this hybrid position. Therefore, demoralized by the position of Brandler and Thalheimer, they must approve everything in Russia today, and so, too, do you, dear comrade Zetkin. Politics has its logic.

Why do I write all this, although I have not corresponded with any comrade in Germany for two years? I know your feeling of responsibility and I heard that you are travelling to the convention. At first I wanted to discuss matters with you thoroughly, but I preferred the written form, which permits me to formulate my thoughts more calmly. Should you want to discuss with me, I am at your disposal. I do not hope to convince you by this letter, but I do hope that it will impel you to reflect on matters all over again. An enormous responsibility rests upon you. You are the link with the past for all of us, the great experience of life. It is long since you have been in Germany. If you look at the party now, not in its large meetings but in its daily work, then, without agreeing with me in everything, you will probably want to reflect on the following thoughts about the situation in the German party:

1. In the period of stabilization, the

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task of the party consists more than ever in connecting the struggle around daily problems with genuine communist propaganda and agitation. In this period the daily elaboration of the revolutionary perspective is a positively vital question. In January 1924, at the fifth congress, it was necessary in the first place to underscore the stabilization. That's what was new. It was necessary to bump the heads of the parties against it, so that they might not break their necks because they ignored the new world-political change. The contrary danger now threatens.

2. Just because we must count upon a period of stabilization in Germany, whose duration cannot be accurately calculated (it may last five years; and then again, ten), just because at the same time a stabilization lasting for years signifies a lasting unemployment which might alienate the Left wing worker elements, the party must do everything to draw them closer and assimilate them. Therefore, an end to the hounding of the Left wingers. We must take a stand for taking them back into the party, just as we insisted on having Jannack and Westermann taken back.

3. The winning over of the social democratic workers is impossible unless our party in Germany carries out that measure of inner democracy which is necessary in order that the uninterrupted catastrophes of the party leadership finally give way to an organic development of the party.

4. The party cannot continue to live without a party program. We can neither win the trade unions nor carry on our agitation without a program. Important as the aid of the International may be in elaborating the program, it must arise out of the intellectual discussions of the currents existing in the Communist party of Germany. For this reason too the spiritual leaders of the Left wing must get back into the party.

5. The future leadership of the party must be democratically set up. To reflect accurately the majority in the party, not to exclude any tendency—these will assure the execution of the convention decisions as well as help imbue the minorities with the spirit of responsibility for the party.

6. Solidarity with the Russian opposition must not constitute grounds for persecuting comrades. The more thoroughly the party understands the dangers that threaten the Russian revolution, the more zealous it will be in defending the October revolution.

7. Only such a policy will truly lay the basis for an end to the factions in the German party, and create that synthesis of the best elements of the *Spartakusbund* and the Left wing about which you spoke at the fifth congress.

Dear comrade Zetkin, if these modest requests of mine are fulfilled, we "old ones" shall once more stand together.

I salute you cordially, and may I be forgiven by my book on the Chinese revolution from which I stole a day in order to write this letter. My new love for the Chinese revolution has not supplanted or lessened the old love for the German.

Karl RADEK.

Moscow, December 1926

## Outlook of Science

THE OUTLOOK OF SCIENCE. By R. L. WORRALL. 192 pp. London. John Bale, Sons and Danielsson, Ltd. 8s 6d.

The war, and the years after, taught the enemies of materialism that the repeated citation of excerpts from the works of Bishop Berkeley, and those of a few other philosophers of varied accomplishment and repute in the sphere of the ghostly and godly, would not serve to stem the rapidly growing influence of the teachers of dialectic materialism. Surprising and annoying as it was to them, the fact remained that the *Treatise Concerning the Principles of Human Knowledge* had ceased to have the ring of authority, the feel of impersonal solidity that it at one time commanded.

In contrast to the growing realization in the mind of the thinking man that "the naive realism of any healthy person"—as Lenin expressed it in *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*—was, in the final analysis, the correct basis upon which to erect a philosophical structure, Berkeley's reiterated admonition to the select faithful that "there is not any other substance than spirit" sounded hollow and philosophically tubercular. The old idealism was routed. The question was: How to restore its essence in a changed form? The alarm went forth and from all directions defenders flocked to the idealist standard, bringing with them new colors, altered patterns and a brightly novel terminology. They came from the schools of divinity—the eternal reserve officers' training corps of idealism—and from the philosophy departments of the lay colleges. Realistic, practical merchants went forth from their materialistic counting-houses to write—in the evenings (enough is enough!)—their compact, leather-bound tracts in defense of a world of spirit. But finally, from the laboratories came the personnel to man the heavy batteries of neo-idealism. Subtle, experienced, men of accomplishment in the world of matter, these men were well qualified to reform the routed forces of idealism and lead a strategic flank attack on conquering materialism. The day of the forthright Berkeley was over. The clever manoeuvre of ambiguity must replace the tactic of head-on assertion.

Worrall has, in *The Outlook of Science*, brilliantly turned the spotlight of materialism into the most secret hiding-places of the disguised neo-idealists and he has brought their occupants to the surface, blinking with surprise and embarrassment. Because, Worrall has, for instance, taken the trouble of searching out the definition which Russell gives to electron and proton, traced it out through pages and books of ambiguous verbosity, he has finally succeeded in arriving at the nub of Russell's philosophy—and puncturing the extended bubble of his "realism".

Russell probably represented the most artful of the idealistic dodgers. If the Bishop of Cloyne said outrightly in 1710 "As to what is said of the absolute existence of unthinking things without any relation to their being perceived, that is to me perfectly unintelligible", in 1927 Bertrand

Russell, with a scientific gleam in his eye, smuggled into his *Analysis of Matter*: "What the physiologist sees when he examines a brain is in the physiologist, not in the brain he is examining."

Action on the part of the neo-idealists started with a rather weak shot, *Science and Human Progress* by that old discoverer of ectoplasm Oliver Lodge. Even his cohorts averted their eyes when Lodge blubbered: "Not only the heavens, but the earth; not only the flowers, mountains, sunsets, but every pebble, every grain of dust, the beautiful structure of every atom, proclaim the glory of the Being who planned and understood it all." Milord Lodge was admittedly the Salvation Army Band of idealism. If not for the fact that Worrall successfully deals in similar style with the more skilled of his opponents one might be tempted to lift an eyebrow at this forceful child-beating. As it is, the criticism of Lodge's "religious ideas under the cloak of 'science'" serves to preface the winning attack on the writings of Jeans, product of the same philosophy. Sir James, who speaks dreamily and pleasantly of innumerable monkeys pounding innumerable typewriters to produce innumerable books, refuses to leave himself open in the manner of his ideological old man. Let Lodge cross himself in public if he will, none of that for Jeans. He prefers to suggest, after a fair-to-middlin' sophisticated argument, that "this brings us very near to those philosophical systems which regard the universe as a thought in the mind of the creator". Worrall however regards no argument as too worthless for refutation. He grabs Jeans by the rear and traces out the argument:

"Neglecting the mountain of absurdities which are involved in the conception of a 'Creator', the question may be asked: if the universe is 'a thought in the mind of the creator', then must not the 'Creator' have a brain to think with?"

But we must cease dallying with the subalterns while the generals wait. After all, those most to be feared are the disguised idealists, the metaphysicians in the scientific garb with the scientific-sounding chatter. Worrall wastes little time pondering the majesty of those he attacks. Rotten reasoning and antiquated philosophy are both putrid whether casually spoken by a high school history teacher or neatly formulated on vellum by Bertrand, Earl Russell.

In a masterly fashion Worrall, using the works of the sage, outlines the essentially idealistic character of Russell's thinking. "Electrons and protons," says the self-styled neo-realist, ". . . are not the stuff of the physical world: they are elaborate logical structures composed of events." This is slightly obscure and the unwary may pass it by as realism. Worrall searches and finds, however, the Earl saying: "As to what the events are that compose the physical world, they are, in the first place, percepts. . . ." And percepts? Why percepts are purely mental! So, to have Worrall summarize:

"Russell plunges into the mire of subjective idealism: electrons are composed of 'events', which are, in the first place, percepts, which are mental phenomena!"

The lion's realistic roar echoes as an idealistic squeak.

Eddington, the astronomer-prestidigitator is the really slippery one though. The Eddingtonian tactic is first to enchant the reader by his playfulness, his refined nonsense, his references to common things and then suddenly to leap to metaphysical obscurity with the reader in an hypnotic condition and holding on tight. Thus the versatile astronomer is not above quoting "Jabberwocky" to illustrate a point.

"The slithy toves

"Did gyre and gimble in the wabes"

serves to demonstrate that "the description of the processes [atomic] must be taken with a grain of salt. The tossing up of the electron is a conventional way of depicting a particular change of state of the atom which cannot really be associated with movements in space as macroscopically conceived. *Something unknown is doing we don't know what. . .*" Worrall comments:

"What is the significance of this playfulness! It is that in the process of play the support which atomic theory gives to materialism is denied. . . . Actually, in presenting its ideas in the form of mathematical formulæ physics gains in exactitude, that is, its theories approximate more closely to objective reality."

Eddington with his disarming nonsense causes one to believe "that it is only numbers which rescue physicists from entire ignorance". This of course is in line with his philosophy which "is a mixture of subjective idealism and agnosticism".

Professor Whitehead, with a confused and difficult terminology all his own, is a more difficult man to corner. As Worrall aptly puts it, he reminds one of that "blind man in a dark room looking for a black cat that isn't there". The fact however that Whitehead considers the material atomic components as *abstractions* is sufficiently damning when it is borne in mind that the great majority of physicists consider these "to be concrete entities existing quite independently of any mental process".

So, in superb logical sequence, R. L. Worrall shows the idealistic nature behind the thought of Lodge, Jeans, Russell, Eddington, Haldane, etc., etc. Nor does he hesitate to draw the inevitable conclusions from his thesis:

"If philosophy is only a question of putting one's thoughts in order, or if philosophy is simply random speculation, then why have such definite, enduring and bitter controversies broken out?

"The answer to this involves the relations between philosophy, religion and science. Religion is a factor of the relation, and religion is the concern of the Church—and the Church is the ally of the State—and the State is the instrument of the ruling class in society. . . ."

In all ages idealism has been the bedmate, if not the exo-skeleton, of religion. Conversely, to quote Bishop Berkeley, "How great a friend *material substance* has been to atheists in all ages were needless to relate."

The scientists, philosophers who are allied with the class holding power, who occupy the well-paid chairs in their universities, who are carefully attended to in their endowed institutions, and whose writings are eagerly accepted by the publishing houses of capitalism cannot be expected to further the ends of materialism: they refuse to undermine the palace in which they live. That task must be accomplished from

the outside. By thoroughly analyzing and criticizing the nature of that philosophy, in all its veiled manifestations, which supports this edifice, R. L. Worrall has written an important and valuable book.

S. L. SOLON.

## Art and Action

ART AND THE LIFE OF ACTION.

With Other Essays. By MAX EASTMAN. 227+iv pp. New York. Alfred A. Knopf. \$2.00.

By and large, Max Eastman's critical work is among the most sensible and illuminating that our time has produced. It is therefore especially disappointing to find that his latest essay is based on conceptions which can be called nothing less than academic and—for all Eastman's devotion to the scientific method, for all his attack on the Hegelian residue in Marxism—essentially idealistic. Further, the political implications which lie beneath its surface are at once naive and dangerous.

So far as *Art and the Life of Action* offers a practical program for the relation of artist and revolutionary party, it is excellent. Eastman believes that art and the party cannot be related organizationally. If the individual artist desires to do an (actual) uniform and become an active revolutionary, that is admirable; but Eastman adjures him not to put on the emotional uniform of party when he sets to his creative task. On the other hand, he bids the party refrain from censorship of art so long as it avoids actual counter-revolution. Eastman himself, in *Artists in Uniform* has amply prove how justified this advice is. He also points—though not with sufficient emphasis—to the danger of art's giving to the party a "sense of something done when nothing has been done". Surely one of the greatest ironies of American Stalinism is the ludicrous disproportion between its elegant façade of novels and its shabby interior of political ineffectuality.

But when simple common sense has agreed to this and we turn to Eastman for a theory that shall be Marxist and free of the gross errors of Stalinism, all his academicism and all his idealism appear. There is, he declares, no revolutionary function for art. Art is self-justified, self-maintaining. Art, by its nature, is pure. True, no work of art can be completely pure, and, true, it is often convenient for the artist to deceive his muse into believing that he is concerned with a passionate purposive activity. But for the consumer of art the attitudes in any given work of art do not matter and art is lovable for itself. The Rockefellers admire Rivera; Lenin enjoyed Turgeniev and Beethoven (and *La Dame aux Camilles*). Art is free of any social function. Its sole end is to *heighten consciousness*: it arrests the "brain's purposive flight while consciousness itself spreads wing".

Eastman, of course, is talking not about art in reality but about some essence of art that he has conceived; he is telling us what art *must be* if that essence is to be perceived. Herein lies his idealism. His academicism lies in his strange and perverse refusal to see what art is *in actual use*, in the experience of people.

Thus, Eastman scorns previous aesthetic speculation because it has been able only to arrive at the following multifarious and

frequently mutually exclusive functional definitions of art:

"Education, recreation, revelation of God, representation of nature, relief from pain, diffusion of pleasure, compensation for reality, integration of reality, propagation of emotion, escape from emotion, embodiment of reason, objectification of will, manifestation of law, liberation from law, organization of attitudes, elevation above attitudes, prophecy, recollection, purification, publicity, propaganda."

For all of these Eastman would substitute the function, "heightening of consciousness". But however mutually contradictory the functions in the list may be, the only fault to be found with any one of them is that it has been offered as the *sole* function of art. *In actual use*, in the experience of people, art has served as all these things and continues to do so. Any fertile and non-academic thought about art, any thought that avoids sterile definitions, must understand that art serves not one but many functions as various needs arise.

Eastman cannot but understand this fact but he hides his understanding under the desire to change it. He does not *want* art to do anything save to heighten consciousness. (He really does not mean consciousness at all but a kind of abstraction of consciousness, a non-intellectual, anti-purposive, half-dream state: awareness divorced from attitudes.) He does not want art to *do* anything to the mind that has any relation to action because he wants science to do everything. Attitudes must be the work of science and he is so jealous of a still Utopian science that he will change the very nature of art to keep it from poaching on science's preserve. All this, it is obvious, is the direct outcome of Eastman's conception of the "social engineer", of revolution and socialism as strictly the work of science.

Art, he declares, has always had a "sanction", that is, a purposive human activity which it subserved and which included it. Magic, religion and craftsmanship were such sanctions. But scientific mass production drove art from the making of objects. (This is certainly questionable.) Science destroyed art's sanctions of magic and religion. Art became independent, pure. But the artist feared and shirked this independence, sought for a new sanction and found it in education. Then science advanced again and took over education. Again sanctionless, the artist looked for a new sanction and found it in social action. But the artist was blind to the fact that social action is the sphere of the social engineer, of science. And so, Eastman declares, the last possibility of a sanction is removed. The alliance with social action is shattered. Art, in effect, ceases to be the mate and helpmate of the social intellect and becomes the girl it keeps in a little apartment near the Elysian Fields, a charming creature, full of the joy of life, but not very intelligent.

In some part it may be that Eastman has got to this position by allowing himself to be provoked by the excesses of the Stalinist critics. And much of what he says must be admitted. There is surely, as he says, the propensity in most intelligent art-consuming people to love art for its own sake, to find delight in experiences that do not confirm their values and desires, despite the canon of Stalinist criticism of which Michael Gold's grossly misinformative squib about Henry James (*Daily Worker*, Oct.

29) is so representative. And the heightening of consciousness is surely the *sine qua non* of art. It is fortunate that someone has again asserted these simplicities, unfortunate that Eastman has bound up his assertion with a confused and dangerous political theory.

For the full purport of Eastman's aesthetic is, as I have tried to indicate, his theory of the revolution made and developed by the social engineer, by science. The implications of this theory do not, perhaps, need to be shown again, but it is interesting to see them appear in a new connection. Eastman makes a sharp dichotomy between the artist and the engineer. They are of different nature and function and must not allow their paths to cross. But considered politically, the social engineer represents power and control; the artist represents the feelings, the desires, the ideas, the reactions—of people. Thus, the rigid separation of art and science which Eastman desires has an obvious political meaning. It means the separation of leadership from masses, of control from democratic will. It means, in short, a bureaucratic tyranny, tempered perhaps, but more likely strengthened, by science.

Thomas COTTON.

## Non-Violence

THE POWER OF NON-VIOLENCE. By RICHARD B. GREGG. 359 pp. Philadelphia. J. P. Lippincott. \$2.50.

This book is an odd mixture of simple-mindedness and sophistication. The style is that of a salesman turned Y.M.C.A. secretary; and yet the references and careful documentation are witness to unusually wide reading in many fields. Mr. Gregg's zeal in gathering a multitude of facts from psychology, history, politics, economics, military science, is exactly matched by his ability to misinterpret them.

Gregg's central thesis is this: Non-violent resistance (what Gandhi calls *Satyagraha*) is a more effective method for bringing about desirable social change in the modern world than violence. Indeed, Gregg goes further, asserting that non-violent resistance is the only effective method, and that every violent method is doomed to failure. Notice—and this is what is unusual about the book—that Gregg's thesis is not a moral one. He is not here primarily interested in maintaining that non-violence is morally preferable to violence, but that non-violence is superior as an instrument to bring about social change. And notice also that he is speaking of non-violent resistance, not of non-resistance, which is quite another matter.

I do not wish at this time to go into the details of Gregg's arguments. They have, indeed, been adequately refuted by others, and most conclusively of all by the lessons of history. I wish, rather, to examine briefly the assumptions or postulates upon which his arguments rest. Underlying the lot of them is the general position of philosophical idealism, expressed in the belief that social and economic institutions are the outward manifestations of men's thoughts and feelings and characters. Thus, Gregg concludes, we must change the thoughts and characters first before a significant change can be made in the institutions; and violence is unable to accomplish this; it can be done only by non-violent resistance, properly understood, and backed by good will.

Opposed to this, of course, is the Marxian contention that it is the institutions, themselves founded upon the productive process, that—on the whole at least—determine the thoughts and feelings and characters of men. The institutions, then, must be altered as the necessary pre-condition for raising the level of these thoughts and feelings and characters. The institutions can be basically altered only by being overthrown; and since (as Gregg himself admits) the institutions are founded on and supported by violence, only a superior and better directed violence can overthrow them.

Gregg further postulates that man is innately good (the Rousseau doctrine) and that the interests of all men are the same and can be understood by them as the same if once they can be led to see "the truth." Violence, he claims, prevents the innate goodness from coming to the surface, is divisive rather than unifying in its effects, and forces men to act as if their interests were diverse, exaggerating and reinforcing the conflicts and thereby keeping men from realizing a community of interest. Non-violence will let the good come forth, and will gradually teach the opponent that there is no real conflict. We are led imperceptibly to the step that Gregg does not openly take: the capitalist and the worker will clasp hands in brotherly truth over the buried illusion of class conflict, and so on and on to the spiritual regeneration of the corporate state.

The healthy contrast of Marxian realism is evident enough: Men are "innately" neither good nor bad. The interests and values they hold to are based upon the objective historical conditions of their lives. Community of interest is possible only when men stand in the same economic and social relations, that is, when they have the same economic and social status. A capitalist can have the same interest as a worker only when he is no longer a capitalist. Thus, once again, the necessary pre-condition of developing the "goodness" of men, of achieving a real community of interest among men, is the overthrow of the system which by its very nature makes such community of interest impossible. Gregg wants to do the job backwards.

Marxists are not worshippers of violence. Above all do they try to guard against the sporadic, meaningless and inevitably self-defeating violence that suffering and resentment are so likely to prompt. There are, moreover, many half-truths in Gregg's book; and it is well always to remember that violence alone will not achieve socialism, that, for the long run, the physiological, psychological, and indeed the moral factors that Gregg stresses are fundamental if we are aiming at a better, a more human world. But Marxists deal with the society that confronts them, not with hopes and dreams. And consequently they will judge the effectiveness of non-violence less by the nobility of Gandhi's sentiments than by the Constitutional Reforms for India, now before the British Parliament, which are the result of twenty years of *Satyagraha*.

John WEST.

## Fontamara

FONTAMARA. By IGNAZIO SILONE. xix+299 pp. New York. Harrison Smith and Robert Haas. \$2.50.

This is a remarkable book. From its

first to its concluding sentence it is aimed against the Fascist régime, its lies, brutalities, and abominations. *Fontamara* is a book of impassioned political propaganda. But in it revolutionary passion attains such heights as to result in a genuinely artistic creation. *Fontamara* itself is merely a poverty-stricken village in one of the most forsaken corners of Southern Italy. In the course of some 200 pages of the book this name becomes the symbol of agricultural Italy, of all its villages and their poverty and their despair and their rebellion.

Silone possesses an intimate knowledge of the Italian peasants. As the author himself tells us, he spent the initial twenty years of his life in *Fontamara*. Gaudiness of style and sugary sentimentality are foreign to him. He is able to see life as it is; he is gifted with the capacity first to generalize what he perceives by means of the Marxian method and then to embody his generalizations in artistic images. He tells his tale through the persons of the peasants, the *cafoni* and the village paupers themselves. Despite the extraordinary difficulty of such a presentation, the author handles it like a true master. This book has chapters of stupendous power.

Has this book been published in the Soviet Union? Has it come to the notice of the publishing houses of the Third International? This book deserves a circulation of many million copies. But whatever may be the attitude of the official bureaucracy towards those works which belong to the genuine revolutionary literature, *Fontamara*—we are certain—will find its way to the masses. It is the duty of every revolutionist to assist in circulating this book.

Leon TROTSKY.

## Two Poets

POEMS. By STEPHEN SPENDER. New York. Random House. \$1.50.

POEMS. By W. H. AUDEN. New York. Random House. \$2.50.

SPENDER

The process of evaluating "culture" goes on. The slightly tarnished literary journals participate: to keep a section of their audience, they must keep abreast of the times, even if only for academic reasons. The Arts, suffering from the overdose of prosperity, are now showing signs of social virility, though the past still weighs them down. Otherwise, why the confusion, the sudden jerks and lightning twists back to *Surréalisme*? After the war, the Era of Schools began! Dadaism, Modernism, Vorticism, Cubism, Imagism: these have now more or less succumbed to the pens of literary historians. And poetry, which has been a dead dog in this country for some years, has with the arrival of Spender and Auden, caused the cultured eyelids to lift a point.

Any important poet writing in the English language cannot help but "spring and feel the influences of the past"—to be at all worth the salt of his pen. The present Mr. Eliot who regales the intellectualized Catholic world and the Church of England with metaphysical pageants, has had a wee bit to say in the moulding of Spender. Spender is an aristocrat of blood and idea, occasionally though the blood clots and his poems, always broad with generalizations and wide concepts, sometimes lack the beauty of intimate feeling which makes for the sensual

quality that high poetry should have. His poems are addressed to Buchmanites, Oxonians, to "classical scholars" "who dream of the ghosts of Greek boys" and it is not accidental that his conceptions of communism should have the mirage of a poetic Utopia about them.

Spender sees the hawk-eyed aristocracy carefully planning their lives: as if the world were "superb of all instinct"—and he dedicates himself to action: "Hands, wings, are found." But soon after you encounter the oft-familiar mood of Mr. Eliot: "After success, your little afternoon success" etc., the past crawling back! Sometimes pity rather than understanding makes him suspect, and his images—like "builds with red hands his heaven" increases the suspicion of churchliness, mythmaking and ignorance. Those who have died in the war "have learnt a strict philosophy of clay". All the brutal images of capitalism find their expression in Spender's sullenness: the unemployed "who stand behind dull cigarettes" "and greet friends with a shrug of the shoulder"—and his participation: "I'm haunted by their emptiness".

He clips his pictures with scissors and sometimes cuts close to the portrait and disembowels his image, though "The speed-lines of Dictators" gives you a focus so sensitive that you almost sense the motion of your own movement in it. In the poem to Van Der Lubbe, he sets his eyes for gleaming, and they neither blench nor blink, with this result: "O staring eyes, search-light disks, Listen at my lips. I am louder than to Swim an inhuman channel, be boy, or climb a town's notorious mast." "I'll throw you these words, I care not which I tear, You must eat my scraps and dance." "Yes, no, yes, no, Shall I tell you what I know? Not to Göring, but, dear movie-tone, I whisper it to you. I laugh because my laughter Is like justice twisted by a howitzer." When the world is too much to bear, Spender retreats: "This century chokes me under roots of night" and "This writing is my only wings away." The young offspring to the inheritance of a rotting system, in war, will have left, "the vivid air signed with their honor"—an epitaph for slightly too judicial a mind, but savagely biting. In writing about beggars he sweeps along momentarily in the majestic flight of Shelley: "No, I shall weave no tracery of pen-ornament to make them birds upon my singing tree" and in the last line of the book "Death to the killers, bringing light to life."

When Spender falls flat—and that is often—he then seems to be writing from the frigid insides of his class, though Proust obtained heroic results in bed, with prose, where reflection and disenchantment gave us *Swann's Way*. Spender, with less groping and less mystery of ideas, and lesser documentation of slogans, stretched as an elastic, will then produce "that clean sharp stroke" "where the axe goes into living wood", as a blurb on the bookjacket declaims.

#### AUDEN

Auden is an intellectual's poet; and one is slightly awed by his psychomantics. He is an obscurantist with the vague and foggy reaches of his poetry lying out on the moors, or drying in the fogged sun. His images and meanings are clouded in the atmosphere of his methods. From the running lines of the ballad, he jumps into an admixture of Imagism for Tea, and thence back to rigid blank verse entrées for

a midnight supper, and finally with the simple radiance of words he crams his overflowing energies and emotions into bald little couplets that result into the hangover of the morning after: like,

"Face that the sun  
"Is supple on  
"May stir but here  
"Is no new year."

Auden will start from any one point, and in the midst of his meanderings wander into the class struggle. Often his wanderings take on the gay pictures of an exercise in the gaiety of his intellect. Perhaps the intention is either vulgar or noble, but one cannot help but feel that he is too often a playful schoolmaster concerned with his versicle muscles. In juxtaposition he places the jingling dunce cap on his own head—to complete an act of clownishness begun by his past teachers. And in England there have been many teachers of daring, though in their mental experiments some have gone to the Anglo-Catholic church through the medium of the esoteric publishing house of Faber and Faber, Ltd.

But to give the impression that this alone is Auden would be unfair to him, for despite himself he is rich with poetry. Though diffused in the brackishness of his technique, his singing sometimes sparkles with wit and irony, and makes us sorry that E. E. Cummings, America's most meritorious clown in poesy had such binding effect on Auden.

Like Spender's farewell to his past, Auden in a ballad says *Allons!* to Baudelaire, to Cocktails, to Maters and Paters, to Lawrence "brought down by smut hounds" and to his profession in torment "destroying intellectuals" and the final lines: "Lecturing on navigation while the ship is going down." Then with the wit of an engraving on a tombstone are the dirge lines: "If we really want to live, we'd better start at once to try; If we don't, it doesn't matter, but we'd better start to die."

This is Auden at his best. The rest of the book is divided into a series of prose poems (bastard literature) with diagrams and imposing titles to help them along: *Journal of an Airman*, including without diagrams a statement purporting to be the second law of thermo-dynamics, being, "self care or minding one's own business". Then there are a series of circles, large and small, with bright reference to their psychological meanings, and also lines of prose and poetry running through their empty spaces, all of which had its place in its time in the eccentric magazine for the gentlemen playboys of literature, viz. *transition*.

The *Dance of Death*, the last poem, a fantastic play in the pattern of symbolism, never attains more than juvenile strength. In the beginning the characters are wearing dressing gowns, their clothes lying before them; a moment later they are in bathing suits and they say: "Boys from France, Join in our dance." Death—capitalism disguised as a dancer—dances, and through the dance the rhymes are running fast in this pitter-patter fashion:

"He's marvelous  
"He's a Greek  
"When I see him  
"My legs go weak."

Death finishes the dance and walks off with their clothes; a basket of uniforms is brought on, and then the chorus:

"But these aren't ours.  
"We've never seen them before.

"Why, they're uniforms.

"This isn't war."

And further:

"One moment sir, the Kellogg pact

"Has outlawed war as a national act."

"Scholarships—not battleships."

Then the audience chips in saying:

"One, two, three four

"The last war was a bosses war.

"Five, six, seven, eight

"Rise and make a workers state."

This is the method; this is the man; this is the poet. One cannot find fault with Auden's purpose, but with the leftist infatuation that cannot allow the head to grow. The circus performs its own function and does not mingle in poetry: let Auden cease clowning!

The fellow travellers of the revolution in verse forms should start by giving us more of their finished products and less of the laboratory smells of their experiments.

Harry ROSKOLENKIER.

## The Press

### POLITICAL RIBALDRY

The radical German émigré weekly, *Europäische Hefte* (No. 33/34, December 6, 1934), published in Prague, remarks editorially:

"A piece of political ribaldry is now making the rounds of the press: The French communists have submitted to the French social democracy a programmatic platform for the organizational fusion of the two parties; after a close examination, however, the social democratic party leadership asserted 'that the communist program does not contain even one single measure filled with the socialist spirit and by that token cannot be characterized as the program of the working class'. Shortly before the organizational union it appears that the French social democracy is the Left wing of French communism. And what makes this joke so frivolous is its seriousness: The assertion of the French social democracy is correct! The organized communists of all countries haven't the slightest idea nowadays of where they are at; whether they are for the 'disintegration of the army' or for the defense of their fatherland', whether they are supposed to fight for parliamentarism or against 'bourgeois democracy', whether they stand at the Right or Left wing of the labor movement—on these points the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs has still made no decision. So that many communists find themselves in the midst of this confusion to the Left of Otto Wels and many to the Right of Léon Blum. That's just the right atmosphere for the organizational union on the basis of a program, as Point I of which we should like to propose: 'Membership in a party is a private affair.'

"The French social democracy is exploiting this, to it, unusual situation of being the guardian of orthodox radicalism with a vengeance, and is proposing as the basis for the unification the program of—1905. And really, of what importance are these last thirty years? Are such trifles as the world war, world revolution, world Fascism, and world decline of the last thirty years, to suffice to justify the toilsome job of renovating the program? A program with which they managed so well in the last

# At Home

THE NEW INTERNATIONAL continues to make its way. Issued from now on by the Workers party of the U. S. (the new party formed in the merger of the Communist League and American Workers party), its growth, swift till now, should be even greater. 4,000 copies are issued now; the immediate goal aimed for is 6,000. It is a realizable and reasonable ambition. THE NEW INTERNATIONAL now is read everywhere; India is now in the list and THE NEW INTERNATIONAL literally circles the globe.

Comrades in China write: "THE NEW INTERNATIONAL is deserving of the most unstinting praise. Indeed a mighty weapon for our cause! And how the 'theoretical' trash of the Stalinists pales before it."

A Canadian reader in northwestern Canada says: "The magazine is 'it', right from the beginning."

A subscriber from the South, in Mississippi, declares: "Thanks for the N. I. Just a hurried scanning of them is enough to make me want to subscribe; enclosed check . . . wishing and predicting a tremendous success."

A railroad engineer from California says: "I am forcibly struck with one impressive feature of the matter printed in your periodical, and that is its scientific analysis of questions. . . . You people write like Karl Marx. . . . I am afraid Marx would not think much of Stalin. . . ."

The Akron, Ohio, agent says that, "Everyone here thinks the magazine is great."

A student at Harvard asserts: "The N. I. is the best revolutionary publication I've ever seen in its field." And, by the way, interest among college students in revolutionary problems is evidenced by the fact that bundles of the N. I. are handled by students in a number of colleges.

Subscriptions continue to come in right along. Of the sub-getters Rae Spiegel has been the best. Now there will be an opportunity for others to get under way with a sub drive. Bundle orders remain on a sound foundation, with even some additional orders. Cape Town, South Africa, has increased its bundle again, this time from 30 to 40. Johannesburg agents handle a like number. Scotland, England, Australia continue their good work.

In spite of the fact that this issue of the review appears towards the end of the month, considerably belated, we have nevertheless decided to make it the December number. The delay in coming off the press has been due essentially to the fact that the

war surely ought to suffice for the coming war!

"The spectacle is simply painful. . . . Very soon, in all probability, some partial union of the Second and Third Internationals will take place; after a few years a Left wing will develop under the leadership of Otto Bauer, and a Right wing under the leadership of Manuilsky, which—despite Léon Blum's obduracy—will come out in favor of participating in a French coalition government which is allied with the Soviet Union; then will come the split again, and in 1930 Paul Faure will inveigh against the social-Fascist Cachin. In half a year this perspective will no longer be smiled at, for then the whole world may be laughing over it. . . ."

time needed and the difficulties involved by the holding of the convention of the Communist League and, following it, the fusion convention which founded the Workers party, made it impossible for us to meet our deadline. However, we are determined not to omit any issues, but to bring our subscribers and readers in general one issue of the review every month. We beg them to take our difficulties into consideration and to accept our apologies.

In order to catch up with our regular publication date, we are planning to publish the January issue right on the heels of the current number. Although the rate of publication will now mean shorter intervals between issues, we believe that all our friends will cooperate with us in our task of bringing the magazine to the point of a systematic and regular dateline in the future. A minimum of difficulties will be involved if distributors and agents throughout the country also make a special effort to dispose of each current issue as rapidly as possible, so as to clear the way for the coming number. In addition, it will be easier for the management to get the issues out on time if settlement is made promptly for all the bundles ordered.

Last month we called the attention of our friends to the campaign we are undertaking to assure the regular and easy publication of our review by strengthening its financial basis. To accomplish this means:

1. A strong subscription list. The first and solidest base of a working class periodical is its regular subscriptions. By decision of the founding convention of the new party, we are out to get a circulation of six thousand copies within a period of six months. We will be closer to our goal by

every subscription that is sent in. The low rates make it possible to approach virtually every radical and thinking worker for \$1.50 for a year or at least for \$1.00 for a six months subscription.

2. Our bundle order circulation must be raised. We have already attained good results in this field, better, in fact, than we expected at the beginning. Bundles of the review now reach not only every important city in the country, but every important center in the English-speaking world—Toronto to London-Glasgow-Dublin to Johannesburg to Sydney to Shanghai to Winnipeg. No difficulty is encountered in disposing of comparatively large amounts of the review, and many branches of the party and the youth organizations add to their local finances with the profit made on sales. As the official organ of the party now, it is incumbent upon every local organization to see to the widest possible distribution of the magazine. Increased sales in this field will bring us more quickly to the 6,000 circulation and, moreover, strengthen our financial basis.

3. We are aiming at the establishment of a modest pledge fund, to be paid every month by those in a position to contribute. A minimum monthly contribution of a dollar means only a quarter a week, and there are many comrades who can make such a donation to THE NEW INTERNATIONAL without difficulty. If the pledge fund is raised and maintained, it not only means a guaranteed magazine every month but also assures us that we shall not have to raise the price of the review in order to meet the high costs of publication. We want to keep it at 15 cents so as to put it within reach of everybody.

THE MANAGER.

## Books by Leon Trotsky

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# six thousand

THE convention that launched the Workers Party of the United States has adopted THE NEW INTERNATIONAL as its official monthly theoretical organ. Beginning with the new year, our review will appear in that form. Henceforward, therefore, the pages of our periodical will be devoted to putting forward and defending the principles and policies of the new party—the principles of revolutionary Marxism.

IN ITS program of action for the coming six months, the convention included a campaign to raise the circulation of the theoretical organ to six thousand copies. The popularity of THE NEW INTERNATIONAL since it was launched leads us to believe that with a concerted effort, the goal of six thousand readers can easily be achieved within the coming half year. But it does require concerted effort!

IT MEANS that every branch of the Workers party, every branch of the Spartacus Youth League, every reader and friend of the magazine, make it an urgent task to increase the sales of THE NEW INTERNATIONAL—get new subscribers and extend the bundle order circulation.

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