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CONTENTS

LEON TROTSKY:

I. L. P. and the Fourth International
Sanctions and the Coming War
A. F. of L. Begins to Face the Issues
A Reply to Max Eastman
Notes on Workers' Education
Marxism and the Intellectuals
The Comintern and Social Patriotism
Romain Rolland Executes an Assignment
A Review of Barbusse's "Stalin"
Norman Thomas' "War"

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A MONTHLY ORGAN OF REVOLUTIONARY MARXISM

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Sanctions and the Coming War, by <i>Maurice Spector</i> ... 209	3. Reaction and Anti-Intellectualism..... 227
The A. F. of L. Begins to Face Issues, by <i>Arne Swabeck</i> 212	Romain Rolland Executes an Assignment, by <i>L. Trotsky</i> 233
I.I.P. and the Fourth International, by <i>Leon Trotsky</i> In the Middle of the Road 215	The Comintern and Social Patriotism, by <i>Feroci</i> 234
Max Eastman's Straw Man, by <i>John West</i> 220	BOOKS:
Some Notes on Workers' Education, by <i>A. J. Muste</i> ... 225	Stalin in Reality and in Legend, by <i>Walter Held</i> 237
Marxism and the Intellectuals, by <i>George Novack</i>	"War" by Norman Thomas, by <i>J. W.</i>
1. The Marxist Theory of the Intellectuals	Inside Front Cover: Sanctions and the British Elections
2. Non-Marxist Theories of the Intellectuals	Inside Back Cover: At Home

Sanctions and the British General Elections

SUPPORT OF League of Nations or governmental "sanctions" — including sanctions in the form of "neutrality legislation"—is, according to Marxists, betrayal on the question of war. To many persons sincerely concerned over "peace" this attitude of Marxists seems sectarian and unrealistic. Should not the "imperialist antagonisms" be utilized by the working class, if at the moment they aid in "preventing war"?

Marxists base their position on clear and simple reasoning. For them, the general question of sanctions cannot be answered until we ask, "Whose sanctions?" Capitalist governments are the instruments of the bourgeoisie of their respective nations. The League is the instrument of the dominant imperialist member states. League and governmental sanctions are, therefore, weapons of the bourgeoisie of the sanction-involving nations. Support of League and governmental sanctions is, thus, necessarily support of the bourgeoisie of these nations. And therefore, such support meant the subordination of the working class within these nations to the class enemy—means, that is to say, as in 1914, the betrayal of the working class in the face of the war crisis.

No amount of "reservations" or "distinctions" accompanying the support of official sanctions can possibly alter the essential content of such support. This is determined by the causal relationships of the actual world of history, not by words and pious hopes.

It is, already, no longer necessary to appeal merely to theoretical analysis on the question of sanctions. The policy of support of official sanctions has already borne its first great practical fruits. We can judge also by results in the present war crisis.

The first great fruit of the policy of support of official sanctions by working class parties is: the achievement of national unity in Great Britain, and the overwhelming victory of the Conservative party in the general elections of November 14.

A year ago the British Labour party was gaining strength rapidly. From the days last summer when it formulated clearly its policy toward sanctions, it has steadily lost strength—lost it, above all, in industrial centers which could rightly have been expected to return huge Labour majorities. The masses interpreted the position of the Labour officialdom correctly. Brushing aside their reservations, what was left was only: support of British imperialism, acceptance of the policy of British finance-capital. And, with entire plausibility, Baldwin showed that if you support imperialist policy, you must also support the means to carry it out—namely, armament. The masses reasoned that if they were going to have to support imperialism by either vote, they had better give preference to Baldwin, who at least knew clearly what he was doing.

But the mere numerical, the quantitative defeat is not by any means the worst

of it. The policy of support of sanctions by the Labour party, enthusiastically seconded by the Communist party of Great Britain, has powerfully altered the basic relationship of class forces in Great Britain to the advantage of finance-capital, has disarmed and weakened the working class. British imperialism has, with the aid of the betrayers, been put in the happy position of being able to solve the war crisis in its own way, without effective opposition. Even the Labour minority in Parliament is not a true opposition, since it too is committed to the fundamental position of British imperialism. The genuine opposition is confined to the four Independent Labour party members, who fought the campaign on an anti-government-sanctions platform, together with those individual Labour party members whom the I.L.P. position forced to repudiate their official party stand.

Once again are the lessons of Marxism confirmed: *Compromise* with the class enemy and with its state means always—*capitulation* to the class enemy and its state. In the present instance: Support of governmental sanctions means support of the government applying the sanctions—that is, support of imperialism. The Marxist conclusion is inescapable:

Against all forms of League or government or official sanctions.

For the independent "sanctions" of the working class, for and only for the independent revolutionary struggle of the working class against the war-makers.

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Sanctions and the Coming War

"... In the last imperialist war, the Allies made use of the slogan, 'Fight Against Prussian Militarism' while the Central Empires used the slogan, 'Fight Against Tsarism'; both sides used the respective slogans to mobilize the masses for war. In a future war between Italy and France or Yugo-Slavia, the same purpose will be served by the slogan, 'Fight Against Reactionary Fascism', for the bourgeoisie of the latter countries will take advantage of the anti-Fascist sentiments of the masses of the people to justify imperialist war."

—Resolution on War, Sixth Congress of the Communist International, Moscow, 1928.

I.

THE ITALO-ETHIOPIAN war throws into sharp relief the basic issues of the Marxist struggle against imperialism and social-chauvinism. After the German catastrophe established Hitler, the Marxists declared that the cup of poison brewed by the Stalinist doctrine of national-Bolshevism was filled to the brim; the capitulation of the German Communist party was the death of the Comintern. Less "subjective" critics of Stalinism countered that our judgment was precipitate and premature. They required still further evidence of bankruptcy. For some people, apparently nothing short of a police confession, and sworn affidavits taken before a duly accredited commissioner, would suffice. The Marxists know no other tests than those applied by Lenin. The Second International collapsed when it turned disloyal to its anti-imperialist pledge of 1912; the German social democracy turned traitor when it joined with the general staff, the government and the bourgeoisie. One difference between the situation two decades ago and today is that even Lenin did not completely recognize how inevitably the opportunism of peace-time would develop into the chauvinism of the war. The Third International does not even wait for the actual outbreak of world war; it unmistakably flaunts its social-patriotism and class treason against the background of the Italo-Ethiopian struggle. The bitter antagonists of the past, the Second and Third Internationals, embrace on a common platform of mobilizing the masses in support of the League of Nations, "collective security" and governmental sanctions against the "aggressor". A writer in the Old Guard *New Leader* registers his heart-felt satisfaction at "the isolation of the small extremist groups who take the Trotskyist position . . ." i.e., those who oppose the League of Nations and sanctions as instruments of imperialist policy. One is strongly reminded of the days when those eminently "successful" statesmen of socialism, the Eberts and Scheidemanns, the Hendersons and Lavals, poured withering contempt on "the fellows without home and country", Lenin, Trotsky, Rosa Luxemburg and Liebknecht.

II.

There was no mobilization of the League of Nations and the Royal British Navy when imperialist Japan annexed Manchuria; no intervention in the spirit of Grotius, Immanuel Kant and Woodrow Wilson, when Paraguay and Bolivia, both members of the League, warred desperately in the Chaco. Nor was the sonorous Covenant invoked to prevent the earlier Greco-Turkish war that

ended in the sack of Smyrna or when insurgent Polish militarists seized Vilna. The League calmly contemplated its navel as the French occupied the Ruhr, and the government of Alfonso suppressed Abd-El-Krim. The democratic Third Republic of Laval-Herriot and their similars mercilessly crushed the Syrians; parliamentary Britain coerced India, bombarded Alexandria, and dispatched the 1927 expedition to Shanghai. But not the faintest suggestion of sanctions ruffled Geneva. For all this happened within the precincts of the Thieves' Kitchen.

But the Italian eruption is part of the new chapter in international relations, the prologue of a second world war. The status quo of Versailles has been undermined with accelerated speed by the development of the world economic crisis. The war of 1914-18 could not eliminate its own cause; only the European revolution could have done that. The gigantic increase of the powers of production had exploded against the limitations of national sovereignty. But the Peace of Versailles proceeded to Balkanize Europe, at a time when the economic sceptre passed to America, the rise of the Soviet Union challenged capitalism, and Japanese imperialism contested Asia. In these circumstances European peace and stability could never be more than relatively brief interludes. Economic chaos, mass unemployment, middle class ruination, peasant impoverishment resumed their sway. Parliamentary democracy, the political expression of capitalist progress, could no longer confine the class antagonisms of capitalist decay. Fascism captivates the middle classes with promises to restore order, control capitalism, and develop national self-sufficiency. But capitalist planning fails as dismally as the World Economic Conference. "National self-sufficiency", which results in progressively reduced standards of living, proves a necessary means of rearmament in the renewed struggle for the repartitioning of the world market. Armaments, on which expenditures are three or four times their magnitude of 1914, are the only industry that flourishes.

But to describe the ensuing struggle in terms of democracy versus Fascism is radically false. This much the Sixth Congress of the Comintern which, in 1928 was not yet completely "liberated" from Leninist tradition, still acknowledged. "In the last imperialist war," ran its war resolution, "the Allies made use of the slogan, 'Fight Against Prussian Militarism' while the Central Empires used the slogan, 'Fight Against Tsarism'; both sides used the respective slogans to mobilize the masses for war. In a future war between Italy and France or Yugo-Slavia, the same purpose will be served by the slogan, 'Fight Against Reactionary Fascism', for the bourgeoisie in the latter countries will take advantage of the anti-Fascist sentiments of the masses of the people to justify imperialist war." The major emphasis of both the Second and Third Internationals today is a complete denial of this indubitably correct position. Those who completely failed to distinguish between Fascism and social democracy in the struggle against Hitler (Stalin's theory that they were "twins") and those who failed to organize militant working class resistance to Fascism (like Otto Bauer) now call on the capitalist "democratic" states like England and France to win their battles for them. Dimitroff of the Comintern and Adler of the L.S.I. vie with each other mightily to save the "remnants of bourgeois democracy".

The strategy of both Internationals is based on the support of the "peace-loving", satiated, and hence defensive capitalist powers, against the lean and hungry Fascist aggressors. This point of view is frequently crystallized in the formula, "Fascism Means War." The Stalinist writer, Strachey, explains the Fascist tendency to the "extreme of imperialism" and "extreme of bellicosity" as due (1) to the destruction of the home market by cutting of wages and raising of prices, and (2) the consequent drive on the foreign market on pain of complete collapse. The slightest reflection suggests that there is no essential difference between this Fascist policy and that of the National government in England or the Herriot-Laval government in France. Inasmuch as it refuses to accept the *status quo*, Fascism intensifies the inner conflicts of capitalism and sharpens the war danger. But what is of paramount consideration in the struggle against both Fascism and war is to realize that both spring from the existence of capitalism.

Imperialist war has its inception in the struggle of the monopolies for the market. The proletariat cannot afford to distinguish between "aggressor" and "non-aggressor" trusts, syndicates, cartels, consortiums, etc., and as little between the capitalist states which are the general executive committees of these predatory interests. To support the "system of collective security" is equivalent to supporting the balance of power of the pre-war epoch, or in other words, it is to call on the working class to bleed for the present distribution of the world markets, of colonies, mandates and spheres of influence. It is to enlist in defense of one or the other of two rival imperialist camps. The democratic forms of certain imperialist states like France or Great Britain can no more justify giving them support than it would justify the German workers supporting the Nazi régime. In any future conflict "constitutional" and "authoritarian" states will be found mixed up. Even now it is clear that without the complicity of England, it would have been impossible for Nazi Germany to rearm. Even now negotiations persist for a Franco-German rapprochement. Even now Schacht is reported to have disclosed to French and British bankers the Nazi desire for expansion in the Baltic and Soviet Ukraine.

Neither the argument of democracy, nor the argument of the "aggressor" are new. In 1912 the Basle manifesto already rejected these specious ideas, "declaring that the coming war could not be justified by even the slightest pretext of being in the interests of the people", and pointing out that the war would be the product of capitalist imperialism, "of the policy of conquests pursued by both groups of belligerents, both the Austro-German and Anglo-French-Russian group". Which did not prevent the Socialist parties on both sides later discovering that ideals and not investment were the prime movers of "their" governments. The bourgeoisie is no longer capable of waging a "progressive" war, such as in the period of national state unification against aristocracy and feudalism. In the imperialist epoch, the bourgeoisie, confronted in all countries by the problems of the general crisis of capitalism, strives for a solution by the sharper exploitation of the proletariat and the subjection of the "backward races". To summon the working class to support any policy leading to national unity or national defense under capitalism is to be an accessory of imperialism. The Italian invasion of Ethiopia is an example of undisguised imperialist aggression, but the Italian conflict with England is no meaningless struggle between "the principles of the Covenant and imperialist aggression"; it is a collision of rival imperialisms, with the more powerful in temporary command of the League machinery.

III.

The Italian Fascist dictatorship has become steadily more involved in internal economic and social contradictions. Italian economy rests on a very narrow basis; Italy is an importer of

coal, cotton, iron, raw wool and vegetable fibres. It is one of the principal grievances of the Italian bourgeoisie that the price they got at Versailles for betraying the Triple Alliance was practically an insult. Despite the utmost restrictions of imports, the adverse trade balance for the first half of this year was approximately 1.4 billion lire, the total for 1934. The budgetary deficit for 1933-34 was nearly seven billion lire. Treasury bonds can no longer be issued at a favorable rate of interest, and postal savings notes which formerly could be cashed at sight no longer find takers. Trade restrictions throughout the world make it difficult for Italy to export. Public works and reclamation no longer suffice to keep unemployment down, and the safety-valve of the United States labor market is not now available. The worsening economic situation has stirred up the latent reserves of class antagonism and Mussolini has realized that Fascism will be in danger unless it extends its markets. Or as the Fascist journalist Gayda put it: "We must define the year 13 of the Fascist era as the year of the last stages of Fascist concentration and the beginning of the international struggle for affirmation of her right to life and power." The puffed-up verbiage of this statement cannot conceal the real meaning.

The Tripartite Treaty of 1906 between Great Britain, Italy and France, ostensibly guaranteeing Ethiopia's territorial integrity, was a preliminary agreement to partition the country at the first favorable opportunity. What saved the last independent African state at the time was the balance of imperial interests. England was anxious to halt the German advance. Though defeated at Adowa in her direct attempt at conquest, Italy was accorded a sphere of influence practically covering the whole of Ethiopia. By the secret Treaty of London, on the strength of which Italy sided with the Allies, France and England agreed that should they themselves increase their African colonies at the expense of Germany, and that Italy would be accorded compensation. The war ended with England, France and Belgium adding one million square miles to their African holdings. All the Italian diplomats got was a good cry. In 1926 a series of colonial uprisings induced England to agree to support the Italian claim for a railway concession connecting Eritrea and Somaliland, running west of Addis Ababa, in return for recognition of England's right to carry out works on a motor road from Lake Tana to the Sudan and works on a barrage on that lake. Getting wind of this, the unfortunate Ethiopian government protested to both signatories and in a rider to Great Britain pathetically added: "We should never have suspected that the British government would come to an agreement with another government regarding our lake." The League of Nations blandly promised the Negus that it would take cognizance of his protest and the matter was smoothed over. Ras Tafari proceeded, however, to negotiate with the J. G. White Engineering Corporation of New York with a view to having the Lake Tana dam built by American interests, and invited the United States to re-open its legation in Addis Ababa.

But the agreement with Great Britain did not bring any practical results and Italy began pressing forward, against the resistance of the Negus, independently. Italy began plainly preparing for invasion, and the necessary "incident" at Walwal found 200,000 Italian troops mobilized for the autumn campaign. As at Fashoda at the end of the last century in her African rivalry with France, Britain's attitude suddenly hardened. Italy's expansion in Ethiopia would endanger British control of the head-waters of the Nile, of strategic importance for the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan, and no less menace British control of the Red Sea, predominance in the Mediterranean and the whole chain of imperial communications. The development of the Italian air and naval forces, accompanied by Italian talk of "mare Nostrum", pointed an obvious challenge. The Baldwin-Hoare government decided that this was the most

opportune moment in years to take a stand against further attrition of the Empire. British control in Egypt, Irak, Palestine and India were at stake. Not for the first time, the British mobilized not only their fleets but the whole moral order and the world of ideals. What could be more edifying than the abrupt conversion to the Covenant of Winston Churchill. The lesson of the crisis, states the former Lord of the Admiralty, is that Britain must have secure and lasting control of the Mediterranean; the British fleet will enable the League of Nations to give Britain secure and lasting control of the Mediterranean. England becomes the League's most devoted proponent of sanctions to "punish the guilty aggressor".

IV.

The pro-sanctions policy of the Second and Third Internationals came as a veritable god-send to British imperialism. The War Office and Admiralty are able to execute their plans to increase enormously their armaments in an atmosphere of "national unity". In 1933 the Labor party declared that it would "take no part in war and resist it with the whole force of the labor movement". In 1935 the Labor party demands military sanctions. As for the Communist party—its leader, Pollitt, calls upon the British navy to close the Suez Canal! When recently the Edinburgh Trades Council passed a resolution supporting the League in all measures "short of war" (i.e., "military sanctions") the communists supported an amendment to delete the qualification "short of war". But if you want the government to close the Suez Canal you must also vote the naval appropriations for that purpose. If you want the government to apply "military as well as economic sanctions, you must support the government's armament program. You may feebly protest that it does not follow. The masses, subject to the tremendous pressure of bourgeois as well as social-patriotic propaganda, see it in that light. The chauvinism of the Labor party actually facilitates the National government's return to power. The sorry spectacle of the Labor party in the present elections is a repetition of the fate of social-patriotism and class collaboration in every crucial election. Lloyd George won the post-war election on the slogan, "Hang the Kaiser." The Labor party complained. But it had supported Lloyd George in the prosecution of the imperialist war. The Labor government was turned out when the Tories raised the fake Zinoviev letter issue. The Labor party complained; but it had been administering capitalism! The Tories turned the second Labor government out by conjuring up a grave financial crisis; but the Laborites themselves had been preparing wage cuts. In the present crisis, Garvin of the *Observer*, a leading Tory weekly, jeers at the Labor party, "the incredible advocates of both disarmament and defiance, of both feebleness and challenge, of both weakness and war. . . . The main body of Labor opinion has surrendered to a sheer stampede of jingoism. . . . They have clamored for sanctions, blockade and war."

The resolution of the Sixth Congress of the Comintern which we cited above contains this additional injunction: "The first duty of the communists in the fight against the imperialist war is to tear down the screen by which the bourgeoisie conceals their preparations for war and the real state of affairs from the masses of workers. . . . This duty implies above all, a determined political and ideological struggle against pacifism." Official pacifism especially is singled out (League of Nations, Locarno, disarmament conferences, etc.). The Stalinists have completely forgotten this "directive" but it is the none less sound for that. Their support of sanctions is part and parcel of their participation with the social democrats in the treacherous front of "Official Pacifism". "Sanctions" (which have nothing in common with the international workers' boycott, a form of mass action) are the instrumentality of imperialist policy, of the powers that dominate the "League". That is the League which Lenin described as a "Thieves' Kitchen", and the Soviet government characterized it in 1923 as "a coalition

of certain states endeavoring to usurp power over other states, and masking their attempts on the rights and independence of other nations by a false appearance of groundless legality in the form of mandates . . . a pseudo-international body . . . a mere mask to conceal from the masses the aggressive aims of the imperialistic policy of the great powers or their vassals." . . . "The League of Nations," declares the 1928 resolution of the Comintern, "was founded nine years ago as an imperialist alliance in defense of the robber peace of Versailles, and for the suppression of the revolutionary movement of the world. . . ." Apparently England and France only became "satiated" in the last few years.

Identifying the policy of a Soviet state in circumstances of capitalist encirclement with the policy of a working class struggling for power, the Stalinists and social democrats plead that the workers must take advantage of the imperialist antagonisms. Of course, but the methods are quite different. The Soviet state is compelled to manoeuvre between the capitalist states, to conclude pacts and alliances. Even then the limits of the concessions and agreements are the basic principles of the proletarian dictatorship. Anything that concedes these is betrayal. The struggle for peace is a legitimate and necessary aspiration of the Soviet state, but the Soviet state would commit high treason to the principles on which it was founded if it used its authority and influence to force the workers of capitalist countries to conclude civil peace with the ruling classes. The crime of the Stalin régime against the cause of internationalism is that it has forced the vanguard of the French working class into an alliance with its ruling class, that it has forced its supporters throughout the world to become adherents and apologists of the League of Nations, the association of capitalist states. The way the working class in capitalist countries must take advantage of imperialist antagonisms, particularly if they take the form of war, is to direct their struggle and arms against the ruling class of their "own countries". Civil war and not civil peace is the Leninist method of utilizing the imperialist antagonisms—the policy of revolutionary defeatism and not the policy of social-patriotism. Revolutionary defeatism in capitalist countries is the real defense of the Soviet Union too. The international working class and not paper treaties are its real allies.

The Italo-Ethiopian war has thrown a glaring light on the methods by which the new version of social-patriotism, no less rank than the old, seeks to rivet the workers to the imperialist war machine. Tomorrow Roosevelt or his successor may decide to stem the advance of Japanese imperialism by concluding some sort of agreement with the Soviet Union, and the social-patriots will muster all their arguments to save American democracy from the talons of the Mikado. Oh, certainly, Browder will probably plead that he is fighting not only for Lenin, but for Jefferson, Tom Paine, and Abraham Lincoln. But that will not help the overthrow of American capitalism. We accuse the Second and Third Internationals of enlisting their services to enhance the prestige of the robber League, and of the "democratic and satiated powers" whose power is based on the exploitation of the proletariat and oppression of millions of colonial subjects. We accuse these social-patriotic organizations of sabotaging the organization of a real workers' boycott against Italy by directing their attention to a belief in the League sanctions; we accuse them of consolidating Fascism in Italy and Germany by permitting the Hitlers and Mussolinis to use the argument of encirclement and Versailles, and appeal for national unity to counter national unity elsewhere. We accuse them of hallowing the *status quo*, of a course of class collaboration, national unity, and civil peace that will re-enact the tragedy of August, 1914. No thinking worker today can any longer afford to temporize with the issues. The treachery of the Second and Third Internationals is too plain. The building of the Fourth International to organize the revolutionary-internationalist struggle against imperialism brooks no delay. Maurice SPECTOR

The A. F. of L. Begins to Face Issues

DURING THE periods of important historical turns the organizations which have as their function the defense of specific class interests usually experience sharp internal convulsions. The impact from the changes in their external relations raise new issues and set new forces into motion within them. This is what we witness today in its embryo form in the American Federation of Labor.

Its present revival coincided with the revival of industrial production following the depth of the crisis; but the political manifestations, that arise out of these parallel revivals, develop in opposite directions. The big industrial corporations, which reap the harvest from the rising price level, from the increased profits and from the renewed dividend payments, resort to ever more reactionary measures to batter down all working class advance, in order to maintain, as nearly as possible, the low cost of production level established during the crisis. Even the New Deal labor relations provisions, which they formerly accepted reluctantly as a bridge from the crisis to the industrial revival, have now become obstacles to be removed. Their criticisms and attacks are motivated entirely on reactionary grounds. This direction is now unmistakable. Among the organized workers, on the other hand, the continued pressure of a low standard of living and mass unemployment, together with the impulsion from their newly acquired experiences in several important strike struggles, the center of gravity begins to shift in a leftward direction. The relationship of these developments is mutual. Its living dynamics is expressed both in the sharpened antagonisms between capital and labor and in increased conflict between progressive and reactionary tendencies inside the trade union movement. A vivid picture of this process was furnished by the heated and sometimes acrimonious debates at the recently concluded A. F. of L. convention. Important issues entered into these debates around which the leadership, left as a heritage from Samuel Gompers, found itself hopelessly divided.

The truth is that the federation of Gompers, the elaborately built-up craft-union structure, is now, for the first time in its history, shaking to its very foundation. Its policies and its methods have met a challenge from the needs of new conditions and new potentialities of growth. There is no possibility for the A. F. of L. to sidestep this challenge; and the problems that were left unsettled at this convention, or settled without relation to the requirements of the new conditions, will return for a solution later. These problems came in the main from two separate but at the same time closely related directions. One concerned the questions of organizational structure—industrial unionism or craft unionism—which in essence pose the alternatives of growth or stagnation. The other concerned the question of political orientation, which is far broader in its scope and which in its real sense involves the rôle of the A. F. of L. bureaucracy as an integral part of the class domination of the bourgeoisie. Fundamentally these are problems of the class struggle and as such they are not new, but they appear now in a much more imposing form than heretofore.

The Gompers' federation prospered on its craft union basis in a parasitical fashion. Limited to the labor aristocracy of the skilled trades, it pursued a deliberate policy of keeping the large masses of unskilled workers without an organization. The exceptionally rapid industrial expansion in the United States put its own peculiar stamp of development on the A. F. of L. It rejected as a policy the methods of parliamentary reformism practised by the European labor movements. During its early days, beginning with the eighties, it possessed an extraordinary virility in direct action

methods. As a result the leadership gradually developed its own philosophy of no participation in politics and proclaimed a policy of political neutrality for the unions. Ostensibly it maintained a neutral attitude to all political parties. In reality the leadership sought thereby to separate the movement from its general political class problems only to become itself so much more closely bound up with the political parties of the bourgeoisie. Naturally this leadership repudiated any recognition of the class struggle and almost invariably supported the policies, both foreign and domestic, of whichever of these parties had control of the administration at Washington. It hardly ever rose even to the occasion of a loyal opposition. Therefore the formula of political neutrality, which at one time served to justify the courage and the militancy of direct action methods of the movement as a whole in its early days, was later used as a cover for the cowardice and reactionary development of its leadership.

This tie-up with the government and the support of its policies became more complete with the Roosevelt administration. The trade union officials considered themselves as special agents of the New Deal and were in turn drawn in for service on the numerous governmental labor relations boards. Outwardly this mutual relationship was presented as a guarantee of the right of collective bargaining and the right of union organization. But this "right" carried with it also specific duties for the A. F. of L. leaders. The mutual relationship was conditioned upon their ability to control the unions, to strangle independent working class activity and to prevent the development of working class consciousness. Already it has served to smother and defeat two important strike waves. This is the real essence of the mutual relationship between the government and the A. F. of L. bureaucracy.

What has been the reaction of the workers? In the first place, they took advantage of the opportunity offered to them by the new stimulus to union organization. But the concessions from the government could not appear as very real inasmuch as they had to fight bitterly for their rights in every instance. On the contrary, the ruthless opposition which they encountered in all of these struggles, from the employers and from the organs of the capitalist state, the police and the military forces, became much more real. Where the collective bargaining right was to be established by "agreement", without the resort to strike action, the workers were similarly disillusioned. Most outstandingly that was the case of last year's so-called agreement covering the automobile industry. At the time a great movement surged through the automobile plants, looking hopefully toward the A. F. of L. leadership for guidance, and ready to fight for a union; but it was cut short and betrayed by the "agrèment" which rendered no gains and forestalled for the time being any further independent action. In this the trade union movement suffered its first serious setback under the new form of labor relationship. It had far-reaching consequences in discrediting trade unionism and checking its promising growth in the basic industries. Subsequently the Automobile Labor Board elections piled up an overwhelming majority vote for the company unions. President Roosevelt and Wm. Green were the principal actors in the working out of this "agreement". In this both remained true to the actual conditions of the mutual relationship between the government and the A. F. of L. bureaucracy.

But in these experiences its weak sides are also exposed and to an extent brought certain conclusions to the minds of the more advanced workers. The first thing that becomes clear to them is the fact that the outward appearances of the alliance with the gov-

ernment are deceptive. It does not serve to protect the rights of union organization but turns out to do the opposite. The special measures of labor relations, the complicated system of labor boards, function essentially to circumvent the demands of the workers. What then can the alliance with the government mean except to strengthen the prestige and the powers of the bureaucracy? Jointly with the government the bureaucracy becomes the defender of the interests of the employers, which are in direct conflict with the interests of the workers. Consequently it is necessary to fight this bureaucracy in order to gain any real concessions from the class enemy. This fight begins to crystallize distinctly progressive tendencies arising in response to the needs of the movement.

Wm. Green learned this at first hand from an excursion he made to several international union gatherings shortly before the A. F. of L. convention. The rank and file showed him its temper in the severe rebukes he received. Delegates to the Federation of Teachers' convention, in Cleveland, refused to carry out his edict for the expulsion of its New York local, which he charged to be under the control of the "reds". Delegates to the newly chartered automobile workers' union convention, held in Detroit, declined to enter into a voluntary agreement in support of his choice for leadership, and the newly chartered rubber workers' union convention, in Akron, rejected out of hand his candidates for the major offices. What could he do? He was probably taken somewhat unawares. For the first time in recent years the issue of trade union democracy was put to a real test with the rank and file standing its ground and the bureaucracy compelled to beat a hasty retreat. It was difficult to head off such a sudden manifestation of revolt, which was clearly born out of general dissatisfaction with the policies, the methods and the accomplishments of the organization.

It is true that the A. F. of L. has experienced considerable growth in prestige and in membership during its recent revival. The Executive Council reports another half million increase over the previous year, bringing its total membership up to 3,045,347. This is the highest membership reported since 1922, though it is still more than a million below the 4,078,740 of 1920. Still, these figures are paltry indeed, showing a very miserable accomplishment, when we consider the rich opportunities for organization that have been available since the turn in the business cycle. The changes in economic conditions and the consequent changes in class relations set a mighty stream of workers into motion for union organization, gravitating almost exclusively toward the A. F. of L. But they were repelled by the utter inability of its leadership to grasp the opportunity, by its insistence on the antiquated craft-union forms, by its bureaucratic, racketeering emasculation of the unions and by its outright betrayals. To the workers in the basic and mass-production industries, who were ready for organization, the craft union form was manifestly ineffective in face of the ruthless onslaughts from the gigantic corporations. Only a union embracing all the workers in the plants, operating on an industrial basis, could meet such a formidable challenge. An aggressive policy of organization and militant methods of resistance, they felt instinctively, would be an essential prerequisite, and this demanded freedom from the bureaucratic encumbrances. The attempt to keep them moribund and to impose upon them a hand-picked leadership from above could only tend to increase the already growing dissatisfaction of the rank and file and put them on their guard.

But the dissatisfaction has extended also to the sphere in which Green and company expected the real fruits from their relations with the government. The New Deal legislation they hailed as great victories for labor, destined to inaugurate a new era of coöperation between capital and labor. As it turned out, however, even the Executive Council had to admit in its convention report that it did not work out so well: "Labor had no voice in the deter-

mination of code provisions, in code administration, or in adjustments in code provisions as they were found necessary," it said. "United action of labor and management was the exception, not the rule." This is the complaint of the partners who feel that they have been jilted. What they mean to say is: How can we carry out *our* obligation of preserving industrial peace and preventing independent class activity when we are not given full recognition in the partnership and the "unreasonable" employers refuse to collaborate with us and reject all our ideas? Green and company knows that if their class-collaboration policy is to prevail they must be able to show enough concessions to forestall too great dissatisfaction. They know now that some of the most important New Deal measures did not remain popular with the masses for very long.

Moreover, with this change in popularity, certain changes in political trends began to appear here and there. Wherever the workers turned to the specially established governmental agencies, they found them loaded down with representatives of the employers, representatives of the same people who fought the workers viciously in every strike. Here they faced the class enemy, and many of them undoubtedly learned that, when considered fully, all of the legislative labor relations measures were worked out, decided upon and enforced by the class enemy. And, not yet seeing the full implications of the capitalist state or the necessity for its overthrow, the idea of labor having its own representatives do the business, appeared as a much better alternative. Consequently, labor party sentiments began to crystallize anew in many places in disregard of the official A. F. of L. political orientation. The Oregon State Federation of Labor came out in condemnation of the profit system and voted to establish a new political party. No doubt there was as yet little clarity on what kind of a party was needed, but there was at least a good indication that the outworn policy of rewarding friends and punishing enemies amongst the agents of privilege no longer found the same acquiescence as hitherto in trade union ranks. Similar indications were recorded elsewhere. The Connecticut State Federation of Labor decided to conduct a referendum vote of all local unions in the state on the question of creating a labor party. The New Jersey federation likewise; and even down in Tennessee, serious consideration has been given to labor party propositions.

Such was the general background leading up to the recent A. F. of L. convention. Outstanding manifestations of serious changes in the moods of the masses were clearly established.

The A. F. of L. bureaucracy knows now that a real test of its ability to control the unions is approaching. It is in a dilemma. Fearing the consequences that would ensue should it forfeit its "right" to its alliance with the government, it resorts to more openly reactionary and more high-handed methods. In line with this the Executive Council announced its intention to bring forward, as the most important issue before the convention, a proposal to amend the constitution by inserting a provision barring communists, or advocates of the "violent overthrow of our institutions", from all representative bodies in the organization. The language of this provision should not deceive anybody. It is clearly an attack aimed at the whole of the militant and genuinely progressive tendencies in the unions. At the convention, however, the bureaucracy encountered new difficulties. New and authentic issues of the class struggle made their way to the convention floor, upsetting the most cunning calculations and bidding fair to become the means of breaking the death clutch of reaction. Even the Executive Council was no longer united. All of these questions demanded the expression of an attitude and thus the conflict of tendencies found its sharp reflection amongst the very topmost layers in the organization apparatus. All of the legislative "victories", hailed with so much ardor and acclaim just a few days

before, faded into the background as the authentic issues concerning organizational structure and political orientation held the center of attention. The main division occurred around the question of industrial unionism. Lined up on the progressive side of the argument were the representatives of the coal miners, the textile workers, the metal miners, the oil field workers and the needle trades, solidly backed by practically all of the representatives of the newly organized federal unions, which operate mainly in the mass production industries. Arrayed against them were the overwhelming majority of the distinctly craft-union representatives, who are today the most backward and most reactionary section of the movement. While the latter did not possess the convincing arguments, they still controlled the majority vote, with the opposition, however, rallying imposing forces to its standard. But the struggle for industrial unionism has just begun. The A. F. of L. can hardly escape its full weight. Before it there is posed the alternative of adjusting itself to the ever more pressing needs of changing economic conditions or of being condemned to stagnation. Even the most reactionary elements in its leadership do understand the essential prerequisite of mass numbers, as a means of wielding power and influence. Therefore, the struggle for industrial unionism is bound to grow in momentum as the movement faces its new tasks.

To conclude, on the other hand, from the line-up in this struggle that amongst the main spokesmen on the progressive side of the argument at Atlantic City are to be found the genuine progressives of today, might easily prove worse than illusory. John L. Lewis, Charles P. Howard, Sidney Hillman and David Dubinsky appeared as the main defenders of the proposition, clashing with William Green, Matthew Woll, John P. Frey and Dan Tobin. The hide-bound reactionary outlook of the latter need not be questioned. But it is incontestable that the former have proven, equally with those whom they are now opposing, an integral part of the bourgeois class domination. From the most outstanding to the lesser lights, without any particular exceptions, they have shared, in theory and practise, in the class-collaboration policies of the Rooseveltian era and before. In their own unions they have established a record of cunning deception of the workers, functioned as a brake upon their independent class activity and denounced and assailed the militants, the genuine progressives, resorting with regularity to the most bureaucratic methods. This is well known.

At the present time, however, John L. Lewis and his lieutenants have gauged more accurately the actual mood of the masses and they have responded in a measure to the needs of changing conditions. They visualize the potentialities of the real progressive tendency once it gains firm roots; but they also understand its present weaknesses and confusion. Hence they endeavor to move into a commanding position from the beginning. They have not yet shown any serious inclination to break with the established bureaucratic concept of integral relations with the class domination of the bourgeoisie. In basic class ideology this section of the leading A. F. of L. officialdom differs but little from the dominant clique of Green, Woll and company. Even the labor party proposal before the convention found support from only a certain part of the industrial union defenders. But the fact that their appearance as an opposition influenced a certain moderation of the bureaucratically staged "red-baiting" campaign is noteworthy. The further fact that they chose to single out Matthew Woll as a special target, personifying reaction bred-in-the-bone, and to enter an opposition candidate contesting the election of W. D. Mahon, a Green supporter, to fill a vacancy on the Executive Council, is an unmistakable sign of their determination to carry on with the fight.

Insofar as this determination remains, the genuine progressives and the revolutionary workers in the trade unions will make it a

common struggle. Revolutionists at all times take the issues as their line of departure and upon that basis define their attitude to the movement and to its various elements at each particular stage of development. The workers, who in ever greater numbers rally to the support of the trade union movement today, do not necessarily thereby support the reactionary policies of its officials. The support the latter receive goes to them as opponents of the bosses. It is important to bear this in mind. But it is equally important to make the distinction between the movement and its official bureaucracy clear to the workers. Revolutionists at all times defend the genuine trade unions; this itself, however, presupposes intransigent struggle against its reactionary bureaucracy. Toward those who now appear as the leaders of a progressive fight the revolutionists must also draw a clear line. In the first instance this means that common struggle around the progressive issues is both necessary and possible. But the special distinction must be made toward those who today move one step forward, under pressure from a progressive direction, only to retreat tomorrow, when facing the more serious issues, to their erstwhile position. Their present position cannot be judged fully, nor is a complete endorsement of such elements, under the honorable name of progressives, warranted, on the basis of one episodic experience. The real criterion is where they stand on the general issues of the class struggle.

In this connection it is important to remember that in the further intensification of the struggle between these leading forces in the A. F. of L., which is to be expected, it will be increasingly more difficult for the John L. Lewis section to draw back. As the contradictions of American capitalism mature, the issues that have already arisen will rather tend to coalesce with the general leftward trend, deepen the conflict and drive even these elements into a more irreconcilable opposition. Pursuing the tactic of common struggle, where such is possible, and constantly clarifying the issues in line with the political class objectives of the workers, rich opportunities will be available for the revolutionists to become the courageous builders of a serious progressive movement in the A. F. of L.

Today we see before us the living dynamics of the trade union movement clearly revealed. The bureaucracy finds it ever more difficult to attempt to reconcile the contradictions between the theory and practise of class-collaboration and the reality of the class struggle. Upon such attempts at reconciliation depended the equilibrium of mutual relations between the bureaucracy and the government. When this essential condition disappears—and certainly, recent events tend to upset this relationship—the government will very soon reveal itself much more clearly in its real authentic expression. Nothing else can be expected. After all, the chief function of a bourgeois government is to preserve and strengthen the class relations of capitalism.

It may seem entirely premature to speak of the possibility of a break in this relationship, in the sense of leading officials of the largest trade unions in the country entering into hostile opposition to the government. Still, it is not excluded that further developments will soon lead many of those who have today taken one progressive step into certain new party alignments, into a loyal opposition in a third party or labor party formation. Indeed, the A. F. of L. faces still greater and still more vexing problems than it has experienced so far. History has laid down a rubicon for it to cross.

Socialists, the Old Guard especially, and Stalinists, each in their own way, have now renewed their plea for a new party formation, addressed particularly to these new "progressives". The Stalinists go the Old Guard Socialists one better in their pleas by eliminating all class connotation and calling for an all-embracing peoples' movement. But the placating of the "progressives" is equally revolting from both sides. The poison virus of social-patriotism

from either direction is equally pernicious. For the revolutionists this should mean, above all, that in the coming period their first duty is to combat this poison virus and exert all their energies

toward steering the developing working class political consciousness in a revolutionary direction.

Arne SWABECK

I.L.P. and the Fourth International

In The Middle of the Road

IF WE WERE to leave aside the Revolutionary Socialist Party of Holland which stands under the banner of the Fourth International, we could assuredly say that the I.L.P. of Britain stands on the left wing of the parties that adhere to the London-Amsterdam Bureau. In contrast to the S.A.P. which has shifted recently to the right, to the side of crassest petty-bourgeois pacifism, the I.L.P. has indubitably undergone a serious evolution to the left. This became definitely revealed by Mussolini's predatory assault upon Ethiopia. On the question of the League of Nations, on the role played in it by British imperialism, and on the "peaceful" policy of the Labour Party, the *New Leader* has perhaps carried the best articles in the entire labor press. But a single swallow does not make a spring, nor do a few excellent articles determine as yet the policy of a party. It is comparatively easy to take a "revolutionary" position on the question of war; but it is extremely difficult to draw from this position *all the necessary theoretical and practical conclusions*. Yet, this is precisely the task.

Compromised by the experience of 1914-18, social-patriotism has found today a new source to feed from, namely Stalinism. Thanks to this, bourgeois chauvinism obtains the opportunity to unleash a rabid attack against the revolutionary internationalists. The vacillating elements, the so-called Centrists, will capitulate inevitably to the onset of chauvinism on the eve of the war, or the moment it breaks out. To be sure, they will take cover behind the argument from "unity", the need not to break away from mass organizations, and so on. The formulas of hypocrisy are quite diversified, which supply the Centrists with a screen for their cowardice in the face of bourgeois public opinion, but they all serve the self-same purpose: to cover up the capitulation. "Unity" with the social-patriots—not a temporary co-existence with them in a common organization with a view to waging a struggle against them, but unity as a principle—is unity with one's own imperialism, and consequently, an open split with the proletariat of other nations. The Centrist principle of *unity at any price* prepares for the most malignant split possible, along the lines of imperialist contradictions. Even today, we can observe in France the *Spartacus* group, which translates into the French language the ideas of the S.A.P., advocating, in the name of "unity" with the masses, the political capitulation to Blum who was and who remains the chief agent of French imperialism within the working class.

After its split with the Labour Party, the I.L.P. came into close contact with the British Communist party, and through it, with the Communist International. The acute financial difficulties under which the *New Leader* labors right now indicate that the I.L.P. was able to preserve complete financial independence from the Soviet bureaucracy, and its methods of corruption. This can only be a source of gratification. Nevertheless, the connection with the Communist party did not pass without leaving a trace: despite its name, the I.L.P. did not become really *independent* but turned into a sort of appendage to the Communist International. It did not pay the necessary attention to mass work, which cannot be carried on outside of the trade unions and the Labour Party; instead it became seduced by the Amsterdam-Pleyel masquerade, the Anti-Imperialist League, and other surrogates for revolutionary activity. As a result, it appeared to the workers to be a *second grade Com-*

unist party. So disadvantageous a position for the I.L.P. did not arise accidentally: it was conditioned by its lack of a firm principled basis. It is a secret to nobody that Stalinism long overawed the leaders of the I.L.P. with those rubber-stamp formulas which comprise the miserable bureaucratic falsification of Leninism.

More than two years ago the writer of this article sought to arrive at an understanding with the leaders of the I.L.P. by means of several articles, and in letters; the attempt was barren of results: during that period, our criticism of the Communist International seemed to the leaders of the I.L.P. to be "preconceived", and "factionally", perhaps even "personally" motivated. Nothing remained except to yield the floor to time. For the I.L.P., the last two years have been scanty in successes, but bountiful in experience. The social-patriotic degeneration of the Communist International, the direct consequence of the theory and practice of "socialism in one country", was turned from a *forecast* into a living, incontestable *fact*. Have the leaders of the I.L.P. fully plumbed the meaning of this fact? Are they ready and able to draw all the necessary conclusions from it? The future of the I.L.P. depends upon the answer to these questions.

From pacifism towards proletarian revolution—such has indubitably been the general tendency of the evolution of the I.L.P. But this development has far from reached a rounded-out program as yet. Worse yet: not uninfluenced by the hoary and expert opportunistic combinations of the German S.A.P., the leaders of the I.L.P. have apparently halted in the midway, and keep marking time.

In the following critical lines, we intend to dwell primarily upon two questions: the attitude of the I.L.P. toward the *general strike* in connection with the struggle against War, and the position of the I.L.P. on the question of the *International*. In the latter as well as the former question there are to be found elements of a half-way attitude: on the question of the general strike this hesitancy assumes the guise of irresponsible *radical phraseology*; on the question of the International hesitancy pulls up short of the *radical decision*. And yet Marxism, and Leninism as the direct continuation of its doctrine, is absolutely irreconcilable both with an inclination to radical phraseology, and with the dread of radical decisions.

The Various Categories of the General Strike

The question of the general strike has a long and rich history, in theory as well as practice. Yet the leaders of the I.L.P. behave as if they were the first to run across the idea of general strike, as a method to stop war. In this is their greatest error. Improvisation is impermissible precisely on the question of the general strike. The world experience of the struggle during the last forty years has been *fundamentally* a confirmation of what Engels had to say about the general strike towards the close of the last century, primarily on the basis of the experience of the Chartist, and in part of the Belgians. Cautioning the Austrian social democrats against much too flighty an attitude towards the general strike, Engels wrote to Kautsky, on November 3, 1893, as follows: "You yourself remark that the barricades have become antiquated (they

may, however, prove useful again should the army turn 1/3 or 2/5 socialist and the question arise of providing it with the opportunity to turn its bayonets), but the political strike must either prove victorious immediately by the threat alone (as in Belgium, where the army was very shaky), or it must end in a colossal fiasco, or, finally, *lead directly to the barricades.*" These terse lines provide, incidentally, a remarkable exposition of Engels' views on a number of questions. Innumerable controversies raged over Engels' famous introduction to Marx's *The Class Struggle in France* (1895), an introduction which was in its time modified and cut in Germany with a view to censorship. Philistines of every stripe have asserted hundreds and thousands of times during the last forty years that "Engels himself" had apparently rejected once and for all the ancient "romantic" methods of street fighting. But there is no need of referring to the past: one need only read the contemporary and inordinately ignorant and mawkish discourses of Paul Faure, Lebas and others on this subject, who are of the opinion that the very question of armed insurrection is "Blanquism". Concurrently, if Engels rejected anything, it was first of all, *putsches*, i.e. *untimely* flurries of a *small minority*; and secondly, antiquated methods, that is to say, forms and methods of street fighting which did not correspond to the new technological conditions. In the above quoted letter, Engels corrects Kautsky, in passing, as if he were referring to something self-evident: barricades have become "antiquated" only in the sense that the bourgeois revolution has receded into the past, and the time for the socialist barricades has not come as yet. It is necessary for the army, one third, or better still, two fifths of it (these ratios, of course, are given only for the sake of illustration), to become imbued with sympathy for socialism; then the insurrection would not be a "putsch", then the barricades would once again come into their own—not the barricades of the year 1848, to be sure, but the new "barricades", serving, however, the self-same goal: to check the offensive of the army against the workers, give the soldiers the opportunity and the time to sense the power of the uprising, and by this to create the most advantageous conditions for the army's passing over to the side of the insurrectionists. How far removed are these lines of Engels—not the youth, but the man 73 years of age!—from the asinine and reactionary attitude to the barricade, as a piece of "romanticism"! Kautsky has found the leisure to publish this remarkable letter just recently, in 1935! Without engaging in a direct polemic with Engels, whom he never understood *fully*, Kautsky tells us smugly, in a special note, that toward the end of 1893, he had himself published an article in which he "developed the advantages of the democratic-proletarian method of struggle in democratic countries as against the policy of violence". These remarks about "advantages" (as if the proletariat has the freedom of choice!) have a particularly choice ring in our day, after the policies of the Weimar democracy, not without Kautsky's co-operation, have fully revealed all their . . . disadvantages. To leave no room for doubt as to his own attitude on Engels' views, Kautsky goes on to add, "I defended then the self-same policy I defend today." In order to defend "the self-same policy" Kautsky needed only to become a citizen of Czecho-Slovakia: outside of the passport, nothing has changed.

But let us return to Engels. He differentiates, as we have seen, between three cases in relation to the political strike:

(1) The government *takes fright* at the general strike, and at the very outset, without carrying matters to an open clash, takes to concessions. Engels points to the "shaky" condition of the army in Belgium as the basic condition for the success of the Belgian general strike (1893). A somewhat similar situation, but on a much more colossal scale, occurred in Russia, October, 1905. After the miserable outcome of the Russo-Japanese War, the Czarist army was, or, at any rate, seemed extremely unreliable. The Petersburg government, thrown into a mortal panic by the strike,

made the first constitutional concessions (Manifesto, October 17, 1905).

It is all too evident, however, that without resorting to decisive battles, the ruling class will make only such concessions as will not touch the basis of its rule. That is precisely how matters stood in Belgium and Russia. Are such cases possible in the future? They are inevitable in the countries of the Orient. They are, generally speaking, less probable in the countries of the West, although, here too, they are quite possible as partial episodes of the unfolding revolution.

(2) If the army is sufficiently reliable, and the government feels sure of itself; if a political strike is promulgated from above, and if, at the same time, it is calculated not for decisive battles, but to "frighten" the enemy, then it can easily turn out a mere adventure, and reveal its utter impotence. To this we ought to add that after the initial experiences of the general strike, the novelty of which reacted upon the imagination of the popular masses as well as governments, several decades have elapsed—discounting the half-forgotten Chartists—in the course of which the strategists of capital have accumulated an enormous experience. That is why a general strike, particularly in the old capitalist countries, requires a painstaking Marxist accounting of all the concrete circumstances.

(3) Finally, there remains a general strike which, as Engels put it, "leads directly to the barricades". A strike of this sort can result either in complete victory or defeat. But to shy away from battle, when the battle is forced by the objective situation, is to lead inevitably to the most fatal and demoralizing of all possible defeats. The outcome of a revolutionary, insurrectionary general strike depends, of course, upon the relationship of forces, covering a great number of factors: the class differentiation of society, the specific weight of the proletariat, the mood of the lower layers of the petty-bourgeoisie, the social composition and the political mood of the army, etc. However, among the conditions for victory, far from the last place is occupied by the *correct revolutionary leadership, a clear understanding of conditions and methods of the general strike and its transition to open revolutionary struggle.*

Engels' classification must not, of course, be taken dogmatically. In present day France not partial concessions but power is indubitably in question: the revolutionary proletariat or Fascism—which? The working class masses want to struggle. But the leadership applies the brakes, hoodwinks and demoralizes the workers. A general strike can flare up just as the movements flared in Toulon and Brest. Under these conditions, independently of its immediate results, a general strike will not of course be a "putsch" but a necessary stage in the mass struggle, the necessary means for casting off the treachery of the leadership and for creating within the working class itself the preliminary conditions for a victorious uprising. In this sense the policy of the French Bolshevik-Leninists is entirely correct, who have advanced the slogan of general strike, and who explain the conditions for its victory. The French cousins of the S.A.P. come out against this slogan, the Spartacists who at the beginning of the struggle are already assuming the role of strikebreakers.

We should also add that Engels did not point out another "category" of general strike, exemplars of which have been provided in England, Belgium, France and some other countries: we refer here to cases in which the leadership of the strike previously, i.e. without a struggle, arrives at an agreement with the class enemy as to the course and outcome of the strike. The parliamentarians and the trade unionists perceive at a given moment the need to provide an outlet for the accumulated ire of the masses, or they are simply compelled to jump in step with a movement that has flared over their heads. In such cases they come scurrying through the backstairs to the Government and obtain the permission to head the general strike, this with the obligation to conclude it as

soon as possible, without any damage being done to the state crockery. Sometimes, far from always, they manage to haggle beforehand some petty concessions, to serve them as figleaves. Thus did the General Council of British Trade Unions (T.U.C.) in 1926. Thus did Jouhaux in 1934. Thus will they act in the future also. The exposure of these contemptible machinations behind the backs of the struggling proletariat enters as a necessary part into the preparation of a general strike.

The General Strike as a Means "To Stop War"

To which type does a general strike belong which is specially intended by the I.L.P. in the event of mobilization, as a means to stop war at the very outset? We want to say beforehand: it pertains to the most inconsidered and unfortunate of all types possible. This does not mean to say that the revolution can never coincide with mobilization or with the outbreak of war. If a wide-scale revolutionary movement is developing in a country, if at its head is a revolutionary party possessing the confidence of the masses and capable of going through to the end; if the government, losing its head, despite the revolutionary crisis, or just because of such a crisis, plunges headlong into a war adventure—then the mobilization can act as a mighty impetus for the masses, lead to a general strike of railwaymen, fraternization between the mobilized and the workers, seizure of important key centers, clashes between insurrectionists and the police and the reactionary sections of the army, the establishment of local, workers' and soldiers' councils, and, finally, to the complete overthrow of the government, and consequently, to stopping the war. Such a case is theoretically possible. If, in the words of Clausewitz, "war is the continuation of politics by other means", then the struggle against war is also the continuation of the entire preceding policy of a revolutionary class and its party. Hence follows that a general strike can be put on the order of the day as a method of struggle against mobilization and war only in the event that the entire preceding developments in the country have placed revolution and armed insurrection on the order of the day. Taken, however, as a "special" method of struggle against mobilization, a general strike would be a sheer adventure. Excluding a possible but nevertheless an exceptional case of a government plunging into war in order to escape from a revolution that directly threatens it, it must remain, as a general rule, that precisely prior to, during, and after mobilization the government feels itself strongest, and, consequently, least inclined to allow itself to be scared by a general strike. The patriotic moods that accompany mobilization, together with the war terror make hopeless the very execution of a general strike, as a rule. The most intrepid elements who, without taking the circumstances into account, plunge into the struggle, would be crushed. The defeat, and the partial annihilation of the vanguard would make difficult for a long time revolutionary work in the atmosphere of dissatisfaction that war breeds. A strike called artificially must turn inevitably into a putsch, and into an obstacle in the path of the revolution.

In its theses accepted in April, 1935, the I.L.P. writes as follows: "The policy of the party aims at the use of a *general strike* to stop war and at *social revolution* should war occur." An astonishingly precise, but—sad to say, absolutely fictitious obligation! The general strike is not only separated here from the social revolution but also counterposed to it as a specific method to "stop war". This is an ancient conception of the anarchists which life itself smashed long ago. A general strike without a victorious insurrection cannot "stop war". If, under the conditions of mobilization, the insurrection is impossible, then so is a general strike impossible.

In an ensuing paragraph we read: "The I.L.P. will urge a General Strike against the British Government, if this country is in

any way involved in an attack on the Soviet Union. . . ." If it is possible to forestall *any* war by a general strike, then of course it is all the more necessary to stop war *against the U.S.S.R.* But here we enter into the realm of illusions: to inscribe in the theses a general strike as *punishment* for a given *capital crime* of the Government is to commit the sin of revolutionary phrasemongering. If it were possible to call a general strike at will, then it would be best called today to prevent the British Government from strangling India and from collaborating with Japan to strangle China. The leaders of the I.L.P. will of course tell us that they have not the power to do so. But nothing gives them the right to promise that they will apparently have the power to call a general strike on the day of mobilization. And if they be able, why confine it to a strike? As a matter of fact, the conduct of a party during mobilization will flow from its preceding successes and from the situation in the country as a whole. But the aim of revolutionary policy should not be an isolated general strike, as a special means to "stop war", but the proletarian revolution into which a general strike will enter as an inevitable or a very probable integral part.

The I.L.P. and the International

The I.L.P. split from the Labour Party chiefly for the sake of keeping the independence of its parliamentary fraction. We do not intend here to discuss whether the split was correct at the *given moment*, and whether the I.L.P. gleaned from it the expected advantages. We don't think so. But it remains a fact that for every revolutionary organization in England its attitude to the masses and to the class is almost coincident with its attitude toward the Labour Party, which bases itself upon the trade unions. At *this time* the question whether to function inside the Labour Party or outside it is not a principled question, but a question of actual possibilities. In any case, without a strong faction in the trade unions, and, consequently, in the Labour Party itself, the I.L.P. is doomed to impotence even today. Yet, for a long period, the I.L.P. attached much greater importance to the "united front" with the insignificant Communist party than to work in mass organizations. The leaders of the I.L.P. consider the policy of the Opposition wing in the Labour Party incorrect out of considerations which are absolutely unexpected: although "they (the Opposition) criticise the leadership and policy of the Party but, owing to the block vote and the form of organization of the Party, they cannot change the personnel and policy of the Executive and Parliamentary Party within the period necessary to resist Capitalist Reaction, Fascism and War" (p. 8). The policy of the Opposition in the Labour Party is unspeakably bad. But this only means that it is necessary to counterpose to it inside the Labour Party another, a correct Marxist policy. That isn't so easy? Of course not! But one must know how to hide one's activities from the police vigilance of Sir Walter Citrine and his agents, until the proper time. But isn't it a fact that a Marxist faction would not succeed in changing the structure and policy of the Labour Party? With this we are entirely in accord: the bureaucracy will not surrender. But the revolutionists, functioning outside and inside, can and must succeed in winning over tens and hundreds of thousands of workers. The criticism directed by the I.L.P. against the left wing faction in the Labour Party is of an obviously artificial character. One would have much more reason for saying that the tiny I.L.P., by involving itself with the compromised Communist party and thus drawing away from the mass organizations, hasn't a chance to become a mass party "within the period necessary to resist Capitalist Reaction, Fascism and War."

Thus, the I.L.P. considers it necessary for a revolutionary organization to exist independently within the *national* framework even at the present time. Marxist logic, it would seem, demands that this consideration be applied to the international arena as

*Cf. "What the I.L.P. Stands For," a Compendium of the Basic Party Documents.

well. A struggle against war and for the revolution is unthinkable without the International. The I.L.P. deems it necessary for it to exist *side by side* with the Communist party, and consequently, *against* the Communist party, and by this very fact it recognizes the need of creating against the Communist International—a New International. Yet the I.L.P. dares not draw this conclusion. Why?

If in the opinion of the I.L.P. the Comintern could be reformed, it would be its duty to join its ranks, and work for this reform. If, however, the I.L.P. has become convinced that the Comintern is incorrigible, it is its duty to join with us in the struggle for the Fourth International. The I.L.P. does neither. It halts midway. It is bent on maintaining a "friendly collaboration" with the Communist International. *If it is invited to the next Congress of the Communist International*—such is the literal wording of its April theses of this year!—it will there fight for its position and in the interests of the "unity of revolutionary socialism". Evidently, the I.L.P. expected to be "invited" to the International. This means that its psychology in relation to the International, is that of a *guest*, and not of a *host*. But the Comintern did not invite the I.L.P. What to do, now?

It is necessary to understand first of all that really *independent* workers' parties—independent not only of the bourgeoisie, but also of both bankrupt Internationals—cannot be built unless there is a close international bond between them, on the basis of self-same principles, and provided there is a living interchange of experience, and vigilant mutual control. The notion that national parties (which ones? on what basis?) must be established first, and coalesced only later into a new International (how will a common principled basis then be guaranteed?) is a caricature echo of the history of the Second International: the First and Third Internationals were both built differently. But, today, under the conditions of the imperialist epoch, after the proletarian vanguard of all countries in the world has passed through many decades of a colossal and common experience, including the experience of the collapse of the two Internationals, it is absolutely unthinkable to build new Marxist, revolutionary parties, without direct contact with the self-same work in other countries. And this means the building of the Fourth International.

The "International Bureau of Revolutionary Socialist Unity" (I.A.G.)

To be sure, the I.L.P. has in reserve a certain international association, namely, the London Bureau (I.A.G.). Is this the beginning of a new International? Emphatically, no! The I.L.P. comes out against "split" more decisively than any other participant: not for nothing has the bureau of those organizations who themselves *split away* inscribed on its banner . . . "unity". Unity with whom? The I.L.P. itself yearns exceedingly to see all revolutionary-socialist organizations and all sections of the Communist International united in a single International, and that this International have a good program. The road to hell is paved with good intentions. The position of the I.L.P. is all the more helpless since nobody else shares it inside of the London association itself. On the other hand, the Communist International, having drawn social-patriotic conclusions from the theory of socialism in one country, seeks today an alliance with powerful reformist organizations, and not at all with weak revolutionary groups. The April theses of the I.L.P. console us: ". . . but they (i.e. the other organizations in the London association) agree that the question of a new International is now theoretical (!), and that the form (!) which the reconstructed International will take will depend upon historical events (!) and the development of the actual working class struggle." (p. 20). Remarkable reasoning! The I.L.P. urges the unity of the "revolutionary-socialist organizations" with the sections of the Communist International; but there is not and there cannot be any

desire on the part of either for this unification. "But", the I.L.P. consoles itself, the revolutionary-socialist organizations are agreed upon . . . what? Upon the fact that it is still impossible to foresee today what "form" the reconstructed International will take. For this reason, the very question of the International ("Workers of the World Unite!") is declared to be "theoretical". With equal justification one might proclaim the question of socialism to be theoretical, since it is unknown what form it will take; besides, it is impossible to achieve the socialist revolution by means of a "theoretical" International.

For the I.L.P., the question of a *national* party and the question of the *International* rest on two different planes. The danger of war and Fascism demands, as we were told, *immediate* work for the building of a national party. As regards the International, this question is . . . "theoretical". Opportunism reveals itself so clearly and incontestably in nothing else as in this principled counterposing of a national party to the International. The banner of "revolutionary-socialist unity" serves only as a cover for the yawning gap in the policy of the I.L.P. Are we not justified in saying that the London association is a temporary haven for vacillators, waifs, and those who hope to be "invited" to one of the existing Internationals?

The I.L.P. and the Communist International

While acknowledging that the Communist Party has a "revolutionary and theoretical basis", the I.L.P. discerns "sectarianism" in its conduct. This characterization is superficial, one-sided, and fundamentally false. Which "theoretical basis" has the I.L.P. in mind? Is it Marx's *Das Kapital*, Lenin's Works, the resolutions of the first Congresses of the C.I.—or the eclectic program of the Communist International accepted in 1928, the wretched theory of the "Third Period", "social-Fascism", and, finally, the latest social patriotic avowals?

The leaders of the I.L.P. make believe (at any rate, such was the case up to yesterday) that the Communist International has preserved the theoretical basis that was lodged by Lenin. In other words, they identify Leninism with Stalinism. To be sure, they are unable to make up their minds to say it in so many words. But, in their passing silently over the enormous critical struggle that took place first inside the Communist International, and then outside it; in their refusal to study the struggle waged by the "Left Opposition" (the Bolshevik-Leninists) and to determine upon their attitude towards it, *the leaders of the I.L.P. turn out to be backward provincials in the sphere of the questions of the world movement*. In this they pay tribute to the worst traditions of the insular working class movement. As a matter of fact the Communist International has no theoretical basis. Indeed, what sort of theoretical basis can there be, when yesterday's leaders, like Bukharin, are pronounced to be "bourgeois liberals", when the leaders of the day before yesterday, like Zinoviev, are incarcerated in jail as "counter-revolutionists", while the Manuilskys, Lozovskys, Dimitroffs together with Stalin himself never generally bothered much with questions of theory.

The remark in relation to "sectarianism" is no less erroneous. *Bureaucratic Centrism* which seeks to dominate the working class is not sectarianism but a specific refraction of the autocratic rule of the Soviet bureaucracy. Having burnt their fingers, these gentlemen are abjectly crawling today before reformism and patriotism. The leaders of the I.L.P. took for gospel the assertion of the leaders of the S.A.P. (poor counsellors!) that the Comintern would rest on the pinnacle, if not for its "ultra-left sectarianism". In the meantime, the Seventh Congress has spurned the last remnants of "ultra-leftism"; but, as a result, the Communist International did not rise higher but fell still lower, losing all right to an independent political existence. Because the parties of the

Second International are, in any case, more suitable for the policy of blocs with the bourgeoisie and for the patriotic corruption of workers: they have behind them an imposing opportunist record, and they arouse less suspicion on the part of bourgeois allies.

Aren't the leaders of the I.L.P. of the opinion that after the Seventh Congress they ought to reconsider radically their attitude toward the Communist International? If it is impossible to reform the Labour Party, then there are immeasurably less chances for reforming the Communist International. Nothing remains except to build the New International. True, in the ranks of the Communist parties quite a few honest revolutionary workers are still to be found. But they must be led out from the quagmire of the Comintern onto the revolutionary road.

The "Councils of Workers' Deputies" and the New International

Both the revolutionary conquest of power and the dictatorship of the proletariat are included in the program of the I.L.P. After the events in Germany, Austria and Spain, these slogans have become compulsory. But this does not at all mean that in every case they are invested with a genuine revolutionary content. The Zyromskis of all countries find no embarrassment in combining the "dictatorship of the proletariat" with the most debased patriotism, and besides, such fakery is becoming more and more fashionable. The leaders of the I.L.P. are not social-patriots. But until they blow up their bridges to Stalinism, their internationalism will remain semi-platonic in character.

The April theses of the I.L.P. enable us to approach the same question from a new standpoint. In the theses two special paragraphs (27 and 28) are devoted to the future British Councils of Workers' Deputies. They contain nothing wrong. But it is necessary to point out that the Councils (Soviets) as such are only an *organizational form* and not at all a sort of immutable principle. Marx and Engels provided us with the theory of the proletarian revolution, partly in their analysis of the Paris Commune, but they did not have a single word to say about the Councils. In Russia there were Social-Revolutionary and Menshevik Soviets (Councils), i.e. anti-revolutionary Soviets. In Germany and Austria the Councils in 1918 were under the leadership of reformists and patriots and they played a counter-revolutionary role. In autumn 1923, in Germany, the role of the Councils was fulfilled actually by the shop committees that could have guaranteed fully the victory of the revolution were it not for the craven policy of the Communist party under the leadership of Brandler and Co. Thus, the slogan of Councils, as an organizational form, is not in itself of a principled character. We have no objection, of course, to the inclusion of Councils as "all-inclusive organizations" (p. 11) in the program of the I.L.P. Only, the slogan must not be turned into a fetish, or worse yet—into a hollow phrase, as in the hands of the French Stalinists ("Power to Daladier!"—"Soviets Everywhere!").

But we are interested in another aspect of the question. Paragraph 28 of the theses reads, "The Workers' Councils will arise in their final form in the actual revolutionary crisis, but the Party must *consistently prepare for their organization*" (our italics). Keeping this in mind, let us compare the attitude of the I.L.P. toward the future Councils with its own attitude toward the future International: the erroneousness of the I.L.P.'s position will then stand before us in sharpest clarity. In relation to the International we are given generalities after the spirit of the S.A.P.: "the form which the reconstructed International will take will depend upon historic events and the actual development of the working class struggle." On this ground the I.L.P. draws the conclusion that the question of the International is purely "theoretical", i.e., in the language of empiricists, *unreal*. At the same time we are told that: "the Workers Councils will arise in their final form in the actual revolutionary crisis, but the Party must *consistently prepare for their organization*." It is hard to become more hope-

lessly muddled. On the question of the Councils and on the question of the International, the I.L.P. resorts to methods of reasoning that are directly contradictory. In which case is it mistaken? In both. The theses turn topsy-turvy the actual tasks of the party. The Councils represent an *organizational form*, and only a *form*. There is no way of "preparing for" Councils except by means of a correct revolutionary policy applied in all spheres of the working class movement: there is no special, specific "preparation for" Councils. It is entirely otherwise with the International. While the Councils can arise only under the condition that there is a revolutionary ferment among the many-millioned masses, the International is always necessary: both on holidays and weekdays, during periods of offensive as well as in retreat, in peace as well as in war. The International is not at all a "form" as flows from the utterly false formulation of the I.L.P. The International is first of all a *program*, and a system of *strategic, tactical and organizational* methods that flow from it. By dint of historic circumstances the question of the British Councils is deferred for an indeterminate period of time. But the question of the International, as well as the question of national parties, cannot be deferred for a single hour: we have here in essence two sides of one and the same question. Without a Marxist International, national organizations, even the most advanced, are doomed to narrowness, vacillation and helplessness; the advanced workers are forced to feed upon surrogates for internationalism. To proclaim as "purely theoretical", i.e. needless, the building of the Fourth International, is cravenly to renounce the basic task of our epoch. In such a case, slogans of revolution, of the dictatorship of the proletariat, Councils, etc., lose nine-tenths of their meaning.

The Superiority of Foresight Over "Astonishment"

The August 30 issue of the *New Leader* carries an excellent article: "Don't Trust the Government!" The article points out that the danger of "national unity" draws closer with the approaching danger of war. At the time when the ill-fated leaders of the S.A.P. call for the *emulation*—literally so!—of British pacifists, the *New Leader* writes: "It (the Government) is actually using the enthusiasm for peace to prepare the British people for imperialist war." These lines, which are printed in italics, express with utmost precision the political function of petty-bourgeois pacifism: by providing a platonic outlet for the horror of the masses to war, pacifism enables imperialism all the easier to transform these masses into cannon fodder. The *New Leader* lashes the patriotic position of Citrine and other social-imperialists who (with quotations from Stalin) mount upon the backs of Lansbury and other pacifists. But this same article goes on to express its "astonishment" at the fact that the British Communists are supporting Citrine's policy on the question of the League of Nations and the "sanctions" against Italy ("astonishing support of Labour line"). The "astonishment" in the article is the Achilles heel of the entire policy of the I.L.P. When an individual "astonishes" us by his unexpected behavior, it only means that we are poorly acquainted with this individual's real character. It is immeasurably worse when a politician is compelled to confess his "astonishment" at the acts of a political party, and what is more, of an entire International. For the British Communists are only carrying out the decisions of the Seventh Congress of the Communist International. The leaders of the I.L.P. are "astonished" only because they have failed up to now to grasp the real character of the Communist International, and its sections. Yet, there is a twelve years' history behind the Marxist criticism of the Communist International. From the time the Soviet bureaucracy made as its symbol of faith the theory of "socialism in one country" (1924), the *Bolshevik-Leninists forecasted the inevitability of the nationalist and patriotic degeneration of the sections of the Communist International*, and from then on they followed this process critically through all its

stages. The leaders of the I.L.P. were caught off guard by events only because they had ignored the criticism of our tendency. The privilege of becoming "astonished" by major events is the prerogative of a pacifist and reformist petty-bourgeois. The Marxist, especially those claiming the right to leadership, must be capable not of astonishment but of foresight. And, we may remark in passing, it is not the first time in history that Marxist misdoubt turned out more penetrating than Centrist credulity.

The I.L.P. broke with the mighty Labour Party because of the latter's reformism and patriotism. And today, retorting to Wilkinson, the *New Leader* writes that the independence of the I.L.P. is justified fully by the patriotic position of the Labour Party. Then what are we to say about the I.L.P.'s interminable flirtation with the British Communist Party that now tails behind the Labour Party? What are we to say about the I.L.P.'s urge to fuse with the Third International that is now the first violinist in the social-patriotic orchestra? Are you "astonished", comrades Maxton, Fenner Brockway, and others? That does not suffice for a party leadership. In order to put an end to becoming astonished, one must evaluate critically the road that has been travelled, and draw the conclusion for the future.

Back in August 1933, the Bolshevik-Leninist delegation issued a special declaration officially proposing to all the participants in the London Bureau, among them the I.L.P., that they review jointly with us the basic strategic problems of our epoch, and in particular, that they determine their attitude to our programmatic documents.

But the leaders of the I.L.P. deemed it below their dignity to occupy themselves with such matters. Besides, they were afraid they might compromise themselves by consorting with an organization which is the target of a particularly rabid and vile persecution at the hands of the Moscow bureaucracy: we should not overlook the fact that the leaders of the I.L.P. awaited all the while an "invitation" from the Communist International. They waited, but the awaited did not materialize. . . .

Is it conceivable that even after the Seventh Congress the leaders of the I.L.P. will be so hardy as to present the matter as if the British Stalinists turned out to be the squires of the little honored Sir Walter Citrine only through a misunderstanding, and only for a split-second? Such a dodge would be unworthy of a revolutionary party. We should like to entertain the hope that the leaders of the I.L.P. will come at last to an understanding of how lawful is the complete and irremediable collapse of the Communist International, as a revolutionary organization, and that they will draw from this all the necessary conclusions. These are quite simple:

Work out a Marxist program.

Turn away from the leaders of the Communist party and face towards . . . the mass organizations.

Stand under the banner of the Fourth International.

On this road we are ready to march shoulder to shoulder with the I.L.P.

L. TROTSKY.

September 18, 1935

Max Eastman's Straw Man

MAX EASTMAN has a deceptive, though not unusual, critical method. When he wishes to make a point, he makes it by attacking what he alleges to be the ideas of some one else. But this is only appearance. Actually he builds up a straw opponent, and then goes on cheerfully to tear this straw man to pieces. Naturally he succeeds, for he is careful to build his straw man out of confused and contradictory materials, and consequently has little difficulty in the job of demolition. Most often he labels his straw man, "Marx" or "Marxism"; though other labels—for example, "Sidney Hook"—are not infrequent. It is not impossible for such a method to yield certain correct results; but the method itself is hardly the manner in which to increase our understanding of the alleged opponents. Specifically, it has contributed only to misconceptions, some of them exceedingly serious, about Marx and Marxism.

I do not intend here to discuss Eastman's position in general. This would require, for example, an analysis of his outmoded, nineteenth-century notion of "science", and his failure to grasp the meaning of the *historical* approach. My immediate purpose is more restricted; namely, to examine the leading contentions of his article, "Marxism: Science or Philosophy?" which appeared in the August issue of *THE NEW INTERNATIONAL*.

This article makes two chief points: First, "that Marx himself did not wish to be a philosopher," that "he did not want any philosophy at all", that he aimed at "rooting up all philosophy forever". Second (and more important), Eastman contends that "Marx planted the seed of a new philosophy in the very labor of rooting up all philosophy forever." The heart of this philosophy of Marx's own, what in fact proves Marxism to be a "philosophy" and not a "science", is "the conception that reality itself is a purposive process, and that the highest state of mind a human being can attain is one in which he conceives himself as cooperating with, or participating in, the forward and upward going of that reality towards high ends." Marx reads "his own ideal program of action

into a world conceived as inherently purposive." (The quotations in this paragraph are all from Eastman's article.)

I.

To prove that Marx did not want to be a philosopher, that he wanted to get rid of all philosophy forever, Eastman quotes at length from *Die deutsche Ideologie*. He believes that the quotations establish his point. This becomes part of the stuff of his straw man; Eastman can now go on to show how naive Marx was, how he failed to understand the implications of his own rejection of philosophy, and how Marx himself fell into the trap of philosophical speculation which he had pretended to lay bare.

But, surely, no one who takes Marx's method seriously can fail to approach such a problem as this *concretely*, that is, in its actual historical context. A Marxist cannot merely understand "Marx's rejection of philosophy" in the abstract; he must ask what this rejection means in the concrete historical and biographical context in which it is made. If Marx did reject "philosophy", he was not simply expressing distaste for a certain word; he was rejecting what the word referred to within the given context. If we approach the question from this point of view, the meaning of Marx's "rejection of philosophy" becomes clear by a study of precisely those passages from which Eastman quotes.

Die deutsche Ideologie, like the somewhat earlier *The Holy Family*, was part of Marx's break with Hegelianism. First of all, then, the rejection of philosophy stated in *Die deutsche Ideologie* means precisely—the rejection of Hegelianism. But Hegelianism was, in common with the major tradition of German philosophy, a form of philosophic idealism. More broadly, then, the rejection of philosophy means—the rejection of idealism. This is indeed what Marx himself makes clear: "In direct opposition to German philosophy which came down from heaven to earth, we here intend to rise from earth to heaven. . . ."

But more than this is meant. Marx meant also the rejection of any philosophy which proceeded merely "deductively", which

believed that "truth" about the nature of reality could be obtained merely by correct reasoning from supposedly certain "first principles" known to the mind. Such a procedure characterized not merely the idealist philosophies, but likewise many earlier forms of materialism (e.g., the materialisms of the French Enlightenment). In contrast to this deductive method, Marx insists that we must "start from really acting people", that we must discover their "empirically ascertained life-process, which is bound up with material conditions".

But, third, the most distinctive point in this "rejection of philosophy" (for the two former are by no means peculiar to Marxism) is contained in the following sentences, quoted by Eastman: "In this way, morals, religion, *metaphysics*, and other forms of ideology, lose their apparent independence. . . . When you begin to describe reality, then *an independent philosophy* loses its reason 'for being' (the italics are in Eastman's version). What Marx is here insisting upon, of course—and this is his central point—is that, contrary to the views of his predecessors, philosophy can be understood only *historically*, only in the light of the historical and social context in which the philosophy appears. He is attacking the idea of the supra-temporal character of philosophy, of its isolation from the actual world of space and time, of its absoluteness or eternity. Philosophy, like morals, like religion and economics, must be understood concretely, historically.

Does this mean a rejection of "philosophy" in the abstract, of the very meaning and possibility of philosophy of any kind? Clearly, put in this manner, the problem is a purely verbal one. If we confine our definition of the word, "philosophy", to what Marx here *concretely* rejects, then he has rejected philosophy altogether. But no such restriction is necessary or particularly useful. If, for example, we include within the meaning of philosophy the analysis and criticism of the fundamental terms, concepts, postulates, and methods of the sciences and near-sciences—a use of the word shared by many contemporary philosophers—Marx's rejection obviously does not apply. Marx himself was very much concerned with such analysis and criticism. The basis of his empirical studies in, for example, economics, politics and history, is bound up with such "philosophic" analysis. Consider the analysis of "value" and of "labour power" in the first part of *Capital*. Now this analysis, it is true, cannot be separated from the empirical study to which it is relevant; but it is nevertheless possible to regard it as differing sufficiently from the empirical study proper to deserve a separate name: the analysis of fundamental concepts and methods is—though always to be checked by empirical results—nevertheless presupposed in the very possibility of interpreting the empirical results. The relationship between them is, in a proper sense of the word, dialectical.

This distinction between the meaning of philosophy which Marx rejected and one meaning which he both accepted and contributed to can be enforced by a more recent example. Einstein is a scientist, and in addition a philosopher; but he is a philosopher both in the sense which Marx rejected and in that which he accepted. In his early treatises, Einstein, in part, reached certain scientific results: e.g., certain generalizations dealing with masses at high relative velocities, and with certain data of "field physics". But to reach these results, Einstein was forced also to make a critical analysis of the fundamental concepts and presuppositions of Newtonian physics—e.g., of the concepts of "simultaneity", "space", "ether", of the supposition that "absolute velocity" had a meaning. This analysis was not purely "scientific" in any usual sense of the word. It called for no new experiments or observations. What was necessary was a new *schema* in terms of which empirical results already obtained could be made intelligible; and this involved a revision of the root terms and postulates of Newtonian physics. If we choose to call such a criticism "science", there is no reason to quarrel. It is more useful to use another word to distinguish

such criticism from the more strictly empirical inductive aspect of science. But whatever name we use, Marx accepted and notably contributed to such criticism.

But Einstein also "philosophizes" in another sense. He writes essays stating his belief in a loose, semi-mystical kind of idealism, or even pantheism. In spite of Einstein's own conviction to the contrary, this idealism has no logical relation whatever to his science (or to his "philosophy" in the first sense), and is no better than any other confused, sentimental wish-thinking. It is philosophy of this latter type, and the very possibility of such a philosophy which Marx rejects.

There are other and important functions of philosophy (whether or not we use the word) which Marx accepted, and to most of which he himself made contributions. But there is no need to go into details in the present connection. The important point is to avoid juggling with words, and to understand precisely what Marx did mean, in *Die deutsche Ideologie* and elsewhere, when he "rejected philosophy". We shall then be better able to defend the necessary and acceptable tasks of "philosophy" against the naive positivism of the Eastmans as well as against the day dreams of the idealists, and to clarify our understanding of the full import of Marx's own method.

II.

Eastman, however, believes that Marx, though trying to get rid of philosophy altogether, fell victim to it not only in the "acceptable" senses which I have discussed, but also in the "bad" sense—a sense which is clearly incompatible with the allegations of Marxism. Eastman claims, as we have seen, that Marx treats reality as a purposive process, that he "reads his own ideal program of action into a world conceived as inherently purposive".

If this claim is true, Eastman is quite correct in contending that Marx's abandonment of philosophy is hollow, and that Marx retained the heart of Hegelianism while turning it "the other side up". The view that the world is purposive is a view of idealism, and, for that matter, usually of religious forms of idealism.

Eastman writes as if Marx had been well-intentioned but exceedingly naive with respect to this problem. The first thing to notice is that both Marx and Engels were keenly aware of it, and make frequent references to it—though not usually in Eastman's terminology. Indeed, their distinction between "utopian" and "scientific" socialism centers around this very point. This is, however, obscured by the habit of commentators to suppose that by calling socialism "scientific" Marx and Engels meant that history, political-economy, etc., are scientific *in the same sense* and according to the same methods as, for example, physics and chemistry. This latter notion is, of course, preposterous, and is held by some positivists, not by Marxists. What above all Marx and Engels meant by calling their socialism scientific was that it studied historical and social processes as *non-purposive*; that they were resolved to discover the general laws of historical development (especially of capitalist society) as these operated independently of the ideals, wishes and subjective purposes of human beings. "Its [scientific socialism's] task was no longer to manufacture a system of society as perfect as possible, but to examine the historico-economic succession of events from which these classes and their antagonisms had of necessity sprung, and to discover in the economic conditions thus created the means of ending the conflict." (Engels, *Socialism, Utopian and Scientific*.) Indeed, Engels' whole essay is an attack upon those who do what Eastman accuses Marx of doing—who read their own ideal program into the world. It is precisely this which, according to Engels, defines them as "utopian".

Again: "In the social production of their subsistence men enter into determined and necessary relations with each other which are *independent of their wills*—production-relations which correspond to a definite stage of development of their material productive

forces. . . . The mode of production of the material subsistence conditions the social, political and spiritual life-process in general. . . ." (Marx, Introduction to *Critique of Political Economy*. My italics.)

These are, of course, "standard quotations". What it is necessary to clarify, however, is a certain ambiguity in stating that the social relations into which men enter (corresponding to the development of material productive forces) are "independent of their wills". Marx does not mean that the "wills"—purposes, preferences, ideals, etc.—of men have no rôle whatever in the historical process (as they do not, for example, in the activities of electrons). This would be manifestly absurd. Men's wills and purposes do in fact enter in as an integral part of the historical process. As Marx puts it, "The production of ideas and conceptions, of consciousness is, to begin with, directly interwoven with the material activity and the material intercourse of men." This is sufficiently obvious. For example, in the early nineteenth century, many of the former artisans and peasants were faced, by the onrush of capitalist economy, with the choice of working for wages or starving. That they should have "willed" or "purposed" to work was an essential prerequisite for the development of capitalist production. However, they *might* have willed otherwise. Not only is this a bare logical possibility: some *did* will otherwise, some willed to starve. Similarly, individual capitalists, after accumulating a certain amount of money not only might have but did in some cases "will" to hoard their money, rather than to put it back into production or to loan it at interest.

What Marx means is, then, not that the process of development goes on independently of "will" altogether; but that the course of development is independent of this or that "willing" or "purposing" of particular individuals—that individual peculiarities in "willing" will not affect the general result, and will cancel out in the long run. And he means, secondly, that the wills, purposes, and ideals held by individuals or groups of individuals do not, under any circumstances, play an "independent" rôle divorced from material social conditions in terms of which they operate.

This distinction is not without importance. Part of Eastman's confusion, and all of his belief that the *Theses on Feuerbach* support his argument, are the result of a failure to understand it. Because Eastman observes rightly that Marx finds purposes and ideals entering integrally into the historical process, he concludes that Marx "reads purposes and ideals into the historical process". But such a conclusion would be justified only if History were a science in the same sense that physics is a science, and if its subject-matter were of the same nature. When we discuss the behavior of atoms, we have little temptation to read purpose or will into the world of atoms, because our subject-matter specifically excludes any form of purpose or will. But when we discuss history, which involves as "its first premise" (according to *Die deutsche Ideologie*) "the existence of living human individuals", we could hardly do so adequately without taking some account of the thoughts, wills, purposes and ideals which the living human individuals have.

What Marx did, then, was not to read ideals and purposes into history, but to discover them (and other forms and manifestations of consciousness) as objectively part of the historical process. Part of his task was to explain how ideals and purposes and consciousness in general (including systematized forms of consciousness such as morals, philosophy and religion) entered into the historical process, what *concretely* was the relationship between the forms of consciousness and the productive relations, and between them in turn and the technique of production. In doing so he overthrew both idealism and vulgar materialism. He denied the idealist contention that consciousness in any sense "determined existence" or played an independent non-historical rôle; and he denied equally the vulgar materialist conception of a single reality

consisting of mechanical atoms in a statically determined interrelationship. In Marx's view, "which conforms to real life, one proceeds from the really living individuals themselves and regards consciousness [not as something "unreal" as did the vulgar materialists but] only as *their* consciousness".

III.

But, Eastman might point out, Marx claims to discover a "direction" in history. Is this not a reading of ideals into the world, a belief that history is purposive, and moving forward to a realization of the ideal? Certainly this would be a valid criticism of most if not all of the bourgeois doctrines of Progress which flourished so popularly during the nineteenth century.

We must ask ourselves what Marx meant by saying that history has a direction. (We discover that it was not for him a "moral" notion at all—though we might on occasion draw moral conclusions from it. Marx saw a direction to history in observable, formulable material conditions. This direction is best indicated in the development of the means of production, and is roughly measurable in terms of the output of goods per time-unit of labor. This "direction" is surely not a reading of Marx's ideals into the world. It is empirical fact which we can confirm by the concrete study of history. It is possible to regard this fact as morally either good or bad, and it is at the present time regarded in both ways by various individuals. If we—as Marx and Marxists generally do—regard it as "good" in the sense that it provides a chief material condition for making possible general material well-being, and thereby providing the basis for great cultural advances for humanity as a whole, we are not in any sense reading our ideal program into the world. We are doing rather the opposite: we are, in a sense, basing our ideal program on the actualities of the real world and the real historical process. It is the contemporary medievalists or the southern agrarians or the liberal meliorists who read their ideal programs into the world: for they formulate their ideals (back to the thirteenth century or to Jefferson, or on to coöperative capitalism) with no relation to historical actualities. Their ideals are not merely "morally wrong" (which is a meaningless statement, in any case, in the abstract), but impossible. In their supposition that these ideals are possible is to be discovered their "reading of their ideal program into the world".

Marx not merely pointed to a "direction" in past history. He likewise, up to a certain point, predicted the direction of history in the future. Is it on this basis that Eastman can conclude that Marx viewed history as purposive, that he read his ideals into the world? Did Marx, as Eastman would seem to suggest, begin by "willing" the further development of capitalism, the intensification of its contradictions, its overthrow, and the victory of socialism, begin by believing in these developments as "ideals"; and then, by a gigantic process of rationalization, and by reading them into the historical process, pretending to discover them in history as "objective" laws of future historical change?

Eastman, unfortunately, sees this question as primarily a psychological one. As such it has a purely biographical interest. It may be—it is for the biographer to answer—that Marx was driven to the long years in the British Museum by an inescapable psychic drive to justify to himself his own pre-conceived "ideals", to "make" history conform to him, and not his knowledge to history. But this is not a relevant question to the economist, the historian, or the revolutionist. These latter must ask, not what was Marx's inner psychic urge, but—was he correct in his conclusions? Can Eastman deny that Marx was, in general at least, correct in predicting that the development of the means of production (in terms of greater output per time-unit of labor, etc.) would be carried further? or that this development would be increasingly hindered and even sent backwards (at least relatively backwards) by the

continued maintenance of the capitalist social relations? or that working class associations and parties would develop? or that some at least of these organizations would have as their aim, in theory and practise, the overthrow of capitalist society and the enforcement of new social relations which would permit the less restricted development of the means of production? Eastman can hardly deny the objective truth—in general, at least—of these predictions. They have already been confirmed in actuality. The question of Marx's psychological process, consequently, is irrelevant. If it is true that these developments corresponded with Marx's "ideals", this is of only accidental importance. Once again, Marx was *discovering* the objective course of historical development, independent of his own or of any individual ideals or purposes. If it happens to be a fact—as it demonstrably is—that history develops in certain more or less lawful ways, in certain more or less definite directions, and if we state those laws and that direction, we are no more considering history as "purposive" than we would be considering a brick "purposive" when we predict that it will fall if we drop it from a high place. There is a difference, of course, in the two cases, as we have already seen: the purposes and wills of men are part of the historical process, whereas they are not part of the activities of the brick; but the purposes and wills are themselves subject to the general laws.

IV.

However, Eastman is not yet fully answered. Marx, he will maintain, does not merely predict such developments and such a direction as have been mentioned. He states in addition that the victory of socialism is "inevitable". What does this mean? It means, Eastman will claim, that Marx believed that the process of history itself *guarantees* the realization of Marx's own subjective ideal (namely, socialism)—in other words, that the world (nature, history . . .) is purposive. Thus, in the doctrine that "socialism is inevitable" Eastman finds convincing demonstration that Marx "read his own ideal program of action into a world conceived as inherently purposive".

It is not my intention at this time to go fully into the alleged doctrine of "the inevitability of socialism". I wish to do so only sufficiently to show that Eastman cannot justify his criticism of Marx as an "unwitting philosopher" by an appeal to it.

That Marx wrote, on certain occasions, in certain contexts, that socialism is inevitable, is unquestionably true. For example, in the *Communist Manifesto*, he wrote that the fall of the bourgeoisie "and the victory of the proletariat are equally inevitable". But does it therefore follow that Marx was reading a guarantee, a purpose, into history?

This question is not so clear as it might at first sight seem to be. The reason for this is the extreme ambiguity of the word "inevitability" itself. What do we mean when we say that something is inevitable? A number of clearly distinguishable meanings are possible:

(1) Sometimes we mean "logically inevitable", as in the proposition, "It is inevitable that the angles of any plane triangle should equal 180 degrees." This is, however, a purely formal meaning, and not relevant to the present question, where we refer to an actual future event. Socialism is obviously *not* logically inevitable, for there are innumerable alternatives which involve no contradiction.

(2) Often we mean only "highly probable", as in the proposition, "If you don't take your umbrella, you'll inevitably get wet" (as we might say if the weather looked very threatening). But Marx clearly meant more, or at least something different than, this.

(3) Mathematicians express "inevitability" as equivalent to "having a probability of 1". In mathematics itself this meaning, like the logical meaning, is also purely formal, depending merely

upon the definition of the problem. However, in its factual application it is *perhaps* this meaning which Marx had in mind. He may have meant that the future victory of socialism has, as a matter of objective fact, a probability of 1—in other words, that this victory is objectively certain. At any rate, many alleged Marxists have understood the statement in this way, and the controversies concerning it have—though confusedly—centered on this meaning.

(4) But there are other possible meanings of "inevitable". It is used with a *directive* meaning, as when a general might say to his soldiers, "Go forth and battle bravely—your victory is inevitable." The logical content of his exhortation is: "If you battle bravely enough, *then* you will win." But putting it in this form might weaken its effect in rousing the soldiers, which in turn may be a *necessary condition* of their winning.

(5) There is a closely allied meaning of "inevitable"—what might be called a *moral* or *psychological* meaning. A boxer might say that "he will inevitably beat his opponent" and mean concretely (a) that it is possible for him to win, and (b) that he is going to put his entire determination and will into seeing that he *does* win. Analogously, a revolutionist might mean by saying that socialism is inevitable that he is *resolved* to stick by his principles and to fight for them whatever happens. Thus the Bolshevik-Leninists in the Soviet Union do indeed remain "inevitably" true to the revolution, when they accept exile, torture, or even death rather than capitulation.

(6) Finally, there is the teleological, idealist, or religious meaning, which Eastman attributes to Marx. In this light, "socialism is inevitable" because a "something" (God's Will, the logical unfolding of the Absolute, or simply "the historic process itself") guarantees the outcome. Such a view of history is characteristic of idealists, and especially of theologians. Such people all regard the outcome of history as inevitable, because it is assured by Reality itself. In the end the Kingdom of God or the Perfect State will come to this world, or all will be perfectly consummated in a World Hereafter.

Now we have already noted that the first and second meanings of "inevitable" are inadequate to explain what Marx believed. The third and fourth (what I have called the "directive" and the "moral" or "psychological") are, I feel, clearly *part* of what Marx meant. He meant what all revolutionists mean: to exhort the proletariat to take up battle and to win; and to express his *own* resolve not to give up the struggle. But more than this is meant.

The question, then, is seen to center around the third and sixth meanings, and we may re-phrase the problem as follows: Marx *said* that he rejected the sixth (i.e., the idealist) meaning. But did he believe the third: namely, that the victory of socialism has a probability of 1? And if he did believe this, does it then follow that he was therefore unconsciously—in spite of what he said—resting on the sixth meaning? That is what Eastman would maintain. He would say that there are in fact no sufficient objective grounds, no adequate evidence, for assigning a 1 probability to the victory of socialism; and, consequently, the *belief* that it has such a probability (that is, is certain) can flow *only* from a conscious or unconscious belief in the purposive character of the world, only from reading our ideals into history and thus "discovering" in history the guarantee of their fulfillment.

In the first place, I wish to point out that it does *not* follow that the assignment of a probability of 1 to a future event *necessarily* involves a belief in the world as purposive. For example, I might say that "If I drop this brick, there is a probability of 1 that (it is inevitable that) it will fall to the ground" or that "It is inevitable that I will die" without at all assigning a purpose to nature which guarantees these outcomes. Perhaps I will be mistaken. Perhaps, even, I *never* have sufficient objective grounds for as-

signing a probability of 1 to *any* future event. But nevertheless, I will then be merely mistaken, not reading ideals and purposes into nature. This seems to me clear in the two instances I have just cited. And *theoretically* it seems to me also clear in the case of the belief that socialism is inevitable. Perhaps this belief is in error; but merely asserting it does not seem to entail the reading of an ideal or purpose into nature, any more than in the case of the operation of the laws of gravity or of the processes of biological dissolution.

However, even if there is no necessary connection in theory, it must be admitted that most persons who have believed in the inevitability of some certain historical outcome have *in fact* been guilty, consciously or unconsciously, of reading ideals into nature—have been, that is, idealists or theologians under the skin. Does this hold also in the case of Marx?

To answer, we must first summarize briefly the objective grounds on which Marx (and Marxists) base their contention that socialism is *likely* (leaving aside, at present, the question of whether it is certain—i.e., has a probability of 1). These include: (1) The chief long term material *conditions* for socialism—the centralization of industry, the high technical level of production, the large-scale “socialization” of labor engaged in production, etc.—are not merely probable but already present. (2) The more immediate conditions for the overthrow of capitalism—serious economic dislocations, financial chaos, general social unrest, etc.—from time to time arise in contemporary society. (3) The continuance of the capitalist social relations, by their very nature, means necessarily increasing inability to utilize the productive forces, means actual sabotage of the productive forces, and means further, as a consequence, wide-spread hunger, war, social chaos, etc. (4) The victory of socialism, and the establishment of its type of social relations is the *only* way in which the continued utilization and development of the means of production can be carried out.

Now these four factors (and other similar ones which might be added) are, though necessary conditions for socialism, not yet sufficient for the victory of socialism. We sometimes speak as if the machines, “strangled” by the social relations (the property relations), would rise up and smash them. But, of course, this is only metaphor. The only “means of production” which can rise up is the working class; to achieve the victory of socialism, living men must achieve it; and this means concretely that the working class must overthrow the bourgeoisie. We must, therefore, add a fifth set of factors, of a somewhat different kind from the first four: the existence of a sufficient number of persons who both desire to change the material conditions of capitalist society and to establish a socialist society in its place; and, in addition, who possess sufficient courage, resolution, vigour, and political wisdom to be able to do so against the opposition of those who are resolved to maintain society on its capitalist basis. In the concrete, this fifth factor is roughly equivalent to the active existence of an adequate revolutionary party.

Our problem now becomes: Will this fifth factor be present? Or rather, what is the probability that it will be present? The other four factors are either actually present, or are essential aspects of the nature of capitalism. No reasonable doubt as to them can be entertained. But to conclude that the victory of socialism has a probability of 1, we shall have to present conclusive evidence that this fifth factor has a probability of 1, since without it socialism will not conquer.

The evidence in favor of the fifth factor is drawn chiefly from history. Whenever, in the past, the means of production have no longer been capable of further development under the given social relations, a class of men, usually with the aid of other classes or groups, has in the long run taken social power and altered the social relations to permit further development of the means of

production. Sufficient resentment, courage, and intelligence has been generated in this class to enable it to overthrow the class whose social position depended on the outmoded social relations. We may, on the basis of this evidence, conclude that there is a likelihood that this will happen in the case of a transition from capitalism to socialism. Supplementary evidence may be drawn from social psychology and from contemporary history. It seems unlikely, from what we know about how men in society behave, that they will fail, in the end, to take the only solution which will permit the development of the means of production and prevent a relapse of mankind to barbarism. We observe, furthermore, that since the time of Marx the active revolutionary movement has had a continuous existence, and that revolutionary parties or groups have existed or do exist in nearly all countries.

Now this evidence seems to me sufficient to establish what might be called a “likelihood” for the fifth factor; but I see no way in which this likelihood can be translated into a definite probability quotient. Certainly it does *not* have a probability of 1. The belief that it does would be the sheerest kind of rationalization. This is conclusively shown by a single fact alone: by the fundamental difference between the change from capitalism to socialism and any previous changes in social systems. Previously society has changed always from one form of class exploitation to another; the change to socialism would, however, be a change from class society to a classless society. For this reason, only a loose and rough analogy can be drawn from the past to apply to the change to socialism. This analogy is far too inaccurate to establish anything approaching a probability of 1 for the victory of socialism. It may even be that in the course of the present and approaching intra-capitalist struggles and struggles against capitalism, men will, with modern destructive techniques (which also have no counterpart in the past) destroy each other completely; or at any rate destroy every vestige of civilization. If the latter, historical development would no doubt begin again; and milleniums from now the problem of the victory of socialism would once again face men; and once again it would not have a probability of 1.

This, then, is what seems to me to be the case: The chief material social and economic conditions for the victory of socialism are given in contemporary society; the political and psychological conditions are sufficiently assured to give the objective *opportunity* for actually *achieving* the victory of socialism. But whether the opportunity will be taken, whether victory *will* be achieved, cannot be predicted with certainty beforehand. This is a contingent factor, depending above all on the revolutionary party. I conclude, thus, that the victory of socialism, objectively considered, has a certain probability—is even likely; but that this probability is less than 1.

I believe that this is what Marx meant on those few occasions when he wrote that “socialism is inevitable”. Only such an interpretation can make intelligible his own practical activity, or the powerful influence of his own writings in shaping the revolutionary movement. And this is clearly the attitude of all great revolutionary leaders, if we look not at their words in the abstract, in isolation, but in their concrete context, especially in the context of their lives and activities. The revolutionary leaders have been distinguished, first, by a firm, cold, impersonal estimate of material conditions, and, second, by acting correctly, intelligently, decisively in the right way at the right moment. How else can we understand Lenin’s polemics against those who after the War thought that European capitalism would fall over without a “push”; or Trotsky’s attack today (in France), as always, on those who expect a revolutionary situation to develop to maturity “of itself”? “There is no crisis which can be, by itself, fatal to capitalism. The oscillations of the business cycle only create a situation in which it will be easier, or more difficult, for the proletariat to

overthrow capitalism. The transition from a bourgeois society to socialist society presupposes the activity of living men who are the makers of their own history. . . . If . . . the party of the working class, in spite of favorable conditions, reveals itself incapable of leading the proletariat to the seizure of power, the life of society will continue necessarily upon a capitalist foundation—until a new crisis, a new war, perhaps until the complete disintegration of European civilization.” (Trotsky, paraphrasing Marx and Lenin, in *Whither France?*)

It is true, however, that the “inevitability of socialism” is not interpreted in this way by many alleged Marxists. Many do regard it as a “guarantee” that socialism will conquer—as meaning that socialism has a probability of 1. Historically, we discover that such a view has always been the expression of forces which have slipped away from the revolutionary struggle for power to non-revolutionary or anti-revolutionary activities. We find insistence on “inevitability” in this latter sense characteristic of the theoretic views of, for example, the following:

(1) *Social-democratic gradualism.* In this case, from the late nineteenth century on, belief in the inevitability of socialism has proved a satisfying rationalization of the repudiation of the struggle for power. Why not peaceful, gradual development, if socialism is inevitable anyway? There can be no answer to this question if its premise is granted. The gradualists are correct: The Leninists have no justification for their call to the masses to break with reformism and take the road of bitter struggle, if victory is guaranteed in advance. The masses would be quite right in replying: “Go talk to someone else. We have enough troubles as it is. The meek will be rewarded equally with the brave—your ‘historic process’ will take care of that; and it is a lot less trouble to be meek.”

(2) *Stalinism.* The Stalinist theoreticians, with their so-called philosophy of dialectical materialism—which is only a disguised form of monistic objective idealism—likewise make a great point of the “inevitability” of socialism, even proving that anyone who doesn’t believe in its inevitability is thereby demonstrated to retain typical “petty-bourgeois vacillations”. And the Stalinist acceptance of the dogma is no accident. All the workers of the world need do now is to preserve peace and the *status quo*, and allow socialism to be built quietly in the Soviet Union. The struggle for state power may be put aside for this period; the defeats in Germany,

or Spain, or France, are only minor episodes; because, of course, victory is guaranteed in advance when the proper time comes—when Stalin finishes up socialism in Russia and starts out for new lands to conquer. Once again, the theoretic attack on Stalinism must include a denial that victory is, either in the long run or in a short time, guaranteed; it must insist that victory must be *won*, must be seized.

(3) *Sectarianism.* Insistence on the inevitability of socialism (in the sense that it has a probability of 1) has also characterized most types of sectarianism throughout the history of the movement. In this case, the doctrine becomes the philosophic justification for failing to go to the masses, for the substitution of purest revolutionary phrase-mongering for revolutionary activity. In the long run, the sectarian reasons, the masses will come to us, for our ideas are true and their victory is inevitable. We need only keep our theses and our resolutions pure. Thus, as in the case of the gradualists and the Stalinists, the sectarians likewise reveal the *non-revolutionary* character of their position, which is, as in the other two cases, rationalized and made philosophically respectable by the doctrine of inevitability.

To the extent that Eastman’s attack is directed against this conception of inevitability, he renders a great service. I agree with him that the belief that the victory of socialism has a probability of 1, that history itself objectively “guarantees” its victory (for this is what the belief amounts to) is in essence a form of philosophic idealism, a reading of one’s own ideals into the world, and closely allied to a religious attitude. As such, it has nothing in common with the genuinely Marxist attitude, which indissolubly combines scientific objectivity with the intransigent struggle for power. I believe that in attributing the former attitude to Marx himself, Eastman is mistaken, and that his mistake flows from taking Marx’s words in isolation, out of their context in Marx’s writings and the larger context of Marx’s activities. But this is after all a minor matter. If Eastman chooses to make a correct and gravely important point by building up a straw-man-Marx, he must be criticized for historical inaccuracy, and for the confusions such a method leads to. But to the extent that his criticism is directed in essence not against Marx but against the non-revolutionary falsifiers of living Marxism, we must not merely accept but drive home his lesson.

John WEST

Some Notes on Workers’ Education

WORKERS’ education in the United States, as far as the A. F. of L. and its unions are concerned, was virtually nonexistent up to 1918. A local of the International Ladies Garment Workers Union, a few small enterprises of the Women’s Trade Union League, constituted the only exceptions. But during 1918 to 1921 scores of local labor colleges were founded; the I.L.G.W.U. and some other internationals, several state federations of labor founded educational departments; Brookwood Labor College was founded, and the Workers Education Bureau, calculated to coordinate activities of these new enterprises, was set up. Workers’ education was a subject for discussion in the A. F. of L. conventions. All of these enterprises were launched, however, not by the “regulars” in the unions but by the progressives of that period such as Maurer, then president of the Pennsylvania Federation of Labor, Fitzpatrick of the Chicago Federation of Labor, Brophy of the United Mine Workers, Fannia Cohn of the I.L.G.W.U. and Lefkowitz of the newly born Teachers Union. They stood for industrial unionism, aggressive organizing work, militant strike

activity and independent political action (some were socialists, some for a labor party), as well as for workers’ education.

It was natural that the conservative craft unionists, lacking in class-consciousness, concerned about the immediate economic issue between the boss and the worker, and not interested in the broader social or political issues, should believe that our “great public school system” did and could give American citizens everything they needed in the way of education. The locomotive engineers had a larger percentage of children in high schools and colleges than any other occupational group. They and their fellows in the unions shared the vague, warm American faith, before the war universally and still widely held, that “education” can solve all problems. They thought of the public school system as a people’s, not a class institution. They were not themselves aware of any class needs which it could not be expected readily to fill.

As soon as elements developed in the trade union movement who sought to deal with the needs of the growing numbers of unskilled and semi-skilled workers, who, therefore, encountered more open

resistance from the state, who were confronted with social issues which could not be disposed of in a wage conference between an individual employer and his workers, and who, therefore, tried to develop independent political action in the interest of labor, they also quickly sensed that the school boards dominated by Republican and Democratic politicians were not going to provide workers with the kind of knowledge of emerging social issues which they needed. Thus they turned enthusiastically to workers' education.

That a dawning class-consciousness motivated this concern for workers' education is illustrated by the discussion of adult education versus workers' education which frequently occurred in this period. The liberals of the time, who were eager to do something toward bringing about that new world which the masses had been told would result from their participation in the war, stated in effect: "Yes, our public school system no longer meets the needs of the workers and the trade unionists. The trouble is simply that we have assumed that 'education' ends when a youth emerges from high school or college. But the fact is that education must be a continuous process through the entire life time. Especially in a rapidly changing world such as ours education must be thus continuous. What we learned about the atoms or about the poor in college twenty-five years ago has become outmoded. We adults must go to school again, therefore. But this does not apply to workers only but to all of us." Some among the workers' education movement agreed in substance with that position and stated that it was necessary for the unions to set up classes for the time being simply because the public schools and the colleges had been slow in meeting the new needs; but they must be made aware of the new task as quickly as possible. These elements turned to the Extension Departments of the universities to take over the infant workers' education movement and were profuse in their "gratitude" when swanky Bryn Mawr College rented its grounds for a few weeks in the summer to a summer school for women workers in industry.

There were, however, others in the post-war workers' education movement who had somewhat deeper glimpses of the problem. One of them put it to an audience of workers: "You have to have unions to protect your interest against the boss; and the boss-controlled company union, therefore, won't do. You also have to vote as you strike; a boss-controlled political party won't do. But if all the ideas you get in your head are boss ideas you will be at his mercy anyway. You have to have your own schools, therefore, under your own control, to teach you how to cope with the boss and make a new world."

Yet these progressives were not entirely clear about their position, nor aware of all its implications, as was presently demonstrated. The officialdom of the A. F. of L. did not contribute to the development of the early workers' education enterprises to which we have referred. At first they were disposed to regard them as a frill or fad like so many others "produced by the war". When the movement experienced a mushroom growth they began to regard it as a danger and after the manner of bureaucracies took steps to gain control. Led by Matthew Woll, the A. F. of L. Executive Council first entered into a "partnership" with the Workers Education Bureau which gave the A. F. of L. a minority representation on the Bureau's Executive, and the Bureau in turn got a mild benediction from the A. F. of L., which to some extent facilitated the approach of the workers' educationalists to the unions. But this inevitably constituted an unstable equilibrium.

Where the conservative A. F. of L. officials got control of local labor colleges, for example, they soon died off. The officials demanded that the classes teach nothing not approved by them, which meant the exclusion of all subjects that really interested the students; or else the moral and financial support of the union was withdrawn from the classes or even active persecution of the

students resorted to. Naturally the enterprises which escaped the blighting touch of the officialdom were those which had a more clear-cut progressive or radical outlook, or acquired it in the course of the conflict with the bureaucracy. These elements accordingly gained increasing influence in the Workers Education Bureau. When a convention of the Bureau clearly revealed this trend to the A. F. of L. executives, they took more direct and aggressive measures to acquire control. Delegates were brought to the next convention from international unions which had never had the slightest interest in the movement, the constitution of the Bureau was amended, the progressives were kicked out. Brookwood Labor College, which had been the leading force among the progressives in the movement, was condemned as "communistic, atheistic and anti-A. F. of L.", and unions were urged not to give it money or to send students.

When the A. F. of L. attack on Brookwood came there was a difference of opinion in its Board of Directors as to the way to meet the attack. One extreme was for replying to the A. F. of L. Executive: "Yes, we are really your enemies. We stand on a philosophy of class-struggle, you are class-collaborationists. But we represent the real interest of the workers and therefore we insist you have no right to isolate us from the trade union movement." The other extreme in the Board was for saying: "We are simply educators. We present the facts to our students and the various philosophies in the labor movement, and then they judge for themselves. The result is that some are working as conservative trade unionists, others as communists." The main line of the reply was actually a compromise. It went like this: "Yes, there are differing philosophies in the labor movement. You represent one, we another. But you claim that the trade union movement is democratic. You have no right to kick us out, therefore, unless you can prove we are traitors. Furthermore, we are educators. You fight the open-shoppers, etc. and insist on 'academic freedom' in the public schools and colleges. You cannot now turn about and deny us 'freedom of teaching' within the trade union movement."

The A. F. of L., then experiencing its extreme swing to the right under the Coolidge-Hoover boom, naturally rode rough-shod over all the protests. Brookwood in the period from 1928 to 1933 survived in part on the momentum of its past, but fundamentally because it found support in, and, on the other hand, gave inspiration to, the few progressive, militant elements left in the labor movement—apart of course from those which were in the wilderness with the Stalinists during the Third Period. Outside of this there was no labor movement in that period which could make any use of workers' education.

The crisis of 1933 at Brookwood was again centered upon the question as to which tendency in the labor movement—reformist or revolutionary—the institution would serve. The crisis in the capitalist world and in the labor movement (advent of Fascism, etc.) forced the issue. Under cover of the formula that the school was allied with "the more progressive" forces in the labor movement but was "non-partisan in its teaching", the trade union majority of the Board swung the school into the orbit of the social-democracy, where it now revolves. It is not without significance that the Stalinists helped them do it.

This recital of certain major developments in the workers' education movement, especially as related to the trade unions, has more than historical interest. It sheds important light on developments now under way.

During the past two years there has been a substantial revival in workers' education activity among the unions. As in the period of the war and the years immediately following, this revival followed upon the influx of large numbers of new members, especially the unskilled and semi-skilled, into the unions. It is further-

more supported by the same tendency in the labor movement, though in the main the individuals are of course new, namely by those who stand for industrial unionism, aggressive organizing work, who, since they deal with the masses and not the skilled aristocracy, have to concern themselves with larger social issues and thus support or are inclined to support independent political action.

At the moment there is, however, an interesting variant. The federal administration itself in connection with its unemployment program is carrying on an extensive series of workers' educational enterprises. These classes have in the main been "freer" than those conducted by the unions themselves. Radical students and teachers are not interfered with; no restrictions are enforced in connection with reference material; all points of view are presented and discussed, etc. Mr. Hearst has given some attention to the question but so far apparently without throwing the administration into a panic.

This development must be considered in connection with the policy of the Roosevelt administration toward unionism itself. As has frequently been pointed out in THE NEW INTERNATIONAL, the administration did not organize workers wholesale into the A. F. of L. as certain liberals and the A. F. of L. officials themselves expected in 1933. Indeed, by means of its labor boards, proportional representation clauses in automobile codes, etc., it has very definitely interfered with organization in the basic industries. It did not demonstrate any grave concern when thugs, police and militia were called out in strikes against workers who believed that they were simply asserting the right to organize which had been "given" them in the NRA. Yet the administration has been astute enough to recognize, as some employers whose interests it serves have not, that workers cannot be dealt with in the same way as in an earlier period of economic development. Labor organization of a kind must be "encouraged" or a worse alternative accepted. There is no question that it has taken steps which have helped temporarily to create a psychology which has brought workers into unions and that it has been willing to play the game and to grant concessions to the officials of certain unions. The workers' education enterprises which the administration is sponsoring serve essentially the same purpose. They gear in with the so-called progressive movement in the A. F. of L. They help to canalize the movement for organization and the demand for political and economic education which goes with it on the part of awakening elements in the working class into relatively safe channels. The government can even afford to give somewhat more leeway to "radicalism" in these enterprises than trade union officials because its interests cannot be so directly and substantially affected by the handful of radicals who may gain influence in such enterprises as the interests of a trade union official are threatened by any radicals who may gain genuine influence in his organization. Besides, the administration is in a position at any moment

to put an end to all these educational enterprises by withholding funds.

History will repeat itself in this entire field. Already there are signs of this. When an upturn occurs in the trade union movement and with it in the field of workers' education, the movement has at first an aspect of spontaneity and idealism, classes spring up rapidly, funds are available, idealistic young men and women believe that they are going to be "free" to teach the "truth" and the whole truth as is not the case in public schools and colleges. They believe that they will be given the opportunity to develop a new revolutionary spirit in the unions with union funds and the support of union officials. But presently it is again demonstrated that educational enterprises and institutions in the labor movement, as everywhere else, are the tools or instruments of the social forces and interests which create them, finance them and utilize their output. In the main they must serve the ends of these interests or the official ban is pronounced. Educational enterprises do not for any length of time remain immune from the struggle of interests for power which is the dominant feature of social life under a class system.

As a matter of fact, the underlying clash of tendencies and interests will come to the surface more quickly and sharply than was the case in the decade and a half beginning in 1918. The reason is, of course, that the general pace of economic development is speeded up in this period of capitalist decline and, with this, crises emerge more quickly in all classes and fields, including the working class and the labor movement. Revolutionists can effectively utilize many of these workers' educational enterprises—we do not of course imagine that it is possible to give all workers at all times the full revolutionary program—but only if they have a clear conception of the character of such enterprises and cherish no illusions as to their possibilities and stability.

For the revolutionary party, its own educational work is the chief concern. Except for brief periods, before the war in the S. P. and after the war in the C.P., the movement in the United States has never done any serious theoretical work in the application of Marxism to the problems of imperialism in general and American imperialism in particular. Hence there has not been a central school with intellectual prestige providing guidance and analysis for the leadership of the party and thus in turn for the membership. Other phases of our educational work cannot of course wait upon the establishment of such a central institution for research and teaching. But this need should have the most serious attention of the Workers Party in this period when it is urgently necessary to indoctrinate the advanced workers and intellectuals with the theory of revolutionary internationalism and when much fundamental work in the application of the theory to the problems of imperialism and the impending war is required.

A. J. MUSTE

Marxism and the Intellectuals

I.

The Marxist Theory of the Intellectual

SINCE THE THEORY of historical materialism, which lies at the very heart of Marxism, is the crowning achievement of the bourgeois intellectual, it is no more than an act of historical justice to apply it to the intelligentsia itself. Castes of learned men existed long before the rise of bourgeois society. The Egyptian and Aztec priesthoods, who had a monopoly of learning and allowed it to die with them, the Greek philosophers and the medieval scholars, possessed many of the traits which distinguish the intellectual from his fellows. But the intelligentsia as a highly

self-conscious and separate grouping with its own interests and institutions is a peculiar product of bourgeois society and the highly developed division of labor within it.

The structure of capitalist society is exceedingly complex. While, from the economic and political standpoint the relationships between the two basic classes become ever-more clearly defined, from the viewpoint of the division of labor the population becomes increasingly differentiated into a vast multitude of sub-classes and occupational groups, each performing special social functions and possessing its peculiar character, interests, institutions, traditions, techniques, and psychology.

One of the most important sections of these middle-class groups comprises the professions. Historically, the intelligentsia has evolved together with the professions and remains today in the most intimate connection with them. Intellectuals are usually (though not necessarily) professionals of one kind or another, teachers, writers, scientists, artists, politicians, etc.

Since the professional may be identical in person, if not in function, with the intellectual, it is often difficult to draw the dividing line between them. The practitioner of every profession theorizes occasionally about specific problems in connection with his work, and to that extent is an intellectual. It is only, however, when the professional carries on the task of theoretical inquiry in a conscious, sustained, and comprehensive manner, extending beyond his own profession, that he can be said truly to have transformed himself into an intellectual.

The practical and theoretical sides of an art or science may be fused in the life work of a single person, as Lenin united the theory and practise of revolutionary politics in the imperialist epoch, or as Sir Francis Bacon combined the theory and practise of scientific method at the dawn of modern science. But, along with the professionalization of technical training and the institutionalization of branches of learning which reach their highest development in present-day society, there ensues a further specialization. A deep division of labor springs up between the theorists and practitioners of the arts and sciences. Thus we have theoreticians of aesthetics, who have never produced a work of art, and painters who have never given an abstract thought to their work; practical politicians and professors of politics; field scientists and laboratory scientists; experimental physicists and mathematical physicists. There have even been established "schools of business administration", like that at Harvard, where the art of exploitation is taught in the grand manner, and the science of capitalist apologetics developed to the same refined degree as the scholastics developed Catholic theology.

Finally, out of the division of labor in the academic domain have emerged entire departments of philosophy and the social sciences, given over to the task of speculating upon the most profound philosophical, historical, and social problems. The professional philosopher is the most consummate expression of the modern intellectual, as the professional theologian was the highest representative of the medieval learned caste.

The native habitat of the professional intellectual in modern as well as in medieval society is the university. The growth of universities furnishes one of the best indices to the evolution of the intelligentsia. It must be noted in this connection that the leading institutions of learning are usually supported and controlled by the ruling classes, as a center for the dissemination of their ideas. Plato's Academy was for the sons of the Greek aristocracy, just as Plato's philosophy was the reasoned expression of the world view of the Greek aristocrat. The medieval universities were in the hands of the higher estates of the clergy and the nobility. Oxford and Cambridge have been, since their inception, finishing schools for the scions of the masters of England and training schools for their auxiliaries, the clergy and governmental bureaucracy. Today in the United States the capitalist plutocracy controls the purse-strings and the faculties of the great privately endowed institutions like Harvard, Yale, Princeton, Chicago, and Leland Stanford, while the upper strata of the middle classes set the prevailing tone in the state universities.

Classes which are struggling toward the heights or have recently attained them, must establish new centers of instruction in opposition to the official universities. Thus the industrial bourgeoisie in nineteenth century England was compelled to found independent universities and technical schools in the manufacturing cities of London, Birmingham and Manchester.

The same task confronts the working class today. It must organize its own schools in which intellectuals who have been educated (and miseducated) in bourgeois institutions and ideas must inevitably be the first teachers. As the proletariat becomes conscious of its historical mission, it will develop its own intelligentsia. In the future socialist society the need for a separate intelligentsia will gradually die away.

Meanwhile, as Kautsky pointed out, "the vehicles of science are not the proletariat, but the bourgeois intelligentsia. It was out of the heads of members of this stratum that modern socialism originated, and it was they who communicated it to the more intellectually developed proletarians, who, in their turn, introduce it into the proletarian class struggle where conditions allow this to be done." (Quoted from Kautsky by Lenin: *What Is To Be Done*. P. 40.)

There is nothing peculiar in this service rendered by the radical intellectuals to the proletariat. For it is precisely the performance of this function that gives the intelligentsia its distinctive social character. Intellectuals are specialists in the production and propagation of ideas. They constitute the sensorium of modern society, the concentration points where ideologies emerge into consciousness; take systematic shape; and are then diffused through the body politic. In various professional capacities, as teachers, writers, politicians, etc., the intelligentsia disseminates not only scientific knowledge but the ideas which classes entertain about themselves and their aims.

The intelligentsia is not a class, nor does it stand above the classes. It is a functional group whose members are pressed, consciously or unconsciously, into the service of all classes. As the intelligentsia is recruited from all ranks of society, it is extremely heterogeneous in its social composition. Different individuals and groups among the intelligentsia may have totally different social origins, aspirations, and allegiances. Intellectuals can combine the most diverse elements within themselves. We find upper class intellectuals with sympathies for the proletariat; proletarian intellectuals who have become sycophants of the ruling class; and middle class intellectuals who claim to be altogether above class connections.

Socially, the intellectuals enjoy a certain measure of prestige in bourgeois society; economically, they are subject to the same vicissitudes as other middle class groups. The intellectuals who command the highest esteem and influence among the rulers of society are more often those who serve them most zealously than those whose intellectual abilities and achievements are greatest. To such gentlemen go the presidencies and professorships, the editorial chairs, and the research foundations.

The average intellectual is no better off economically than the average white-collar worker; the free lance intellectuals who haunt the Bohemias of the metropolitan centers are even less fortunate. Except in rare cases,* intellectuals function, not as factors in capitalist economy, but as part of the social institutions stemming from it. So long as these institutions maintain them in comparative comfort, they will remain loyal to the class that supports them. The impact of the crisis, however, has hurled crowds of helpless intellectuals and professionals into space, like so many disassociated atoms. To cite but a single instance: two thousand of the ten thousand chemists, who live and work within 50 miles of New York, were laid off on December 1932, chiefly because the big corporations had cut their research staffs to the bone. (*Science*, Dec. 16, 1932, p. 562.) These discontented and dislocated people are among the most inflammable elements in contemporary society.

*"A schoolmaster is a productive worker (i.e. one who produces surplus value for the capitalist) when, in addition to working in order to improve the

intelligence of his scholars, he slaves to enrich the school proprietor." (*Capital*, Vol. I, p. 522.)

Because of their economic insecurity, social rootlessness, and mobile, and sensitive groups in modern society. The mercurial mixed composition, intellectuals constitute one of the most unstable, character of their social and intellectual movements make them excellent barometers of social pressures and revolutionary storms. Impending social changes are often anticipated by restlessness among the intelligentsia. The French Encyclopedists of the eighteenth century who frequented the salons of the nobility and taunted them with the idea of revolution; the Northern abolitionists and Southern fire-eaters; the Communist and Fascist intellectuals, who are beginning to spring up on all sides in the United States today, fight on an ideological plane the battles to be fought in grim reality between opposing classes on the morrow.

The intelligentsia therefore becomes a microcosm of capitalist society, mirroring in a contracted compass and often in a distorted manner the real conflicts in the world around them. This peculiar character of the intellectuals endows their history with a significance lacking in the development of other professional groups, just as the articulateness of the intellectuals, and their function as the spokesmen of party and class interests, give their intellectual expressions, and even their political affiliations, an importance disproportionate to their numbers and actual power.

As the demagogue believes that his fiery orations are the decisive influences in the actions of the masses he sways, so deluded intellectuals come to hold that they are the prime movers of society. They inflate their self-esteem to a point where they conceive themselves to be the sole creators, conservers, and continuators of "the values of civilization" and the mainspring of social progress. Thus Preserved Smith, an American scholar, categorically asserts at the beginning of his three-volume history of Western culture, that "the history of Western Europe is the history of the intellectual class."

Whereas the members of real ruling classes base their claim to supremacy upon social position or economic power, this intellectual elite claim the right to rule by virtue of an ability to produce or appreciate works of art, science, or philosophy. Arrogating a superior social status to themselves, they further declare that, as creators, scientists, or philosophers, they have been washed clean of the material motives and class interests that stain their baser fellow citizens. They make a religion of "art", torn up from its social roots and abstracted from its social milieu, like Flaubert, or a religion of "science" in the abstract, like Renan, in order to exalt themselves above the vulgar herd. The perennial wish-fulfillment dream of the intellectual to be the monarch of mankind is best embodied in Plato's mythical republic, where the philosopher is king—and the laboring masses are helots.

Such priestly and romantic attitudes on the part of the intellectuals are rather a reaction against their actual impotence in society than an indication of their strength, just as Pope Pius the Ninth's proclamation of papal infallibility was a reflex of his loss of temporal power. Such an illusory feeling of power and independence can end only in a miserable fit of the blues and a sense of utter sterility. Paul Valery created a metaphysical monster named M. Teste whom he regarded as the high point of human evolution, but who was in reality a caricature of all such intellectuals, including his creator. Teste's mental processes were so lightning fast, so precise, and so profound that he felt no need for practical activity. His chief traits were a callous inhumanity and sick headaches.

Robert Michels, a clever but unreliable student of modern society, asserts that intellectuals are generally revolutionary. This generalization is extremely one-sided and incorrect. Intellectuals exhibit all the political shadings of the society in which they live from the ultra-conservative to the ultra-revolutionary. Indeed, some intellectuals have worn every possible political color in the course of one career.

Burke, DeMaistre, Carlyle and Irving Babbitt may serve as examples of reactionary intellectuals, who become the rationalizers of the interests of classes which had outlived their usefulness and entered into decline. From the historical perspective of their anachronistic standpoint, such intellectuals may be shrewd, even though superficial and uncomprehending, critics of their own society. From opposite premises, they may even find themselves in temporary agreement on certain questions with the most advanced radical intellectuals, as Engels and Carlyle agreed on the miserable state of the English working class.

Such influential American liberals of the past decade as Beard and Parrington among the historians, Randolph Bourne, Van Wyck Brooks, Lewis Mumford, and Waldo Frank among the literary critics, and Veblen among the economists are typical of liberal intellectuals who have accomplished important cultural work during a period of relative social solidarity and stability. As the crisis deepens and the class struggle sharpens, the position of such liberals becomes increasingly untenable and they begin to lose their progressive functions. Unless the liberals succeed in pointing themselves and their ideas in a revolutionary direction, they change willy-nilly into retrogressive influences.

Radical intellectuals are those who ally themselves either in their ideas or actions with the revolutionary class, which, at a certain stage of social development, places itself at the head of the progressive forces in the nation.

Radical intellectuals have been at the head of bourgeois revolutions in almost every country. As ideological leaders, they have worked hand in hand with the political and military leaders of the revolutionary forces. Milton and Cromwell, Paine and Washington, Marat and Robespierre, Mazzini and Garibaldi are well-known examples of such alliances. Bourgeois intellectuals like Voltaire and Diderot who tilted at established institutions like the Church, and petty bourgeois intellectuals like Rousseau who demanded the overthrow of all the ideas and institutions of the established order were the heralds of bourgeois revolution in France. Radical intellectuals have played an especially prominent part in the bourgeois democratic revolutions of colonial and semi-colonial countries in our own time. The national revolutionary movements in Czarist Russia, the Balkan countries (Masaryk and Benes in Czecho-Slovakia), India, China, Turkey, the Latin American countries, Cuba, and the Phillipines, have been inspired and directed by professional intellectuals and intellectual professionals. The recent anti-British demonstrations of the Egyptian nationalist students in Cairo are but the latest in a long line of such insurgent colonial movements, initiated by students, teachers, and lawyers.

These declassed intellectuals, smarting under a sense of the inferiority and oppression of their people or class, and with a wider historical horizon than the uneducated masses, have helped rouse the colonial peoples from their age-long apathy and inertia, brought them to their feet, given them a political program, and led them into action. This rôle of the radical intellectuals, and particularly of the young students, stands out boldly in the first stages of the Chinese Revolution. In "A Chinese Testament", Tan Shi-Hua tells how in 1921 the students translated the first Marxist books from English and Japanese into Chinese and formed "The Group for Popular Education" to carry the message of revolution to the awakening workers. In 1925, the Chinese sailors said "the students are our only leaders." It was the shooting of the students in Shanghai that gave the signal for the revolutionary uprising.*

*Tan also presents us with the other side of the picture. In China until very recently learning has been a monopoly of the mandarin class as it was in Europe in the middle ages.

When Tan's father became a local leader of Sun Yat Sen's party of Tung Men Huei, which united all "liberty-loving intellectuals" against the Manchu dynasty and led the successful

Owing to the freer access to educational facilities, the differences between the intellectuals and the masses are not so marked in highly developed capitalist countries as they are in the backward colonial lands. The social distinctions between the well-educated and the uneducated persist, but in an attenuated form. There is no great unbridgeable gulf between the illiterate masses and the educated classes as in the days when the learned constituted a closed caste; nor could there be, in such a country as the United States, where college graduates are dumped unceremoniously almost overnight into the ranks of the proletariat and the permanently unemployed.

Bourgeois and petty-bourgeois intellectuals have also taken prominent places in the labor movements of the advanced capitalist countries. In the nineteenth century, even before the advent of Marxism, such petty bourgeois intellectuals among the Utopian socialists as Proudhon in France and Chernychevsky in Russia were the ideological leaders of the working class.

Many of the most important political and intellectual leaders of the Marxist parties have been middle-class intellectuals. This is true of Marx and Engels, the founders of the movement. Bebel and Dietzgen the elder were of proletarian origin, but these two stand out as conspicuous exceptions in a galaxy which includes Lassalle, DeLeon, Plekhanov, Liebknecht, Luxembourg, Lenin and Trotsky. All of these intellectuals, "having grasped the historical movement as a whole", broke with the class of their origin, and merged their lives with the fate of the working class. Trotsky informs us that, of the 15 original members of the Council of People's Commissars elected on the day following the October insurrection, eleven were intellectuals and only four workers.

It is said that radical intellectuals are unstable and unreliable allies of the working class. There is a certain element of truth in this accusation. Since, socially speaking, intellectuals form a parasitic group, even the most radical intellectuals may have stronger social and ideological ties with the existing order than they consciously suspect. Long after the umbilical cord is cut and the youth has declared his independence, the mature man is not free from the subtle subconscious influence of his parents. At crucial moments, deep-seated attachments, reinforced by the exceptionally heavy pressure exerted by alien classes, may generate a mood of vacillation in the intellectual, holding him back from decisive action and a sharp break with the bourgeois world.

Then too, intellectuals are prone to idealize revolution in the first flush of their enthusiasm, only to remain on the sidelines or run for cover into the opposing camp when they come face to face with the revolution itself. A classic instance is Wordsworth and his fellow romantics in England, who thought that "to be young was very heaven" in the morning of the French Revolution, only to turn their backs upon it in disillusion and disgust when the class war broke out in deadly earnest.

Nevertheless, the best of the revolutionary intellectuals do not flinch in the decisive hour. Their theoretical training and insight are safeguards. Persons with a correct and comprehensive grasp

overthrow in 1911, "the intellectuals, holders of lofty, learned titles, accused my father behind his back. 'A man with a degree, an intellectual aristocrat, how can he stand at the head of boatmen and bandits? How can he betray the Emperor?' The respectable intellectuals also protested against the edict of the revolutionists that all Chinese should cut off the braids which signified 'A Manchu Slave'. They muttered: 'an outrage! A braid is not a

symbol of enslavement; a braid is a symbol of one's loyalty to the Emperor, to one's ancestors, to the great laws and science of ancient times. They begin by cutting off braids, but they'll end by breaking up the sacred altars in our houses, and by evicting the best people, like mangv dogs, from their estates." Respectable intellectuals, who know which side their bread is buttered on, do not differ much from country to country or from time to time.

of the forces at work in a given revolutionary situation are more apt to stand firm under fire than empirics who rely upon their "practical sense" and spontaneous improvisations alone (i.e. upon their own prejudices and limitations). Just as determined revolutionary armies like the Roundheads under Cromwell and the Red Army under Trotsky, who knew what they were fighting about and why, made superior fighting forces to the mercenary troops of their counter-revolutionary opponents.

Since Marxism, the science of the proletarian revolution, is itself the supreme creation of middle-class intellectuals, and every Marxist party has had its quota of militants drawn from the radial intelligentsia, a Marxist party can, least of all political organizations, ignore the rôle that intellectuals may play in the struggle of the working class for emancipation. But the relationship between the radical intellectuals and the revolutionary workers' party must be correctly understood. Although individual intellectuals may take a place in the leadership of the party by their talents, energy and devotion, intellectuals are generally an auxiliary force of the party with their own special talents to contribute to its work. There is a place for intellectuals inside the party, in the mass organizations it supports, and in many party activities. But the main body of the party must be recruited from, and rest squarely upon, the vanguard of the working class. The party and its leadership must have a solidly proletarian core.

II.

Non-Marxist Theories of the Intellectual

The important rôle played by radical intellectuals in the labor movement, and particularly in the Marxist parties, has led some thinkers to attack Marxism as an anti-proletarian philosophy. The most brilliant and insidious of these attacks upon Marxism and the Marxist conception of the rôle of the intellectual in the revolutionary ranks, was made by Wacław Machajski, a Russo-Polish revolutionist, whose theories were circulated among the revolutionists of Eastern Europe during the early part of the century, although they have never exercised any influence upon the masses nor attracted any large corps of disciples.

According to Machajski, socialism was not a movement for the joint emancipation of hand and brain workers, as the socialists claimed, but of the brain-workers alone. These brain-workers, composed of declassed lower middle-class intellectuals like Marx, Engels, etc. and self-educated workers like Bebel, together with their liberal-democratic counterparts, were simply using the manual workers for their private purposes. The radical intellectuals (as well as the capitalists) exploited the workers. The sole difference between them lay in their methods of exploitation. Higher education was the capital which enabled the intellectuals to befuddle and mislead the workers. The exploitative character of Marxian socialism was demonstrated on the one hand by the persistent betrayals of the interests of the poorly paid manual workers by the parliamentary socialists, and on the other hand by the fact that even the revolutionary wing of the social democracy, the Bolsheviks, neither promised nor gave equal wages to all workers, but deferred such equality to an indefinitely distant future.

Machajski attempted to lay a theoretical foundation for his position by accusing Marx of deliberately concealing the exorbitant share of the national income consumed by the governmental bureaucracy in the formulæ of reproduction given in the second volume of *Capital*, in order to mask the narrow class character of socialism and deceive the masses of manual workers. He asserted that, although socialists and the Socialist parties may attain state power, socialism, which to him meant universal equality of income, would not be established. He found confirmation for his views in the actions of the Bolsheviks. The October Revolution, according to Machajski, simply substituted one set of unprincipled political

adventurers for another. The dictatorship of the proletariat was merely a disguise for the dictatorship of the professional intelligentsia over the proletariat. The Soviet state was not socialist in its tendencies, as the communists claimed, but a form of state capitalism, which was not to be distinguished fundamentally from the Fascist state.

Max Nomad, a veteran radical journalist, who has been propagating Machajski's doctrines in this country, sums up the process in the following alliterative phrases: "Having achieved recognition, influence and power, the apostles of yesterday become apostates, the tribunes turn traitors, and the rebels renegades." It must be admitted that there is much in the history of the degeneration of the parties of the Second and the Third Internationals to give a superficial plausibility to Machajski's charges, but his explanation of these phenomena is false to the very core.

Machajski's theory was not immaculately conceived. It is only a more sophisticated and subtle brand of the anarcho-syndicalist ideology, which has contended with Marxism for the hegemony of the proletarian movement since the days of Proudhon and Bakunin. As Trotsky notes in his pamphlet on *The Soviet Union and the Fourth International*, "Machajski only 'deepened' sociologically and economically the anarchistic prejudices against state socialism."

Ultra-radical as such ideas appear at first glance, they are in reality nerveless and reactionary. This can be seen from the fact that they have been so readily adopted, and used as a weapon against Marxism and Bolshevism, by such theoreticians of Fascism as Michels and Pareto. If Fascism and communism are only alternative forms of state capitalism, in which the working class is exploited by rival groups of bureaucratic intellectuals, it can make no difference to the workers whether a Mussolini or a Stalin rules over them. This theoretical conclusion, implicit in Machajski's position, plays straight into the hands of the worst reactionaries.

The reactionary character of Machajski's ideas can also be seen in the practical conclusions he himself drew from them. According to him, "a workers' government" was a contradiction and an impossibility. Governments were bureaucracies, staffed by the educated class and operated in their interests. Manual workers should avoid them like the plague. True to the spirit of this anarcho-syndicalist doctrine, Machajski enjoined the workers to restrict their struggles against the capitalist class to the fight for higher wages, and their struggles against the capitalist state to social services, such as the dole. The aim of the working class should be, not the smashing of the capitalist state and its replacement by a workers' régime, as the Marxists taught (for this attempt would simply result in the substitution of a new gang of intellectual exploiters for the old) but universal equality of wages!

Whatever the political form of class-rule, equality of wages would guarantee equality of educational opportunity, and thus the monopoly of learning which had enabled one bureaucratic group after another to exploit the ignorant and illiterate manual workers would be abolished. In order to realize this aim, Machajski like Bakunin advocated the formation of a band of secret revolutionists, who would guide the spontaneous outbursts of the masses against their exploiters into these channels, and would eventually become powerful enough to call an international strike, which would bring every oppressing government to its feet. After this final revolution, in which the manual workers would have thrown the last group of exploiting bureaucrats, the socialist intelligentsia, off their backs, universal social and economic equality would at last be attained.

However revolutionary these conclusions sound, they are really the product of sociological shallowness and political impotence. Machajski reduces the whole course of the class struggle in history

to the petty compass of a family quarrel among competing groups of bureaucratic intellectuals. He is unable to distinguish between a class and a professional group within a class. Consequently, he cannot see the difference between a political overturn, such as the shift from bourgeois democracy to Fascism, which takes place within the boundaries of a single class rule, and a genuine social revolution in which political power is transferred, not from one ruling group within the same class to another, but from one class to another.

The logical political consequences of this theoretical error are the inability to pursue a revolutionary policy before the seizure of power by the proletariat, and the tendency to follow a counter-revolutionary policy after a victorious proletarian revolution. If the day-to-day struggles of the working class are to be limited to economic and social demands, excluding political questions, the working class is not only deprived of the invaluable weapon of parliamentary manœuvring and political propaganda, but they will be bound hand and foot, ready to be delivered to the Fascists, who have then a free field left for their activities. From the proposition that the Soviet state is not a dictatorship of the proletariat but a dictatorship over the proletariat, there would logically follow the necessity of overturning the Soviet state in behalf of the working class. Such a position has nothing in common with that of the Bolshevik-Leninists. It is necessary to cleanse the Soviet state of the Stalinist bureaucracy precisely in order to defend and strengthen the existing workers' régime in the Soviet Union, which the policies of the bureaucracy are undermining and threatening to destroy.

Machajski further fails to distinguish between social parasitism, which exists under all forms of government, and class exploitation, which arises from the antagonistic property relations of class societies. Social parasitism exists today, for example, in the bureaucracies of both the Soviet Union and Germany, but the social relations of production in the two countries are at opposite poles. The Soviet Union is a workers' state which has socialized the main means of production; Germany is a capitalist state in which the instruments of production remain in the hands of private owners. The percentage of the social income consumed by the bureaucracies of both countries cannot alter this fundamental and all-important difference.

Machajski's advocacy of immediate and all-embracing equality of wages as the principal goal of the working class is simply an echo of the anarchistic dream of attaining Utopia "in twenty-four hours". It does not take into account the actual level of productive forces and the need for the further development of the basic means of production, when the working class seizes power, a problem presented in an acute form to the Russian proletariat. Differential wages as a stimulus to production, and the further investment of capital in the means of production, are indispensable instruments of socialist progress. The demand for immediate equality of wages represents in reality an enslavement to bourgeois ideology, which can conceive of no other form of the division of social income. Machajski's emphasis upon equality of wages as the touchstone of socialism springs from the social and economic backwardness of the region of Europe whence he came, where the petty producers predominated. Only a person brought up in an unindustrialized area with an illiterate population could place so much weight upon the demand for equality of wages as to mistake it for the socialist revolution, and upon the distinction between the educated and non-educated as to confuse it with the class struggle.

Machajski's attacks are typical of the attitudes of anarcho-syndicalists in all countries toward intellectuals, even among those groups organized and led by intellectuals themselves. The anti-intellectualism of the I.W.W., their contempt for "swivel-chair artists" and "pen-pushers", exemplified by Bill Haywood's char-

acterization of Daniel DeLeon as "a theorizing professor", was a sign of the theoretical backwardness of the proletarian movement in the United States. The disdain of the terrorists among the Russian Social Revolutionaries and the Chinese students for the theoretical scruples of their Marxist comrades against acts of individual terror is another expression of the same attitude.

Marxism teaches that thought and action are dialectically interdependent and in living unity. In political problems, as in all others, the Marxist can tolerate no contradiction between his thought and his action, but constantly strives to bring the one into conformity with the other, and both into conformity with the objective situation before him. The theorists of anarcho-syndicalism and other backward radical schools, on the contrary, elevate action above theory and spontaneity above reasoned policy. Its more sophisticated theorists disparage the intellect as an instrument of attaining objective knowledge in favor of some supposedly superior source of knowledge, such as intuition or impulse, and advocate action in itself regardless of social conditions and political consequences. Witness the popularity of Sorel's highly intellectualized idealization of violence, his opposition of Bergsonian intuition to Marxist analysis; his preference for myths over principled theory as a guide for political action in the pre-war syndicalist movements in Europe.

This pitting of theory, as a product of intellectual activity, against action as a product of vital activity, this setting of brain against brawn or head against heart, is essentially a sign of reaction, wherever it is encountered. The reactionary side of the anti-intellectual theories of such syndicalists as Sorel is thrown into high relief by the ease with which his leading ideas have been absorbed and developed by Fascist ideologists. The narrow-minded contempt of the anarcho-syndicalists for all revolutionary theory but their own, and for all theorists but themselves, retards the process of clarification necessary to promote the revolutionary movement. The same thoughtlessness encourages acts of sabotage and individual terror, which aid only the cause of reaction.

III.

Reaction and Anti-Intellectualism

Not only is anti-intellectualism an evidence of reaction; all forms of reaction are fundamentally anti-intellectual. However adroit and highly tinted the ideological coverings of reaction may be, they reveal their falsity and hollowness when they are tested in the course of events and confronted with things as they are.

The intellectual defenders of reaction usually abandon the attempt to reason out their position in a straightforward logical manner and rely instead upon some substitute for logical and scientific method. Reaction in every sphere of experience, political, artistic and cultural, disparages the intellect as an organ of objective knowledge and leans upon some presumably more fundamental factor such as intuition, blood-sense, tradition, revelation, emotion, etc. This can be seen in all the great reactionary movements in philosophy and politics from the French Revolution to the present day. Burke's defense of tradition against the implacable logic of bourgeois revolutionists, DeMaistre's brief on behalf of the Catholic Church and the guillotine as the foundation of the state, Carlyle's exaltation of divine inspiration and the strong man, are instances which spring readily to mind. The truth of this observation can best be seen in the Fascist movements of our own time.

Like all forms of reaction, Fascism is not only inimical to the best interests of the intellectuals as a functional group; it is an avowed enemy of intellectual activity itself. Fascism did not originate in theory, boasts Mussolini, but in action. The Fascists improvised an ideology after their seizure of power in order to cloak the nakedness of reaction and to dupe gullible intellectuals, just as they deceive the mass of people in a thousand and one

matters. The Fascist glorification of violence for its own sake in the form of war, oppression and terror, its more subtle appeals to the heart, the "blood-sense", or the racial instincts against the thinking mind, its suppression of all the live growing shoots of art and science, make Fascist society a sterile soil in which it is impossible for the arts and sciences to flourish. Hitler's burning of the books was symbolic of the descent into cultural barbarism which inevitably accompanies the triumph of Fascism.

A few examples from the writings of representative thinkers in the still democratic countries of Europe, who concern themselves with the social rôle of the intellectual, will throw light upon the nature of the alliance between reaction and anti-intellectualism. In France, Maurras, the rationalizer of Gallican and Royalist reaction, warns the intellectual that he must choose between "blood" and "money", that is, between a capitalist plutocracy with a king at its head or a democracy. He, of course, has chosen the side of "blood", and so we discover him as one of the instigators of the first French Fascist putsch on February 6, 1934. Julien Benda, speaking for the Mother Church against the dissenting nationalist Gallicans, is more subtle in his arguments. Hiding the Holy Trinity under the Platonic Trinity, he advises the intellectuals to shun all political activity as unworthy of their time-honored social rôle as guardians of the Good, the True, and the Beautiful. He wishes intellectuals to be unspotted by contact with the world around them. The artist, scientist and philosopher should, like the monk and priest, remain aloof from the cares and concerns of the mass of humanity. They should be pure vestal virgins of thought, tending the sacred flame, while Caesar tyrannizes at home and his legions plunder the provinces and war on neighboring peoples—and Mother Church, no doubt, blesses both.

In England, T. S. Eliot tells the intellectual that he must choose between two creeds, Christianity and communism. Both are to be accepted on faith as mystical means of salvation; it is a matter of arbitrary preference which one chooses. Muddle-headed Middleton Murry hastens to assent, and while Eliot lays his head upon the broad bosom of the Anglican Church, Murry espouses a pseudo-communist creed as though he had become the mystic bride of Marx.

(This is the first of two articles on the social, economic, and political rôle of the intellectual in bourgeois society. In the next issue, we propose to deal with the reactions of the advanced intellectuals and intellectual groups in the United States to the world-crisis of capitalism.)

George NOVACK

THE NEW INTERNATIONAL

IN A BOUND VOLUME

For our readers who desire to have a complete file of THE NEW INTERNATIONAL there will soon be an opportunity to obtain a bound volume of all issues published to date. Needless to say, that for the library of the serious student of labor and revolutionary movement, such an acquisition is indispensable. One bound volume of THE NEW INTERNATIONAL will in itself represent a veritable arsenal of Marxism.

In addition, we regret to say that of the earlier issues published no single copies are now available except those set aside for binding. This bound volume will be volume one and two, together, beginning with the first issue, July, 1934, up to and including the December, 1935 issue. The price for this bound volume will be \$3.00 postpaid. It will be attractively bound, and in view of the fact that the earlier issues are not otherwise obtainable, this should prove a special opportunity. We should appreciate if those of our readers who desire to obtain a bound volume, would let us know right away so that we can make the necessary arrangements.

Romain Rolland Executes an Assignment

L'HUMANITE of October 23 prints a letter by Romain Rolland which is intended to refute criticisms of the Soviet Union made by a Swiss preacher. We would not have had the slightest reasons for intervening in an argument between an apologist of Gandhism and a Protestant pacifist were it not for the fact that Mr. Rolland himself, in passing, touches—in a very improper manner—upon a number of burning questions both personal and public in character. We cannot and do not demand from Mr. Rolland either a Marxist analysis, political clarity or revolutionary insight; but, one should imagine, we would be justified in expecting from him some psychologic insight. Unfortunately, as we shall shortly see, not a trace has been left of the latter.

To justify the terror which is directed by Stalin primarily against his own party, R. Rolland writes that Kiroff was murdered "by a fanatic, who was secretly supported by such people as Kamenev and Zinoviev". Upon what grounds does Rolland make so serious a charge? Those who buzzed it to Rolland were simply lying. It is precisely upon this question, in which politics cuts across psychology, that Romain Rolland should have had no difficulty in judging, were he not blinded by an excess of zeal. The author of these lines has not the slightest reason to assume upon himself responsibility for the activity of Zinoviev and Kamenev which was of no small aid to the bureaucratic degeneration of the party and the Soviets. However, it is unthinkable to ascribe to them participation in a crime which is without any political meaning and which at the same time conflicts with the views, and aims, and the entire political past of Kamenev and Zinoviev. Even had they suddenly turned partisans of individual terror—such a hypothesis is fantastic!—they could never have chosen Kiroff as a victim. Anyone acquainted with the history of the party and its personnel is only too well aware that Kiroff was a third-rate bureaucratic figure in comparison to Kamenev and Zinoviev: his elimination could have had no effect whatever either upon the régime or its policies. Even during the trial of Zinoviev and Kamenev (one of the most shameless of trials!) the original version of the indictment was not sustained. Beyond an excess of zeal, what right has Mr. Rolland to speak about the participation of Kamenev and Zinoviev in the assassination of Kiroff?

Let us remember that it was the intention of the initiators to extend the accusation to the author of these lines as well. There are many who probably still recall the rôle played by the "Latvian consul", an agent-provocateur of the G.P.U. who attempted to obtain a letter from the terrorists "for transmission to Trotsky". One of the hirelings of *l'Humanité* (I think his name is Duclos), even wrote in the heat of the moment that Trotsky's participation in the assassination of Kiroff "was proved". I have dealt with all the circumstances relating to this case in my pamphlet, *The Kiroff Assassination*. Why didn't Romain Rolland venture to repeat this part of the coarse and brazen Thermidorian amalgam? Only because I had had the opportunity to make a timely exposure of the provocation and its direct organizers, Stalin and Yagoda. Kamenev and Zinoviev cannot avail themselves of such an opportunity: they are lodged in jail on the basis of a premeditated false charge. It is possible to calumniate them with impunity. Is this rôle becoming to Rolland?

On the pretext that they were implicated in the Kiroff case, the bureaucracy took the lives of scores of men who were devoted heart and soul to the revolution but who disapproved of the self-indulgence and privileges of the ruling caste. Perhaps, Mr. Rolland will venture to deny this? We propose that an international commission, unimpeachable in its composition, be established

to examine into the arrests, trials, executions, exiles and so on, in connection with, say, the single Kiroff case. Again it should be recalled that when we tried the Social-Revolutionists, in 1922, for the commission of terrorist acts, we permitted at the trial Vandervelde, Kurt Rosenfeld and other outstanding opponents of Bolshevism. Yet at that time, the position of the revolution was immeasurably more difficult. Will Mr. Rolland accept our proposal this time? It is doubtful, because this proposal will not be—and cannot be—accepted by Stalin. The measures of terror which were applied during the initial, and so to speak, "Jacobin", period of the revolution were called for by the iron necessity of self-defense. We were in a position to give an open accounting of these measures to the entire international working class. The terror of the present Thermidorian period serves not so much for the defense of the bureaucracy against the class enemies as against the advanced elements of the proletariat itself. Thus, Romain Rolland steps forward as an advocate of Thermidorian terror.

Only recently, the Soviet newspapers loudly proclaimed the discovery of a new plot in which "Trotskyists" combined with White Guards and criminal elements for the purpose of . . . wrecking Soviet railroads. Not a single serious-minded person in the Soviet Union will believe the new shameless fraud, which throws devastating light upon a number of previous amalgams. However, this will not deter the Stalinist clique from shooting several young Bolsheviks guilty of *lèse majesté*. And what will M. Rolland do? Will he perhaps devote himself to the task of convincing incredulous preachers that "Trotskyists" really do wreck Soviet railroads?

In the sphere of general questions of politics, M. Rolland makes assertions which are no less categorical, and hardly more irrefragable. For the sake of defending the present policy of the Soviets and of the Communist International R. Rolland, in accordance with the ancient ritual, hies himself back to the experience of Brest-Litovsk. We are all attention! He writes the following, "In the year 1918, in Brest-Litovsk, Trotsky said to Lenin: We must die like knights of old. Lenin replied: We are no knights. We want to live, and we intend to remain alive." Where did M. Rolland get this piece of news? As a matter of fact, Lenin was never in Brest-Litovsk. Did the conversation perhaps take place over a direct wire? But all the documents relating to this period have been printed, and, obviously, they do not contain this, to put it bluntly, asinine statement, which one of Rolland's informers buzzed into his ear for wider distribution. Still, how is it that an old hand at writing did not have sufficient psychologic intuition to understand the caricatured falseness of the dialogue he reproduced?

It would be out of place to enter here into a belated controversy with Rolland over the Brest-Litovsk negotiations. But since Rolland trusts in Stalin almost as much as he formerly trusted in Gandhi, we will take the liberty of referring to a statement Stalin made on February 1, 1918, i.e. during the final hours of the Brest-Litovsk decisions: "*A way out of the difficult situation was given us by an intermediate point of view—the position of Trotsky.*" I am not referring to my own recollections, nor to conversations with interlocutors, no matter how highly placed, but to the official protocols of the sessions of the C.E.C. issued by the Government Publication Bureau in 1929. The above quotation (page 214) will probably seem to Rolland utterly unexpected. But it ought to convince him of how careless it is for anyone to write on subjects he knows nothing about.

M. Rolland lectures us—me, in particular—that the Soviet government can conclude agreements, if need be, even with the im-

perialists. Was such a revelation worth a trip to Moscow? The French workers are forced every day to enter into agreements with the capitalists, so long as the latter continue to exist. A workers' state cannot renounce the right which every trade union has. But should a trade union leader, upon signing a collective agreement, announce publicly that *he recognizes and approves* capitalist property, we would call such a leader a traitor. Stalin did not merely conclude a practical agreement, but on top and independently of that, he approved the growth of French militarism. Every class-conscious worker knows that the French army exists primarily to safeguard the property of a handful of exploiters, and to support the rule of bourgeois France over 60 million colonial slaves. Because of the just indignation aroused in the workers' ranks by Stalin's declaration, attempts are being made today, among them the one through Rolland, to explain that "practically" everything remains just as before. But we on our part do not put an iota of trust in them. The voluntary and demonstrative approval of French militarism by Stalin, one should imagine, was not intended to enlighten the French bourgeoisie who did not at all require any urging, and who met it quite ironically. Stalin's declaration could have had only a single purpose: by weakening the opposition of the French proletariat to its own imperialism to buy at this price the confidence of the French bourgeoisie in the stability of an alliance with Moscow. This policy, despite all qualifications, is being rigorously followed right now. The shrieks of *l'Humanité* against Laval do not alter in any way the fact that the Comintern has become the political agency of the League of Nations, in which this very same Laval rules the roost, or his cousin Herriot, or his British partner Baldwin, who is no better than Laval.

With very little authority, Romain Rolland decrees that the new policy of the Communist International remains in strict harmony with the teachings of Lenin. In that case, the solidarity of the French Communist party with the foreign policy of Leon Blum—the "social-Fascist" of yesterday, who, at any rate, remained true to himself; the belly crawling before Edouard Herriot who has

not the slightest inclination to turn traitor to French capital; the support of the League of Nations—this general staff of imperialist intrigues—by the Communist parties—does all this flow from the teachings of Lenin? No. M. Rolland had better return to his studies of the teachings of Gandhi.

Unfortunately, Marcel Martine's very clever, restrained and apt warning left no impression upon Rolland. Instead of stopping and critically looking around, he slid all the way down into the ranks of the official apologists of the Thermidorian bureaucracy. In vain do these gentlemen deem themselves the "Friends" of the October revolution. The bureaucracy is one thing; the revolution is quite another. The People's Commissar Litvinoff is a "friend of mine" even to the conservative bourgeois Herriot. But it does not follow from this that the proletarian revolution must consider Herriot as one of its friends.

It is impossible to prepare the coming day of the revolution otherwise than by an irreconcilable struggle against the régime of bureaucratic absolutism which has become the worst brake upon the revolutionary movement. The responsibility for the terroristic moods of the Soviet youth fall entirely upon the bureaucracy which has clamped a leaden lid upon the vanguard of the working class and which demands of the youth only blind obedience and glorification of the leaders.

The bureaucracy has concentrated colossal resources in its hands, of which it gives an accounting to nobody. These uncontrolled resources provide it in particular with an opportunity to entertain and shower gifts royally upon any of its useful "friends". Many of them are hardly to be distinguished in their psychologic make-up from those French academicians and journalists who are the professional friends of Mussolini. We have no inclination to include Romain Rolland in this category. But why does he himself so carelessly erase the line of demarcation? Why does he undertake commissions which do not become him?

L. TROTSKY

October 31, 1935

The Comintern and Social Patriotism

I.

THE theory of socialism in one country is in itself an outright falsification of Leninism and Marxism, which are based upon the idea of the international socialist revolution. Today we see the other side of the Stalinist medal. Social-patriotism is always the reverse side of social-reformism. We have had already an instance of it in the Stalin-Laval pact. Stalin, by *understanding and approving* national defense of the French bourgeoisie, has definitely and clearly left the arena of the class struggle, the arena of proletarian internationalism. But the bureaucratic "wretches" of the Comintern, whom Stalin did not even consult before coming to an understanding with Laval, and who received a violent and an incredible kick on their backside, keep howling that Stalin is right. (And only yesterday they were acclaiming just the contrary!) Never has there been such vileness and servility inside the working class movement. But worse yet is the fact that these "wretches" seek to establish that Stalin was inspired by Lenin and Marx "in understanding and approving of the French bourgeoisie" and in dragging at the tail of the League of Nations. These people have really lost all respect for Marxism and

Leninism, debasing it up to the point of using it as a cover for the national defense of French imperialism and today of English imperialism, which is playing the game of "sanctions" at Geneva. But in this, too, there is essentially nothing new.

In 1914 Cachin, in the name of Marx, made a trip over the frontier in order to assist Mussolini with French money to found *Popolo d'Italia*. And it was in the name of Marx, using the self-same quotations of Thorez on the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-71, that Mussolini sought to justify his own about face and Italian intervention on the side of "democratic" France. From the war "to preserve democracy", Mussolini arrived at Fascism. And that is where one arrives, when one leaves the arena of class struggle and proletarian internationalism. We meet with nothing new here. It is the same old attempt to cover up the social-chauvinist positions of 1914 with a fig-leaf of several quotations from Marx. Fraud is added to betrayal. Will we have to wait, as in 1914, for the slaughter of peoples to expose the complete treachery of social-patriotism, in order to be on guard against it? We certainly hope not! But everything depends upon the ability of the international proletarian van-

guard not to allow itself to be drawn into the social-chauvinist current; not to permit itself to be duped again by the leaders who betray it.

The argument that is most frequently employed, the specious argument used to cover up the Stalinist betrayal, consists of trying to establish an identity between the "Stalin-Laval compromise" and Lenin's "alliance" with the "French monarchist de Lubersac" during the German offensive against Russia in February 1918, that is, during the Brest-Litovsk period. This argument is only a miserable subterfuge, another proof of the contempt which the Stalinists have for Leninism. To be sure, Lenin and Marxists generally do not condemn *every* compromise. As a matter of fact, it is not the Stalinists who can teach us anything in this sphere, they who only yesterday came out into the streets with the friends of Chiappe to demand the arrest of the "executioners" of February 6 (i.e. of Daladier himself whom they wish today to raise to power); they who made a bloc with the Nazis during the referendum in Germany in order to overthrow the democrats; and so on. There are compromises and compromises. And just as the compromises of yesterday with the Nazis

and Chiappe's friends were to be condemned, so today we condemn the compromises of Stalin-Laval.

But, what did Lenin say on the question of Brest-Litovsk? He said, "Workers who, after a lost strike, agree to terms which are advantageous to the capitalist are not at all betraying socialism. Only those betray socialism who accept concessions for a section of the working class in exchange for benefits to the capitalists. (*Theses*, January 21, 1918).

Let us apply Lenin's teachings to the Stalin-Laval pact.

(1) In the first place, it is clear to all that there has been a "lost strike"—that is to say, the defeat in Germany, Austria, Spain, etc. And involved also is the question of the internal situation in the Soviet Union, despite—or to be more correct, it may be said, precisely because of—the indubitable successes of the two Five-Year Plans (viz., the Kirov affair, the imprisonment of Zinoviev, etc.). But was Stalin really forced to sign the "contract" which he has just made with Laval? Not at all. We think the contrary. On more than one previous occasion, we sounded the alarm to the workers of the entire world at the dangers which threaten the Soviet Union. But despite the ruins accumulated in the Orient and the Occident, as well as in the U.S.S.R. itself, by the Stalinist leadership, the present situation of the U.S.S.R. is far removed, in our opinion, from that of the "besieged fortress" of which Lenin speaks at the end of his letter to the American workers in August, 1918. At that time, the workers' state had just been born; the civil war was raging; sabotage and wild resistance on the part of the overthrown classes raged everywhere. Such was the situation *internally*. *Abroad*, the workers still divided along the imperialist fronts, were cutting each other's throats. The workers' state truly resembled a "besieged fortress" at that time.

Today, despite the grave international defeats, the situation of the U.S.S.R. is quite different. The possibilities of socialist revolution are still great in Europe, particularly in France. But that is where the *real danger lies*: Stalin and his acolytes, after preaching "peaceful coexistence" of "socialism in one country" with European capitalism; in the face of Hitler's assumption to power (which they prepared with their own hands by the theory "after the Nazis, our turn will come"); in the face of the advent of Hitlerism—Stalin and his acolytes, frightened by their own handiwork, turn to "the most militaristic power in Europe" (as Stalin used to say only a short time ago), to the France of the Versailles Treaty, which is today baptised, along with Italy and England [Italy had not yet been declared to be an "aggressor state"] as a power "sincerely attached to the work of safeguarding peace". In this appalling turn there is to be found only a sincere avowal of genuine panic. It was panic that dictated the Stalin-Laval communiqué, a panic arising from a complete lack of confidence in the force of the revolutionary international proletariat. (A story is current that Radek, who appeared to be contented and satisfied in the retinue of Pilsudski, during his visit to the famous leader "of Polish Fascism",—whose death

Bukharin mourned as that of a "friend", of an "ally" of France—joked with Polish comrades who advised him to maintain a modicum of reserve. He said, "Don't worry! I tried to make the revolution with you; it was unsuccessful. Now I hope to make it with them." (By "them" he meant Pilsudski's officers!—Indeed, a joke in Radek's best manner; but a joke which reveals the complete degeneration to which the Stalinist bureaucracy has led world communism. From Pilsudski they went to Laval, to the French General Staff. The circle is complete!)

(2) Thorez has good reason to repeat today what we have been telling him for a long time: "Grave dangers are threatening the Soviet Union." But the gravest dangers, in a capitalist world that is decaying arise for the Soviet Union from the internal weaknesses of the international workers' movement; they arise as a result of Stalinism which is capable only of disintegrating and demoralizing the workers' ranks.

(3) We have seen that the Stalin-Laval pact signed at Moscow was not at all inevitable, despite the numerous lost "strikes" as a consequence of the international Stalinist leadership. It was not at all inevitable, above all when one considers the political and revolutionary situation in France, where the proletariat has not yet lost its chances to win its "strike" against its own bourgeoisie. And it is precisely from this standpoint that the "contract" signed by Stalin with Laval reveals most clearly its treasonable character for the French and the world proletariat. The Stalin communiqué came at the time of the gravest "strike" of the French proletariat against its own bourgeoisie; it came in the course of its struggle against Fascism which must be conquered in order to bar the road to war, and which cannot be conquered without conducting a determined struggle for proletarian power, that is to say, without conducting a determined struggle against the perfidious "national" policy which Stalin declares he "understands" and "approves". For, if instead of weakening one strengthens the bourgeoisie; if one accepts the precept of Stalin-Laval that the first duty is "not to permit the weakening of the means of national defense" of the bourgeoisie,—how then will the working class be able to struggle for the overthrow of its class enemy and to prevent Fascism and war?

The "contract" Stalin signed with Laval is not different from a contract a strike-breaker signs during the strike of workers against their capitalist boss. And the precise name for this is—*betrayal*.

(4) As a matter of fact, the "contract" Stalin signed entails very great benefits for capitalists (unlimited increase of armaments, since the certificate of approval to the French capitalists serves equally well for Mussolini at Rome, and Hitler in Germany). And in return for having smashed the international class front, Stalin receives the meager recompense of a dubious "alliance" with the French General Staff which may prove of some temporary usefulness to allay the fears of the frightened Stalinist bureaucracy; but which provides no guarantee whatever for the defense of the workers' state. Quite the contrary. At the proper moment, once the proletariat finds

itself weakened even still further, the capitalists, after having utilized the "strike-breakers", will again turn against the Soviet proletariat and reestablish their united front against the U.S.S.R.

Once again the act of treachery reveals itself as an act of incurable stupidity: which is, above all, a distinctive trait of Stalinism.

(5) But, indeed, can any sort of parallel be maintained even for a moment between Lenin's "alliance" with the French monarchist, de Lubersac, and Stalin's "alliance" with Laval? Lenin's "alliance" with de Lubersac was established for *real, concrete and immediate* objectives. Lenin was making use of the training of the French officers during the particularly difficult period of the Red Army, which was then in process of formation, in order to check the offensive waged by German troops in Russia. But at the same time Lenin was saying to the French workers, the German workers, the workers of Europe and America (Letter of August, 1918, followed by his letter of January, 1919), "*I am forced to act in this manner, to maneuver, veer and even retreat, so long as you, the other armies of the international socialist revolution, do not come to our assistance.*" Such was the language of Lenin, the language which every worker understood as being his very own. And when Lenin was told to wait, not to sign, etc., the Brest-Litovsk treaty, because the opponents of war among the German social democrats who had become defeatists were demanding this of him, Lenin wrote as follows:

"We are told that the opponents of war among the German social democrats have become 'defeatists' and are pleading with us not to yield to German imperialism. *But we have always stood for defeatism only in relation to the imperialist bourgeoisie of one's own country*, and we have always rejected the idea of victory over another imperialism, a victory obtained in concert with a "friendly" imperialism, since this method is inadmissible out of principled considerations, and, besides, can be only barren of results."

Clear? Of course it is. Even if we were to allow for the moment a case where the U.S.S.R. is forced into a war on the side of an "allied" Power, the duty of revolutionists is still that of remaining "defeatists", first and foremost against the imperialist bourgeoisie of their own country.

(6) But on the other hand, what does Stalin do, and what do the Stalinists say? They "adjure" the proletarians "not to weaken the national defense of their country"; to "unite" with the bourgeoisie of their country, if their country is on the side of the U.S.S.R. They are today *demoralizing* the working class by preaching a sacred union with the prospective imperialist "ally" of the U.S.S.R. They act in exactly the opposite way from Lenin.

Lenin made use of de Lubersac for *real* services to the Russian and international revolution: Stalin renders real services to the imperialists, prostituting the Russian and international revolution for Laval and other traitors to communism.

(7) Here is what Thorez blurted out on May 17 at Bullier (*l'Humanité*, May 24, 1935): "Should, under these conditions, a war break out against the Soviet Union,

and should an imperialist state be on the side of the Soviet Union, for whatever interests it might have, *such a war is not a war between two imperialist camps, for it would be monstrous to consider as an imperialist camp that camp in which the country of socialism, the country of the working class is to be found.* And now I reply to a question which has been put to me, "In a war unleashed by Hitler against the U.S.S.R. would you apply your slogan here of changing the imperialist war into a civil war?" Well, no. For in such a war it would not be a case of an imperialist war between two imperialist cliques; it is a question of a war *against the Soviet Union."*

So that, since it would be monstrous to consider that camp as imperialist in which the country of socialism, the country of the working class is found, they are bent on committing the monstrous crime of identifying with the workers' state the imperialist country or countries that find themselves in the same camp as the U.S.S.R. For, and here lies the whole monstrousness of the matter, what difference is there between the U.S.S.R. that defends the workers' state and the imperialist powers "allied" to the U.S.S.R. who struggle for reactionary and imperialist objectives? Is it possible for anyone to forget so fundamental a distinction? Can the working class ever be made the "ally" of its class enemy, the bourgeoisie by virtue of the fact that the latter finds itself temporarily "allied" to the U.S.S.R.? Such an abdication, as it is supported today by the Comintern, is equivalent to complete betrayal.

In reference to Brest-Litovsk, Lenin wrote:

"Whoever claims that the struggle against German imperialism is a defensive and a just struggle; whoever accepts the support of Anglo-French imperialism and seeks to defend before the people the secret treaties that they concluded between them; whoever does so is a traitor to socialism."

Do you grasp the trickery? Lenin underscored as "traitors to socialism" those who declared the struggle against German imperialism to be a defensive and just struggle; those who accepted the support of Anglo-French imperialism, etc. Lenin affirmed this principle not in 1914 but in 1918, that is to say, at a time when there was on the scene, as there is today, a workers' state, and two imperialist blocs. Did Lenin preach a "defensive and just struggle" of the Franco-British imperialist brigands against German imperialism? And yet, German troops were already occupying Russian soil. What Lenin did was to utilize the antagonisms between the two imperialist camps to permit the Russian and international revolution to become organized and to advance. To get the work of the revolution moving it was necessary *not to bind one's hands* by any combination with either the one or the other imperialism. That is why Lenin branded as treason the desire of the Russian social democrats to continue the war of Anglo-French capitalisms against German imperialism after the revolution. That is why, at the same time that he accepted the assistance of the monarchist de Lubersac, he also *condemned* the brigand policy of the Anglo-French al-

liance, and *called upon the workers to struggle against such a policy and for the seizure of power.*

II.

The League of Nations and the Proletariat. In order to struggle against war, we must first of all struggle against the fog of lies which prevents us from having a correct position on the problem of war. In the period of 1914, we had to carry on a desperate fight against the social-patriots; today, our struggle has become still more difficult because of the treachery of the Communist parties themselves, which have gone back to the position of the social-imperialists. Nothing shows this more clearly than their present attitude toward the League of Nations and toward the problems of sanctions. Let us try to put these matters in their proper perspective.

It was some time ago that we read the following: "In understanding the League of Nations, the Berne Conference [the Socialist conference held in February, 1919 in an attempt to bring to life the corpse of the Second International] showed that the League followed the lead of those bourgeois elements who, under the deceptive appearance of a so-called "League of the People", wanted to overcome the proletarian revolution which was rising throughout the entire world. Instead of unmasking the intrigues of the meeting of the Allies at Paris as those of a gang which acted as a broker for colonies and economic mandates, the Berne Conference reinforced the gang and became its instrument." The above appears in a resolution of the First Congress of the Comintern. How far we have travelled since that period! Today the Comintern has itself become the instrument of imperialist intrigues at Geneva. But, we are told, the situation has changed greatly since those days. Wherein, we ask, has the situation changed the nature of "imperialist Allies"?

"The 'League of Nations' is a slogan of betrayal, with the help of which the social-traitors, at the order of international capital, divide the proletarian forces and aid the imperialist counter-revolution." This, again, is what we read in the "Thesis on the International Situation" adopted by the First Congress of the Comintern. Today we would like to ask how this slogan "of betrayal" has become in the eyes of the "social-traitors" of Moscow the new gospel of "peace". It is not, of course, by the mere fact of entering the League of Nations that the U.S.S.R. violated communist principles. These principles call on "the proletarian revolutionists of all countries of the world to carry on an implacable struggle against the ideas of Wilson's League of Nations and to protest against entry into this society of peace, of exploitation and of imperialist counter-revolution" (from the same thesis of the First Congress).

"Propaganda for the League of Nations is the best means for confusing the revolutionary consciousness of the working class. In place of the slogan for an International of revolutionary workers' republics, there is substituted the slogan of an international association of false democracies, which would be achieved by coalition between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie" (thesis of

the First Congress). And it is no longer merely the social traitors of the Second International who become propagandists for an institution of this kind, "the better" to confuse the revolutionary consciousness of the working class—now it is also the parties of the Comintern itself. Thus, once more is our estimate of this International—that it has become the International of lies and betrayals—confirmed.

Why should the attitude of the proletariat toward the League of Nations be one of opposition and struggle? Let us answer in the words of Lenin and of Bolshevism (with which Stalinism has only the same relationship as opportunism has to Marxism).

1. "One of the forms of the deception of the working class is represented by pacifism and abstract propaganda for peace. . .

"At the present time all propaganda for peace without a call for revolutionary mass action does nothing except sow illusions, corrupts the proletariat by suggesting to it confidence in the humanity of the bourgeoisie, and makes of the proletariat a mere toy in the hands of the secret diplomacy of the warring powers."

2. "The question of determining what group delivered the first blow or what group first declared war has no importance whatever in deciding the tactics of socialism. Phrases about defending the fatherland, about the necessity of resisting an enemy invasion, about a defensive war, etc., are nothing else than a fooling of the people" (Lenin).

The idea of the *aggressor nation*, then, is false and deceptive when we are dealing with two belligerent imperialist powers. The last war proved that the two belligerent groups both prepared systematically for the war. The same thing is true today, whether in the case of those powers who "want peace" (that is, to keep what they have already acquired) or in the case of those powers who demand a new partition of the world.

On the other hand, non-imperialist wars, revolutionary wars, to lift the imperialist yoke from the necks of the oppressed colonial peoples, or wars on the part of the proletariat fighting against the bourgeoisie, *such wars* against the imperialist aggressor, are always entirely justified and admissible.

* * *

"The revolutionary struggle of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie can alone preserve the conquests of the workers and open up to the oppressed masses the path to a better future."

This statement of the Bolshevik-Leninists was formulated in March, 1915. It must be reaffirmed and driven home to the workers deceived by the two Internationals.

The bankruptcy of the Second International was that of Socialist opportunism; the bankruptcy of the Comintern is that of Stalinist opportunism.

The chief present task in the struggle against war is that of the regeneration of Marxism and of Leninism under the banner of the Fourth International.

FEROCI

BOOKS

Stalin in Reality and Legend

TWO STALIN BIOGRAPHIES:

STALINE. By HENRY BARBUSSE. Un monde nouveau vu à travers un homme.

STALINE. By BORIS SOUVARINE. Aperçu historique du bolchevisme.

Probably never before has historical forgery been so systematically practised as in the last 10 to 12 years in the Soviet Union. The history of two decades has had to be completely written anew in order to make Stalin, the "gray spot", as the left Menshevik Sukhanov characterized him, the most important leader, next to Lenin, of the Russian Bolshevik party and the revolution.

All historic evidence, all previous writings on the ideological struggles of the party, the year of the revolution and the period of the civil war, has had to be carefully destroyed to permit the legend free play. And a career beckons only for that "historian", or that red professor, who cunningly plays his part in this forgery; Siberia threatens all others. Thus a Yaroslowsky and a Popov write the history of the Bolshevik party so that Stalin is made to appear next to, and often even ahead of Lenin, as the theoretician of the party and the moulder of its policy. Voroshilov, Manuilski, and thousands after them, draw a new picture of the civil war. Against the ruinous leadership of the Red Army by Trotsky, who in union with the specialists and white guard officers had almost ruined the Russian revolution, there was always Stalin, who took the correct measures and finally insured victory. Recently this whole hodge podge of lies, misrepresentation, falsification, and distortion of historical facts has been forced, so to speak, in compressed form, upon the attention even of the non-Russian reader.

Barbusse's last book *Stalin* is advertised by the Stalinist publishers *Editions Carrefour* as the only "biography authorized by Stalin himself". At just the proper time, therefore, a biography of Stalin appears in the French language which is "not authorized by Stalin". Boris Souvarine, the well-known French communist and later an ultra-leftist, has undertaken to find the way back through this whole tangle of lies and forgeries, to the historical facts in order to give a really true picture of the political rôle and significance of Stalin. The bibliography in the appendix of the book comprises 25 whole pages and is testimony to the industry and scientific seriousness of the Souvarine work. (At the same time Souvarine informs us that he "had to exclude a large portion of the bibliography to reduce the size of the book.")

If no especially new feature in the political psychology of Stalin emerges from Souvarine's book for the reader of the works of Leon Trotsky, the opposition's documents and the party history of the Russian social democracy, nevertheless the biographic collection based on such extra-

ordinary knowledge of the material is of the greatest value and interest to all who recognize Stalinism as the decomposing poison of the modern labor movement and want to struggle against it. Souvarine proves to the very hilt that during the whole period of the preparation of the Revolution from 1900 to 1917 Stalin was nothing more than a "subaltern" in the Russian Social Democratic party. In the first ten volumes of Lenin's *Works*, of which Souvarine aptly says in his introduction, "the facts, ideas and people of a whole epoch" are treated, the name of Stalin is not found. Stalin was not present at the congress which split the Russian social democracy at London in 1903, although he does appear at the reconciliation congress at Stockholm in 1906. (Incidentally, let us remark that Barbusse makes the Stockholm party congress appear to be the high mark of the struggle against Menshevism, and of all people makes Stalin a spokesman of this struggle. Who will take the trouble to look up the protocols?) Stalin appears at the congress under the name of Ivanovitch as the Bolshevik delegate from the Tiflis district. His appearance itself is little more than pathetic. His intervention in the agrarian question the Menshevik Dan disposes of with two sentences. Both of his other utterances on the questions of the character of the Russian Revolution (where he loses himself in the dilemma: either bourgeois or proletarian revolution) and the participation in the Duma elections (where, despite Barbusse's opposite contention, he is for the boycott) receive no notice whatever.

For the following period of the depression from 1907 to 1911, as Trotsky has already established, there can be found no document, article, letter or resolution wherein Stalin formulated his estimate of the situation and its perspectives. "It is unlikely that such documents do not exist. It is unlikely that they have not been preserved,—if only in the archives of the police. Why are they not published?"

Nevertheless the industrious research of Souvarine is successful in digging up other evidence as political documents for Stalin's existence in this period. Koba—Stalin's party name in this period—was arrested in March, 1908 and spent eight months in prison at Bailov. Here he stayed together with a Social-Revolutionist, Simon Verechtschaks, who on January, 1928, published in the newspaper *Dui*, appearing in Paris, his recollections of "Stalin in Prison". The writings of Verechtschaks were used by Demian Biedny, the feuilleton writer of the *Pravda* and follower of Stalin for articles in honor of his master which appeared in *Pravda* on February 7, 1928 and December 20, 1929 under the title "A Conclusive Testimony". Souvarine relates that portion of Verechtschaks recollections which Demian Biedny cautiously withheld from the Russian readers. One day a young Georgian was cruelly mishandled by his fellow-prisoners in the corridors of the

Bailov prison. He was suspected of being a provocateur. Later it was disclosed that the unfounded rumor had emanated from Stalin. At another time the ex-Bolshevik Mitka G. killed a young worker with a knife whom he, without being acquainted with him, considered to be a spy. Called to account, Mitka confessed that Koba had put him up to the deed. To this period belong also other facts of Stalin's life which Souvarine divulges from other sources. At the close of the year 1901, Stalin suddenly left Tiflis. The Georgian social democratic magazine *Brzolis Khma* (Echo of Struggle) gives the explanation for his sudden departure: Stalin (Dyougadwili), by means of slander and intrigue, had attempted to undermine the position of the leader of the organization, S. Djibladze. After he had been warned a number of times he was found guilty of spreading an incredible slander and unanimously expelled from the Tiflis organization.

It seemed appropriate to us to gather all these evidences of Stalin's character, because later, we too shall get to know still other features of the same "moral cowardice"—as Bucharin puts it—quoted by Trotsky in *My Life*. Trotsky narrates how one day in the midst of the confusion of the civil war, which otherwise welded the whole party together in moral unity, Menshinski had come to him and told him that Stalin was attempting to involve Lenin in an intrigue against him. One remembers also Stalin's shameful betrayal of the mortally sick Lenin in the Georgian affair during the spring of 1923, and the whole essence of Stalin's method of struggle—that of casting suspicion and dishonor instead of by political argument and conviction. From the smuggling in of the "Wrangel officer" (read: agent of the G.P.U.) into the ranks of the Opposition, to the fantastic amalgam of the Kirov assassination can be seen the direct continuation of his methods while imprisoned in Bailov. With Stalin's rise to sole ruler, his defects of character were raised to the plane of the Soviet state and the Comintern. Only in this way can the monstrous degree of degeneracy and demoralization which the Stalin bureaucracy has brought upon the labor movement be understood. Beginning with the E.C.C.I. down to the last street nucleus in Paris or Cape Town there is no discussion with anyone who does not agree with Stalin's "general line". He is fought with slander and threats of the lowest order; he is accused of provoking foreign intervention with the White Guards, of being in the pay of the police, of the Fascists in the capitalist countries, and so on. Each political "general line" creates its own type of functionary and the Stalinist functionaries have become the flesh and blood of their master.

But after this degeneration let us follow further Stalin's political career as it is unfolded in Souvarine's book. A letter of Stalin's of the year 1911, in which he takes a position on the faction fights of the emigrés, has not been withdrawn from publication. Stalin said: "We have heard about the tempest in the tea-cup, the bloc of Lenin-Plechakov on the one hand, and Trotsky-Martov-Bogdanov on the other. As far as I know the workers incline toward the former. In general, however, they mistrust the emigrés. Why should they bother

themselves about them; as far as we are concerned, everyone who has the interest of the movement at heart does their own work. The rest will follow of itself. That is in my opinion the best." Souvarine here projects Stalin. In his opinion Stalin is expressing the healthy attitude of the rank and file on discussions of philosophical and other complicated questions. It appears to us, however, as if we were facing here also an evasion of Souvarine for thorough consideration of theoretical questions. But even if we accept Souvarine's attitude as that of the real rank and file, is not Stalin presented to us as the theoretical luminary light of the party? We recall also Stalin's later utterances about emigration with which he reproaches the leaders of the Opposition in his struggle against them. And when in the year 1932, the interviewer (Emil Ludwig) asks Stalin whether the emigration, in his opinion, was not of great significance for the Russian revolution, the latter answers disparagingly: "Not at all. The emigrés only sat in cafes and played chess." And woe to him who, disregarding the Master, dares to remember that Lenin spent 16 years of his life in emigration. Emigration, connection with the International and its problems, study of languages, all that is repulsive to the narrow Russian nationalist. Not until 1925 does he consent to be elected to the presidium of the C. I., in order to ruin it. "The Comintern will never make a revolution, not even in 90 years," said Stalin in Trotsky's presence in the Politbureau. And Souvarine also quotes Stalin's well-known expression, divulged by Lominadze: "The Communist International represents nothing and exists only by virtue of our support." Only on the basis of such a mentality could the "theory of the construction of socialism in one country" arise.

In the year 1912 Stalin worked on the newspaper *Zvezda* and took part in the founding of *Pravda*. According to Barbusse* Stalin was the real *spiritus rector* of this paper. Yet the various versions of the history of the Bolshevik party by Zinoviev, Nevski, Tchevolin, Bubnow and even that of Jaroslovsky do not even mention Stalin's collaboration on the *Pravda* and *Zvezda*. And Souvarine produces another mass of proof for the absolute insignificance of Stalin's collaboration on these papers. In 1913 Stalin spent some weeks abroad, in Cracow and Vienna. Lenin, who was favorably impressed by him, induced him to write an article on the national question, the only product of Stalin's literary activity in the pre-revolutionary period. And this article, a sophomoric essay, the leading ideas of which came directly from Lenin, has since been reprinted over and over again. Whole schools of red professors dedicated themselves to the task of preparing a glossary of the book in order to justify Stalin's pretensions to the dignity of theoretician. Stalin returned to Petrograd as an obedient pupil of Lenin. He became the intermediary between Lenin and the Duma fraction, i.e., he brought the latter the tactical advice and the drafted speeches

of the party's "brain". In this rôle of the obedient instrument, Stalin gained the confidence of Lenin and only in this rôle did he display certain merits. No sooner was he deprived of Lenin's sure leadership than his own empiricism led him on the road of the least resistance, of adaptation, of opportunism. And because he could hope to gain a position in the party only by complete submission to Lenin, obedience becomes for him the highest virtue. This obedience he deifies and abstracts from the politics which it should serve and which, after Lenin's death, he claims for himself and his régime. But Lenin himself foresaw the results of such a régime in that letter to Zinoviev and Bucharin which the latter cited in 1928 when the ground began to shake under his feet: "When you begin in the International, to replace the intelligent and independent men by obedient blockheads you will inevitably dig its grave."

In 1913 Stalin is again arrested. At the outbreak of the war he is in the Siberian steppes. Again for the whole period from 1913 to 1917 every vestige of Stalin's political activity or expression of opinion is destroyed. Of course, in the struggle against "Trotskyism" all critical quotations which Lenin dedicated to Trotsky's *Nashe Slovo* have been advertised hundreds of times. But what was Stalin's opinion during this period? Where did he defend revolutionary defeatism and the idea of the New International, asks Trotsky? It is really impossible that the future "leader of the world proletariat" wrote nothing in these decisive years. And Souvarine adds:

"Stalin has not only suppressed his writings of this epoch but also taken care that they are not made use of by others. In the extensive collection *Katorga i Ssylka* (Fortress and Exile), the periodical of the former prisoners and exiles, where the survivors of Czarist oppression are free to discourse on even their most trivial recollections, above all if they can conjure up a personality, Stalin does not exist. The other historical publications, a mass of documents and recollections, likewise do not mention him. A singular case in Russia which justifies the most unfavorable conclusions."

These "unfavorable conclusions" find their confirmation in Stalin's political appearance in the first few weeks after the February revolution which freed him from exile. Muranov, Kamenev and Stalin, after their return to Petrograd, took over the editorship of *Pravda* and thereby actually determined the policy of the Bolshevik party (i.e., the C.C. which had constituted itself as such) also delegated Stalin as its representative to the executive committee of the Soviets. But here he was unable to play even the smallest sort of a rôle and only confirmed the judgment which Trotsky passes on him in his latest pamphlet (*Workers' State, Thermidor and Bonapartism*):

"Stalin was never a leader of the masses and according to his whole nature could not be; he is the chief of the bureaucratic chiefs, their embodiment and apotheosis." In a bureaucratic manner Stalin attained the editorship of the *Pravda*. There he put forth the line of "conditional defense of the Fatherland", i.e., the Bolsheviks would

support the policy of the Provisional government to the extent that its policy corresponded to the will of the Menshevik-Social Revolutionary Soviet. The issue of the *Pravda* of March 15 which defends this policy became a real political sensation. Souvarine quotes from the memoirs of the Bolshevik Shlyapnikov:

"The 15th of March, the day of the publication of the first number of the 'reformed' *Pravda* became a day of rejoicing for the defenders of the Fatherland. From the Tauride Palace, from the members of the Duma committee to the executive committee, the heart of the revolutionary democracy, everyone was filled with one single piece of news, the victory of the moderate, the reasonable Bolsheviks over the extremists. In the central executive committee we were greeted with poisonous smiles. That was the first and the only time that the *Pravda* received the approval of the defenders of the Fatherland of the worst sort."

The proletarian vanguard was not so delighted with Stalin's little coup d'état as were the Menshevik parliamentarians. Let us listen to Shlyapnikov further:

"In the factories this issue of the *Pravda* called forth dismay among the followers and sympathizers of our party and sarcastic satisfaction among our enemies. In the editorial rooms of the *Pravda* inquiries as to the cause of the sudden turn piled up.

"The anger in the workers' quarters grew considerably and as the workers learned that three former editors of the *Pravda* had come from Siberia and gotten hold of the paper, they demanded their expulsion from the party."

If one believes the first edition of Stalin's *On the Road to October*, he wrote only three articles up to Lenin's arrival, of which the first closes with the necessity "of the democratic republic for all citizens of Russia" (thus, without distinction of class); the second demands "pressure upon the Provisional Government for the purpose of opening peace negotiations" (that was the policy of the Mensheviks); the third raises the demand, in equivocal fashion, of the convocation of an All-Russian Soviet. In his foreword to this edition Stalin explains "self-critically" that the three first articles "reflect a certain hesitation of the majority of our party". What Souvarine forgets to add is that the first two articles and the self-critical passage in the foreword have disappeared from the later editions. Stalin had in the meantime received the consecration of infallibility. Barbusse, the "sole biographer authorized by Stalin", removes all these difficulties in the simplest way imaginable. He has Stalin arriving in Petrograd only at the same time as Lenin, whereby the former becomes from the very outset the champion of Leninist intransigence against the "Kamenevite opportunism". Thus to put it politely (*de mortuis nil nisi bonum*), he carries over to the writing of history the poetic fantasy of the fiction writer.

After Lenin's arrival Stalin again disappears behind the scenes and limits himself to the rôle of the obedient subaltern. He never attempts to clarify himself on his own errors nor to take the road to the Leninist conception. He is silent and obeys. Then there occurs only one more slip—when the

*Souvarine does not discuss Barbusse's book, for both books appeared almost at the same time. In spite of this, Souvarine's book seems to be an answer to Barbusse's.

"tireless fighter and real organizer of the insurrection" of the legend places himself just at the critical moment defensively in front of the "strikebreakers" Zinoviev and Kamenev. This does not prevent the miserable—pardon—Barbusse from writing that Trotsky "with certain reservations" shared the position of both.

In the government of People's Commissars, Stalin is made Commissar for Nationalities and later Commissar of Workers and Peasants Inspection, but he neglects both of these offices which as a result, are cast into the greatest disorder. During the years of the civil war, this would be understandable—if still not excusable—had Stalin at least played the rôle at the civil war front which legend has attributed to him. The real rôle of Stalin in Tzaritzin and on the southern front, has already been convincingly traced by Trotsky and Souvarine's portrayal, which here again is based on official documents, bears Trotsky out on all points, so that not a loophole remains for all the fairy tales of Voroshilov, Manuisky and Barbusse. Moreover, here is what a proof looks like when Stalin's authorized biographer once takes the trouble of citing a document. In Barbusse's book the text of a telegram (of December 31, 1918) to the Revolutionary Military Council reads as follows:

"Received from the environs of Perm a series of reports from the party which indicate drunkenness and a catastrophic condition of the Third Army. I was thinking of sending Stalin."

In reality the full text of this telegram of Lenin's to Trotsky reads as follows: "From below Perm there are a series of reports from the party on the catastrophic condition of the army and drunkenness. I am sending them to you. It is demanded that you come down there. I was thinking of sending Stalin because I am afraid that Smilga is too soft toward X—, who, they say, also drinks and is incapable of restoring order. Telegraph your opinion."

A mere reconstruction of even this telegram, which is not to Stalin's disadvantage proves the deep unanimity between Lenin and Trotsky in the years of the civil war and the third rate rôle of Stalin.

Stalin's work in the Commissariat of Nationalities and in the Workers and Peasants Inspection is treated by the sick Lenin in 1922-23 with merciless criticism. Stalin's brutal policy of suppression of the Georgian communists who were striving toward relative autonomy is flayed in Lenin's last writings in the strongest terms and as a result led to Lenin's letter to Stalin in which he broke off all relations with the latter. And Lenin said about Stalin's Workers and Peasants Inspection in his famous article "Better Less but Better."

"Let us say it openly. At present the Inspection has not the least authority. Everyone knows there is no worse management than our inspection."

About the post-Leninist period, about the régime of the Troika, the United Opposition bloc, Stalin's zigzags, the Chinese revolution, the overhead, disproportion and contradiction of the Five-Year Plan, we hear no facts which have not already become known from Trotsky's writings.

There is no doubt that Souvarine's book is worthy of serious attention. How far

some of his sources (the Georgian Mensheviks, etc.) are reliable is naturally very hard to judge. As regards the presentation itself, Souvarine very often loses himself in details. In addition, the book is not quite free of repetitions. Yet the weakest passages of the book are clearly those wherein Souvarine's own conceptions are expressed. Thus he identifies himself precisely with the weakest points of the Luxemburg criticism of the Russian Revolution; namely, Rosa's position on the agrarian question and on the national problem. But Paul Levi, as early as the fall of 1921 when he published Rosa's pamphlet, was able to state in his foreword that in these questions history had criticized Rosa's critics. By defending Rosa Luxemburg's point of view Souvarine contradicts himself. In his struggle against the Georgian communists in 1923, Stalin with good grounds was able to base himself on Rosa's arguments in favor of centralism against federalism. (It is still a question, however, if Rosa alive would have been in agreement.) Yet Souvarine condemns Stalin's policy without in this connection going into the theoretical side of the problem. Souvarine also does not let the method of struggle of the Left Opposition go uncriticized and accuses it of great tactical errors. Of course, there is nothing sacrosanct for us in the policy of the Opposition, and we would only welcome a detailed study of these questions. But we are afraid that Souvarine will not have very much to say on this question. For example, he considers it a mistake on the part of the Opposition that along with the serious errors in the Russian question it dragged the Chinese and Anglo-Russian Committee questions into the discussion in the sharpest form. In his opinion Bucharin, Tomsy, etc. were thereby compelled to rally around Stalin. Had criticism been limited to Stalin's Russian policy, he maintains, Stalin's faction would surely have disintegrated. We believe that here Souvarine is making a great mistake. The Opposition fought precisely under the banner of international revolution against Stalin's limited nationalism. If the Opposition had allowed Stalin's national limitation to be forced upon itself its defeat would only have been more complete. Souvarine also contradicts himself when he accuses Trotsky of claiming infallibility. Souvarine himself often enough quotes precisely such passages from Trotsky in which the latter acknowledges his mistakes, such as Trotsky's attitude toward the Bolsheviks before 1917, the question of the Brest-Litovsk peace, he pursuit of Kolchak, etc. Not only that, but one of the most recent pamphlets of Trotsky's, *Workers' State, Thermidor and Bonapartism*, is dedicated to self-criticism on the question of the Thermidor analogy. To be sure, Trotsky, to the misfortune of Souvarine, the little narrow-minded S.A.P.ers, etc., who level the same accusation of the "claim of infallibility", sticks by his opinions and fights for them uncompromisingly, as the course of historical events confirms the correctness of his point of view and the fatal errors of his opponents.

It would lead us too far afield to examine all of Souvarine's mistakes here. Let us be content with a smile when he characterizes the Trotskyist tendency as opposed

to Stalinist theocracy as a sort of Jansenism in contradiction to which completely enlightened rationalism is to be found only in Souvarine. Our greatest difference with Souvarine, however, lies in the question of whether the bureaucracy in the U.S.S.R. represents a new class which only a new revolution can remove. To his well-known hypothesis Souvarine adds no new proof in his book. What property forms are typical of this "class" in contradistinction to the feudal nobility or to the bourgeoisie he is unable to say.* From the false estimation of the bureaucracy as a new class, there follows for Souvarine, with regard to the further development of the U.S.S.R., an extremely dangerous, fatalistic and in the last analysis counter-revolutionary perspective. Souvarine leaves the question of curing the U.S.S.R. from the evil of bureaucratism to a new war. The Russo-Japanese war ended with the Revolution of 1905, the participation of Russia in the world war with the Revolution of 1917; at the end of a new war the Russian workers will shake off the bureaucracy. Therein lies Souvarine's wisdom. By means of his fatalistic perspective Souvarine furthermore arrives at the same plane of limited national thinking from which Stalin's theory of socialism in one country arose. The conception of the bureaucracy as a class prevents him from seeing the dialectic function of the bureaucracy. Despite its rôle as grave-digger for the Soviet state and the international revolution, it defends in its own peculiar way the gains of the October Revolution against world capitalism.

In case of an attack of imperialism on the Soviet Union the world proletariat must not leave the Soviet Union to its fate and rely upon the workers there to settle with the bureaucracy. It must defend the Soviet Union even in its present condition, naturally without giving up its criticism of the Stalin bureaucracy for one single second. In this respect Trotsky has used a comparison which is striking in its simplicity. Just as we will defend Leon Blum (one might also say Thorez) against an attack of the Fascists, despite their policy which is so fatal for the French proletariat, so we defend the U.S.S.R. against world imperialism. The freeing of the U.S.S.R. from the Stalinist tumor is the task of the international revolution. The precondition for victory is the creation of the Fourth International. If the October Revolution and the creation of the Third International signified a basic revival of Marxism coming from Russia, from the East, so today the workers of western Europe and America are in a position to regain the Russian workers for revolutionary Marxism. In a word, to make the rejuvenation of the Soviet Union dependent upon the fatalist hope on the outcome of the next war can only be the idea of salon revolutionists and babblers (who not infrequently become direct agents of reactionary forces). The removal of the cancer of bureaucracy from the Soviet state is a task of the conscious struggle for the Fourth International.

Walter HELD

*The reader will find a detailed analysis of this question in Trotsky's pamphlet, *Soviet Union and the Fourth International*.

"War" by Norman Thomas

WAR: NO PROFIT, NO GLORY, NO NEED. By NORMAN THOMAS. Frederick A. Stokes Co. New York. \$1.50.

The new international war crisis is no longer a matter for prophecy and prediction. It is already here, inaugurated by the launching of the Italian campaign in Ethiopia. We have entered the period of the armed struggle of the imperialist powers for a re-division of the world. This does not, of course, mean that open world war is scheduled to begin immediately. Delay, hesitation, maneuvering are still, for the moment, possible. What it means is that the approach of the world war has now become the decisive and determining factor in international, and thus also in national, developments.

This is no less true within the working class than in the case of the bourgeoisie and their national states. Once again it is the war crisis that strips bare the pretenders and betrayers within the working class, that acts as a powerful solvent to separate the opportunists, the social patriots, the sectarians, from the revolutionists—for, more directly and obviously than in any other test, it is the revolutionists alone who can stand before the impact of the war crisis.

It is against this background, then, that we must judge any and every statement of position on the question of war. On the question of war every responsible person must be completely serious. No evasions, no half-truths can be accepted. The only answer to war is the full answer, with no sugar-coating.

In the light of these considerations, what are we to say about Norman Thomas' new book on war, a book published only a week or two after the beginning of the Ethiopian campaign? It must be remembered that this is a book of great significance for the labor movement in this country. Thomas is justifiably known as the public leader of the Socialist party, its most popular speaker, writer, and candidate. He is more particularly known as the official leader of the official Militants, the man to whom many of the leftward moving Socialist party members still look for leadership in the fight against the right wing and for the regeneration of the socialist movement. His answer to the most crucial problem facing the working class deserves the most careful study and analysis.

But, alas, to begin with we find that this new book is three-fourths mere journalism, mere loose writing about the horrors of the last war and the probable horrors of the next, doubtful history about the origins of war in human society and the character of early wars, side paragraphs of questionable biology, anthropology and psychology. Such journalistic treatment has, no doubt, a place, and sometimes a correct one, in the agitational side of the struggle against war. It does not always have the effect that is intended. Some years ago, Kenneth Burke pointed out how convincing portrayals of the horrors of war may easily be turned toward the ends of the war makers, since these made the sacrifices of the soldiers seem even greater acts of nobility. But the present time demands, not "popular"

essays, but—the correct answers to the fundamental questions.

It is, therefore, the remaining quarter of Thomas' book, the political sections, which concern us. These may be adequately judged by outlining Thomas' five point program for "struggle against war" in this country:

1. "An immediate, solemn declaration of national policy by the President and Congress that the United States will not supply, or permit its citizens to supply, arms, munitions, or financial support to belligerents or prospective belligerents."

2. "... the largest measure of disarmament that the public can be persuaded to accept."

3. A cessation or mitigation of imperialist policies on the part of the U. S. government. (Thomas records with approval that the government has not been "so aggressively imperialist" in the thirties as in the twenties.)

4. Repeal of the Asiatic exclusion laws.

5. "International coöperation", as against "isolation".

Put down in outline, in black on white, this might seem almost like a joke. What world, one is tempted to ask, is Thomas living in? To propose disarmament seriously in the stage of preparation for the new world war! To beg the most powerful imperialist power on earth to be a little less imperialistic and not antagonize other nations! To solve the Far Eastern conflicts by admitting a few Japanese to California! To coöperate internationally—with the war makers! To preserve peace by founding it on a public promise of the war government of U. S. finance-capital! Truly, a program for the Duponts and the directors of the Chase National Bank to smile over.

It is, of course, not an accident that Norman Thomas puts forward such a program. Thomas' approach to social problems is always first and primarily ethical and psychological. Politics is for him a kind of by-product, and political statements in his works usually give the impression of being in parentheses. Consequently it is not surprising that his political position is a strange and precarious mélange. All through this book on war we find the constant expression of political problems in their ethical and psychological form. We are told about war's "madness"; "this 'homicidal mania' which men call war"; the "megalomania" of Mussolini which can be satisfied only by foreign conquest; the "nasty mess" resulting from the Rickett concession; the "dreadful" hazards of the secret war for oil; the failure of the League of Nations to show "real zeal in behalf of justice and peace"; the encouraging factor of "the sincerity with which the European masses have condemned Mussolini's raid". . . . But nowhere in this book do we find a sharp, clear analysis of what makes wars, and, in the light of what makes them, how they can be got rid of. There are, it is true, a few side remarks to the effect that the "capitalist nationalist system" breeds wars, and that we shall have to build a "coöperative society" in order to be secure in peace. But these remarks are introduced almost apologetically, as if Thomas were anxious to avoid offending anyone who might be

enlisted in the "struggle for peace" so long as this didn't upset the rest of his customary behavior.

Nowhere is the weakness clearer than in the last chapter, which is entitled, "A Postscript on War and Revolution". Here Thomas takes the position which has now become pretty well standard among large sections of the leadership of world social democracy who can no longer keep their standing with the old type out and out gradualism. "Violent revolution" is a terrible thing—in all probability even more terrible than international war—but nevertheless there is a "possibility" that it may have to be undertaken as a last resort. The "sane revolutionist" will not "utterly renounce the use of violence"; "if new world war is begun there may be nothing for it but to try to turn it into the right sort of revolution in order to end the war" (will that be the aim of the right sort of revolution? To end the war?—Thomas states no other aim). But the events in Austria and Spain alone have proved with entire conclusiveness that this "sane revolutionary" attitude is not one degree better than pure and simple gradualism: to admit only the "possibility" of fighting, and then to drop the whole subject, is only to guarantee in advance that you will lose the fight when it starts.

Nevertheless, there are greater surprises in Thomas' position, and of an opposite sort. In a footnote, written apparently while the book was in proof, he writes a paragraph on the Seventh Congress of the C. I., which briefly and yet decisively analyzes the C.I.'s present position on war from close to a Marxist point of view. This single paragraph says more on the question of war than the entire remainder of the book. Readers should begin with this paragraph, and should then use it as a critical weapon to carry them steadily through what precedes it.

It is, of course, Thomas' ethical and psychological approach, combined with his personal charm and speaking abilities, which wins him so devoted a following. But above all on the question of war ethics and psychology and personal sincerity are not enough. Thomas is "right" enough in his feelings; but he is wrong in politics. In politics he wants it both ways: he wants—occasionally and if "absolutely necessary"—a revolutionary struggle for workers' power (which is the only struggle against war as it is the only means for attaining socialism), and he wants also peace—international peace and a peaceful education toward the "coöperative society". He wants it both ways; but the trouble is that you can't have it both ways. This the members of the Socialist party are perhaps beginning to learn. And within their own ranks they have good teachers. For the Old Guard thinks not ethically but politically. They know what they want, and they want it just one way—their way. When the left socialists understand this clearly, they will understand also the solution to their own problems. And they will see that, on the question of war as on every other, it is not Thomas' answer—which is in reality an effort to avoid answering—but the only possible answer: the Marxist, the revolutionary answer.

J. W.

At Home

Beginning next year we intend to stabilize the publication of our magazine on a regular monthly basis. We are fully aware of the great responsibility that such a statement imposes upon us; but we also feel that it is now possible to realize this objective in view of the splendid coöperation given by our readers. In other words, to us this represents a problem of common efforts and once the necessary prerequisite is attained, the solution, for which we are striving, should also be possible.

We have appealed to *all of our readers* to assist us in extending the circulation of THE NEW INTERNATIONAL. A full and complete response to this appeal will automatically solve the problem of regular monthly publication and all indications so far point to a response even beyond our greatest expectations. Quite a few readers have sent in new subscriptions. Three of our best supporters comrades, F. X. Ferry of Chicago, F. Remus of Northville, Mich., and Ray Saunders of New York City, have sent in more than one subscription each. No doubt this example will become a spur to others to do likewise.

In the future issues we intend to go more deeply into discussions of the fundamentals of Marxism in order to help restore this indispensable weapon to the labor and revolutionary movement. Great events are taking place, not only on a world scale, but in the labor movement of the United States as well, and we feel that we are in a position to make serious contributions to such a discussion. To make this worth while, however, in its fullest and most complete sense, we must pay the greatest attention also to the rather tedious work of extending our circulation. Ideas become power once they penetrate the masses and it is in this spirit that we have asked for support from our readers. With the indications that we already have, that this support will be given, we can promise that no stone shall be left unturned until we really have a regular monthly publication always filled with material touching on the most burning problems of the movement and serving as a serious means of Marxian education.

Some of the party branches have also made increases in their bundle orders. Naturally, this is one of the very effective ways of increasing our circulation. But in this respect it is important also to remember the financial aspect of an extended cir-

ulation. Thus, for example, the Los Angeles branch increased its bundle order and it always makes prompt settlements, whereas the Toledo branch, while it has consistently increased its bundle order, it is almost as consistently lax in making settlements. Unfortunately this latter example is not the only one. Several branches have permitted their accounts with THE NEW INTERNATIONAL to lapse beyond all reasonable proportions. This should be a warning to all the dilinquents. We should now put our

shoulders to the wheel and build up THE NEW INTERNATIONAL to become, in the full sense of the word, the powerful instrument it is destined to be.

Herewith we also acknowledge the most recent prompt response on previous pledges made to our sustaining fund from comrades Konikow, Remus and Johantges. With further sustained efforts and intimate collaboration between the publishers and the readers, our magazine is bound to gain.

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The *New Militant* will soon become a regular eight-page weekly. Meanwhile our special combination offer of a yearly subscription to THE NEW INTERNATIONAL (12 issues) and the *New Militant* (52 issues) both for the price of \$2.00 still holds good. This combination offer has so far proved exceedingly popular, indicating that more and more every serious student of Marxism and every militant worker finds both to be indispensable.

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