

October 1940

THE NEW INTERNATIONAL

A Monthly Organ of Revolutionary Marxism

The 1940 Elections

WHAT THE WORKERS SUPPORT AND WHY

By The Editor

THE WILLKEVELT CAMPAIGN

By Dwight Macdonald

AMERICAN LABOR AND POLITICS

By David Coolidge

WHAT NEXT IN LATIN AMERICA? By Lebrun

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Manager's Column

In this, the October issue of THE NEW INTERNATIONAL, we demonstrate the determination of the staff and our supporters to keep it alive and to expand with its living. The September issue—32 pages—a memorial to comrade Trotsky—drained the resources dry. But here's the October issue and the fact that it is in your hands should convince you that we mean business.

But to carry on we need your help and cooperation. For our supporters and subscribers we cannot stress too greatly how much subscriptions mean to the life of the N.I. Surely, among your friends there is one more besides yourself—or two or three or ten—who can afford and would subscribe to the only revolutionary Marxist monthly published in this country. Dig down yourselves and pay for another subscription for someone who *needs* THE NEW INTERNATIONAL—there are plenty.

For those who are in our organization we want to say a few words about bundle orders, though subscriptions apply to you as well. On you rests the responsibility for guaranteeing a stable income for our press. Whether the income is small or large, it *must* be stabilized so that we know how much is going to be paid in each month and can make plans accordingly. This means that bundle orders must be paid for immediately upon receipt. Start with this issue and make it a habit. As for back bills, add something to the current payment and amortize your indebtedness over a period of time. Bear in mind that outstanding bills, if paid now, would make possible a 32 page issue for November and assure its being put out on time.

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Due to the strict censorship in many foreign countries, the N.I. is naturally becoming more and more limited in its foreign circulation. However, we manage to get reports of individuals receiving it in some countries where the strictest censorship is imposed. It is our plan, once we are able to stabilize income and circulation here, to set up a fund purely for foreign mailing and circulation. Comrades throughout the world wait eagerly for each issue. This was verified by comrade Sherman Stanley who covered a good deal of territory. He reports that when a single copy is received by an individual it is passed on to literally hundreds more.

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The new business manager is not yet fully acquainted enough with the branches to give you any definite figures, but starting with next month's issue he hopes to be in a position to criticize the slackers and praise the activists. Suffice to say for now that there have been increases in branches where they were not expected and decreases in branches that seem unnecessary.

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A comrade in Louisville who up to now has been receiving a single subscription writes in and orders a bundle of five. That means five more readers in Louisville if we know this comrade.

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What's happened in Boston? We are ashamed to talk about your reduction.

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And Chicago that started so magnificently, we regret to say has become the sorest disappointment of all the branches both in payment and in size of their bundle order.

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For the disappointments there is recompense. Lynn increases its bundle by 5 as of the September issue. Good work and we expect more.

THE NEW INTERNATIONAL

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The November issue of the N.I. will be celebrating the 23rd anniversary of the Russian Revolution. Despite the setbacks, defeats, the war and its resulting repressions, a corps of revolutionary Marxists still carries on, certain of its direction. The traditions of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Trotsky and the inspiration of the Russian Revolution move us at this time to expend even greater effort and sacrifice to spread their teachings and profit by their experience. Few avenues of expression remain to us, but certainly no one will deny that THE NEW INTERNATIONAL is the most important one.

For this anniversary number, therefore, we propose that all literature agents make plans now for an increased bundle order of the next issue and let us know as soon as possible how many you can take and *pay for*.

Let each subscriber order at least one more copy to pass on to a friend. We will be glad to cooperate in sending a copy to an address supplied to us upon receipt of 15 cents.

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For those subscribers who now receive THE NEW INTERNATIONAL by first class mail, we will continue sending it until the sub expires. In the future, however, all subs that must be sent this way will add 75 cents to the cost.

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We hear from reliable sources that the N.I., when it reaches London, gets considerable circulation in Hyde Park and receives much favorable comment from people heretofore antagonistic. It deservedly is becoming recognized as the only American theoretical organ of revolutionary Marxism.

Don't fail it now. Help it go forward to 32 pages and double its circulation!

THE MANAGER

THE NEW INTERNATIONAL

A Monthly Organ of Revolutionary Marxism

VOLUME VI

OCTOBER, 1940

NUMBER 9

The Editor's Comments

Although American Labor Does Not Seem To Be Playing An Independent Role In The Presidential Elections This Year, The Very Reasons Why It Supports Roosevelt As The "Lesser Evil" Have a Fatal Significance For The Future Of Capitalist Politics

AT FIRST AND SECOND GLANCE, the largest and most significant social grouping in the country, the working class, does not seem to be playing an important part in the presidential election. The American Federation of Labor is truer to its pallid traditional "non-partisanship" this year than almost ever before. The Congress of Industrial Organizations, in the person of its badly isolated leader, seems to be a warrior sulking in his tent. Its electoral arm, Labor's Non-Partisan League, is scarcely heard from and there is no one asking it to speak. The Socialist party and its candidate are making a feeble and more lamentable showing than did even the late Allan Benson in 1916. Notwithstanding its still powerful apparatus and resources, the Communist party shows no sign that it will surpass, or even repeat, the trivial performance it gave four years ago. Of the only two Labor or Farmer-Labor parties, the oldest, in Minnesota, is pretty much a ghost, and the youngest, in New York, is in the agony of a convulsing schism.

Yet, American labor was never better, more numerous and more powerfully organized than it is this year. Never was it more urgently necessary for it to enter an election under its own banner; never was it in a better position to do so. Between its two main wings, unionism counts a good seven-eight million adherents in this country, millions of them in the decisive industries of the country which were wholly or partly unorganized four years ago. The principal promises of labor's idol of 1932 and 1936 remain unredeemed. Those pieces of progressive social legislation which did go further than the paper they were written on either are being honored less in the observance than in the breach or are on the road to suspension on the grounds of the presumed needs of national defense. Neither conscription nor the war which it precedes is popular with the majority of the American workers. Finally, the two main candidates for the presidency conduct themselves as if to emphasize that there is no important difference between them.

In face of these facts, while the entire capitalist class is far from standing on the side of Willkie, virtually the entire working class will undoubtedly vote for Roosevelt. In this sense, the class tension is pretty clear. However, it has not produced a powerful independent working class party even to the extent that such existed for decades in every European country. Quite the contrary: except for the handful of incorruptible Republicans of the Hutcherson-of-the-Carpenters type, the Stalinists, who are in a category by themselves, and the militants of the extreme left—all together, a small

number—labor, both organized and unorganized, will support the Democratic candidate of capitalism.

Why?

Two Souls Of Capitalist Politics

The choice between Roosevelt and Willkie is described as one between Tweedledum and Tweedledee. Not without justice. Both are stout champions of capitalism, and not in its youth or its prime, but in its period of poisonous senility. Both are friends of industry whose hearts nevertheless beat tenderly for the honest toiler in the mill and tiller of the soil. What concrete political or social legislation sponsored by Roosevelt would be repealed or altered by Willkie, the latter has thus far disdained to specify. On the capital question of the day, the war, the contenders cannot be told apart by experts. If Willkie complains that Roosevelt shouts too much in world politics and that he prefers to follow the dictum of the first Roosevelt—"Speak softly and carry a big stick"—he only reduces the difference between the two candidates on the most vital of problems to a matter of personal taste in voice controls. Otherwise, Willkie has effectively insisted that he doesn't disagree essentially with Roosevelt, that he does, in fact, endorse one point in his accomplished or proposed program after another. The witty Congressman who predicted that Willkie would end up by endorsing also the third term for Roosevelt was almost right.

Then if there is so little difference between the two candidates, what is to account for the overwhelming majority of the workers supporting one of them? Are they so utterly blind as not to see what is so plainly before their noses? Why do they rally to Roosevelt when, if it were a matter of program, they might just as reasonably rally to Willkie?

The answer is: there is a difference between the two candidates, besides the one indicated elsewhere in this issue, a significant and important difference, and the instincts of the workers do not betray them when they discern it.

Two souls contend for supremacy in capitalist politics at all times and most particularly and even sharply nowadays. Capitalist politics is the art of maintaining class rule, the rule of the capitalist class over the working class. One answer to the problem of maintaining that rule is given by bourgeois reformism. Far from undermining the social order, it leaves it intact. It understands, however, that there are circumstances in which the social interests of the ruling class demand "sacrifices" from it in the form of concessions of one degree or another to the working class. More often

than not, indeed, as a rule, these concessions are made as an anticipatory blunting of sharper demands that the workers are on the verge of achieving by methods of vigorous class struggle; or else as a partial, legal sanctioning of gains already achieved by those methods. Irksome and irritating though these concessions may be to the ruling class, it prefers to make the gesture of granting them rather than to have them—and more than them—torn from it by an irate, mobilized, battling working class.

The other answer to the problem is given by bourgeois conservatism and reaction: Concessions? What the rabble needs is a good dose of the night stick and the riot gun! And what we need is a strong government, strong enough to resist the demagogical demands of the masses, strong enough to deal summarily with subversive forces; courageous enough to retrench in governmental overhead, to reduce the social services to a minimum, if any, to relieve us of the burden of taxation; modest enough to confine itself to running the political machine of the state without interfering in matters of wages and hours and markets and management, but not so empty-treasured as not to be able to subsidize needy but worthy enterprises from time to time. And if some malcontents try to stir up trouble, let them be dealt with as rank rebellion is dealt with—by force.

Capitalist politics are either idealized or violent variations of one of these two courses. Roosevelt represents, substantially, the one; Willkie the other. So far as the latter is concerned, by virtue of his whole past record, of his present associations, and notwithstanding all his protestations, the American workers understand enough to measure him for what he is. The period is past when people voted for the "outs" only because they were tired of the "ins". Whatever else they may feel or think, they want no return to the forgotten days of Hoover. And they are of course right.

As for Roosevelt—here it is essentially not so much a case of his being liked more as it is of his opponent being liked much less. Roosevelt would have to be much more the vain megalomaniac he is represented as in the sub rosa stories circulated by Republican jesters in Washington to believe that his present support, especially so far as the workers are concerned, is blind and personal, that is, that it is more or less permanent regardless of what he proposes and does. It is a fact that approximately up to the time Hitler launched his *Blitzkrieg* in earnest, Roosevelt was steadily losing ground among the workers. The loss of ground was almost directly related to the speed with which Roosevelt was moving along the well-trodden path from bourgeois reformism to bourgeois conservatism, from the New Deal to the War Deal. The master-improvizer in the White House was losing his grip on the masses and this was not least significantly reflected in John L. Lewis' momentary boldness. When he predicted Roosevelt's defeat if he ran for a third term, and talked of a Labor party, and played publicly with the idea of a "grand coalition" in the coming elections of the unions, the unemployed, the Townsendites and the eminent Senator Wheeler, he was not merely trying to blackjack Roosevelt into some obscure deal, he was just giving a few shoves to what he believed to be a shaky throne.

The spectacular advances of Hitler, which disturbed every worker, gave Roosevelt a necessary opportunity to retrieve lost ground. General preoccupation with the tremendous world events enabled him to distract attention from events at home and to cover himself on the domestic front by a clever exploitation of the honest and honorable

anti-fascist, anti-Hitlerite sentiment of the masses. The almost universal alarm over the prospect of a quick and crushing Axis victory enabled Roosevelt, who has pursued a vigorous anti-Axis policy, to rally again those masses of workers who see no alternative to Hitler's triumph right now except the triumph of the democratic imperialisms.

Labor's Ominous Support Of Roosevelt

Still, labor's support of Roosevelt is neither totally blind nor permanent. Rather, it is ominous to the future of Roosevelt and the future of capitalist politics.

Labor supported and supports Roosevelt not because of the reforms which he kept on paper or eliminated, but because of those he granted; not, for example, because he reduced unemployment relief but because he instituted it. Labor supports Roosevelt not because he denied it the right to vote on war and not because he seeks in the coming war to establish American imperialism as *the* world power, but because of his verbal assaults on dictators and dictatorships ("our" dictator-friends, like Somoza, Batista and Vargas excluded, of course). It relies upon Roosevelt, but with reservations. Its reliance—that is where its mere instincts betray it, where they prove so inadequate. Its reservations—that is the point of departure for the development of that political class consciousness which is the indispensable supplement to its class instincts, that consciousness which will mark the coming of age of the American proletariat.

Skeptics—and the labor movement simply stinks with them—will dismiss this as mere wishful thinking. Yet, it is nothing of the kind. It is only necessary to look a little further than the nearest horizon, and to think through to the end.

It is hard to grasp, often it is impossible to do it until after the event, what a titanic effort is required by modern capitalism to conduct a war, what unprecedented expenditures of wealth are demanded, human wealth of course included. Although this fiercest of all wars has lasted more than a year, we have yet to see the development of its fullest force. The truly earth-shaking conflict is still ahead—the war between the United States and its imperialist challengers for world dominion. If the present stage of the war, which is only an introduction to the war to come, has meant the imposing of the burdens it has imposed, what will the next stage mean in terms of sacrifice and destruction in the social, economic and political domain? The mind that seriously tries to embrace the answer to this question must shudder at the picture that is conjured up.

All sorts of professional and amateur statesmen, to say nothing of the outright scoundrels, keep assuring us, more or less confidentially, as if they were really in a position to do so, that while there may have to be a few moderate sacrifices during the "war effort" and even a few governmental restrictions here and there, they will be more than made up for the minute the victory over totalitarianism is won. They who argue that the revolutionary Marxists do not grasp the "realities" of the second world war only prove that the realities have indeed not been grasped—by them.

Who Will Bear The War Burden?

For the United States to prosecute any kind of effective war against such powerful foes as Germany and Japan, or even against Germany and Italy alone, will mean an out-

lay in men and money and machines by comparison with which what was spent in the last world war will seem like a pittance. The burden upon society, specifically upon American society which is not without its burdens already, will simply be indescribable, and not even victory would bring early relief. Fascism, or the war against fascism, may be what you will—holy, unholy, progressive, imperialistic, necessary, avoidable—but in any case there is one thing it does not mean: the abolition of the class struggle, the conflict of class interests.

Who will carry this tremendous and constantly increasing burden? Let us even grant for a moment that the capitalist class, the bankers and the trusts, is so inspired with self-abnegation in the cause of preserving civilization, human decency and dignity, democracy and the Christian way of life that it consents to making an initial sacrifice or two in the interests of winning the war. Let us grant it for a moment even if it is idiotic. What is simply too idiotic to be granted even for the fraction of a moment is that this class will fail to insist on the working class making two or ten times as many sacrifices.

What form will these sacrifices take? There are precious few people whose reason has not entirely left them who look forward to that famous war prosperity that was "enjoyed" by labor in the last war; what is happening to the working class in every European country affected by the war prohibits the dissemination of such an illusion. The standard of living of the working people will be steadily reduced as the war continues. Wages will be cut; the working day lengthened; the modest present-day working safeguards will be flouted and even abolished. The cost of living will move in a different direction—upwards. To prevent the development of any resistance to this reduction of living standards, the organizations of the workers will either be hamstrung or totally suppressed, where they are not simply integrated fully into the total-war machine. The democratic rights of the people—their right to free speech, assembly and press—will be wiped out; we see what is already happening to them in the United States even before the country has formally entered the war. Just as surely as war makes corpses out of workers on the battlefields, so it will make corpses out of bourgeois democracy and the comparatively high standards of the American workers. Prosecution of the war—that means the triumph of totalitarianism in the United States.

That, at any rate, is the plan of the ruling class. That is the plan of the government. We mean this not necessarily in the sense that a conspiratorial group of the country's leaders have sat down and worked this out in fine and malicious detail. That many of them have been and are thinking along these lines is indubitably true—but really beside the point. They *must* operate according to such a plan if the war is to be fought.

Who will preside over the "executive committee of the ruling class" as this plan is carried out if not Roosevelt? And almost in direct ratio to the steps he takes in this direction, he will lose his present support among the American workers, and lose them to the left.

This prediction is far from an imaginative product; it has already been charted with graphic accuracy in France. The masses followed the men of the People's Front—the Blums and Daladiers—with the same enthusiasm they first showed in this country for Roosevelt, and for substantially the same reasons. The masses were dragooned into the war. But the fact that both during the war and during the period

of preparing for it, the social and economic burdens were unloaded even more heavily upon the shoulders of the people, ended with the Blums and Daladiers in complete isolation and the masses in a distrustful but essentially revolutionary mood.

Under the compulsions of the war, the masses will go to the left. Where will they come to rest—in the camp of social reform, as today in England, or in the camp of social revolution? A bold forecast is undoubtedly somewhat risky.

A long period of social reformist development for the American labor movement, though not excluded, is at any rate sure to be of brief duration. What can an "effective," that is, a mass reformist party offer or give the workers that Roosevelt did not offer and give? If memory serves, it was Norman Thomas himself who commented after the 1932 election of Roosevelt that the Democratic President had carried out in action a far more drastic program than had been demanded by the Socialist party platform itself. The statement was true and significant. Even more significant is the fact that merely to preserve, not to speak of extending the social gains of the American workers, the latter will have to engage in the sharpest and most intransigent class struggles, that is, revolutionary action. That revolutionary action, to be fruitful and consistent and victorious, must be guided by a revolutionary party.

Lessons From France

The outcome, for the present, in France has been mentioned above. It cannot be regarded otherwise than as a tragedy. The tragedy does not lie, however, in the fact that the masses abandoned the Blums and Thorezes and Daladiers. Quite the contrary, that was a big and wise step forward. The tragedy does not lie in the fact that the masses developed a distrustful and revolutionary mood. It lies rather in the fact that they trusted so long in their "democratic" and social-democratic leaders, that they were poisoned with the pernicious doctrine of the "lesser evil", that they did not rely on their own invincible strength, their own organization, their own program and their own revolutionary leadership. The tragedy lies in the fact that there was no revolutionary party, independent of all varieties of bourgeois and reformist politics, to utilize the revolutionary situation for the final struggle to end capitalist rule and its attendant horrors.

Contemplating this situation, one is again overwhelmed with the criminality even of those well-meaning citizens of the labor movement who today preach: Roosevelt is not all that he should be, but at least he is preferable to Willkie. Tying the working class to the Roosevelts leads them to the Willkies and worse, just as Hindenburg lead them to Hitler and Blum and Daladier to Pétain. There you have the logical outcome of the "practical" program of the "practical" labor politicians.

The *practical* program of the day is the stiff and stubborn work of preparing for tomorrow, of building the revolutionary vanguard, of holding firmly to the class independence of the workers and to the unshakeable principles of revolutionary internationalism, of Marxism. Joining the Roosevelt bandwagon means not only to prolong the agony of the dying social order, but more concretely, it means preparing surely to meet the crisis of tomorrow with empty, paralyzed hands.

The election this year has only one of two meanings: for

the side which is preparing for support of the imperialist war, or for the side which is preparing the struggle against it and for the socialist peace. Everything else flows from this or is subordinated to it. Essentially, support either to Roosevelt or to Willkie—or to Willkievelt, as a contributor calls them both in this issue—is not only a vote for the imperialist war but a vote for a blacker tomorrow. A vote for the Socialist party candidate, then? No, both because it is a dwindling sect unrepresentative of any mass of workers and because it is already ninety percent in the camp of Allied imperialism. A vote for the Communist party candidate, then? No, both because it is a large sect, very large but still a sect and because it too is in the imperialist war camp, in the camp of the Kremlin despotism and Hitler today and

ready to join patriotically in the camp of the Kremlin despotism and Wall Street tomorrow if they should get together.

A vote for the small revolutionary party, then—which has no candidates? Yes, yes. A vote of confidence in it and of confidence in the revolutionary tomorrow. A vote in the form of closer solidarity with it. A vote in the form of adherence to its ranks, so that the dozens and hundreds of today may be the thousands and hundreds of thousands they must number tomorrow if the coming upsurge of the American workers is not to subside into the sands but mount victoriously until it sweeps away the pillars of exploitation and oppression and war.

The Willkevelt Campaign

THE 1940 PRESIDENTIAL campaign has taken place in the midst of the supreme historical crisis of world capitalism, an era of upheaval unprecedented since Napoleonic times. Since the campaign began, Germany has established its political and military control of the European continent, the British Empire has entered into a life-and-death struggle with the axis powers, Japan has joined the axis to establish a new "world order", warning the United States that any direct participation in the war in either the Atlantic or the Pacific will mean war in *both* oceans. These events have stimulated the Roosevelt Administration to bold countermoves which are changing the face of American politics.

The internal development of capitalist democracy, under the tremendous pressure of the overseas crisis, has greatly speeded up in the last few months. Economically, the drift towards state capitalism proceeds faster than ever. Unemployment is still around ten millions, private investment has failed to pick up appreciably even under the stimulus of war orders, bank reserves are as swollen as ever with no profitable outlet, and the rearmament program, despite the combined efforts of the Democrats and the Republicans, is automatically still further extending the control of the State over private business. Politically, parliamentary democracy has received severe blows: the President's consummation of the destroyer deal with Britain without consulting Congress; the swift passage, under ruling class pressure, of the peacetime conscription legislation in the face of widespread popular opposition; the current breakdown, through Congress's inability to harmonize the sharp conflicts of class and property interests, of the rearmament program. And, above all, the nature of the presidential campaign itself.

For, in the face of these great developments, both inside and outside the country, we see a campaign in which there are no issues! This is the great dum-dee campaign in American history, the campaign in which the electorate are offered a choice between Tweedledum and Tweedledee. The meaninglessness of bourgeois democracy in a period like this never came out more unmistakably. There are no issues not because the country is united behind the policies of the Roosevelt Administration—a large section of the population is anti-war and anti-conscription—but because the ruling

class is united and because the crisis is much too severe to permit the luxury of a democratic discussion of the issues. Roosevelt and Willkie, the only candidates with a chance of election, stand shoulder to shoulder on all the important issues because the bourgeois interests which use them indifferently as mouthpieces are similarly indivisible today.

Boss Flynn's Campaign

One of the reasons for the unreality of the campaign is that one of the contestants, Roosevelt, has refused to campaign. With a cynicism which contrasts ironically with his fervent speeches about "democracy", Roosevelt has refused to carry out the minimum responsibility of a candidate seeking election: to present his view of the issues to the voters. He has taken full advantage of his position as President to identify his official acts with his candidacy, to make Willkie's criticisms seem to be traitorous attacks on the President's office, even to raid the political camp of his opponent for his secretaries of navy and war. By any possible interpretation of democratic procedure, Willkie's demand that Roosevelt debate him was a reasonable one. (Though Ickes scored shrewdly when he suggested instead a debate between Willkie and his running mate, McNary, on the grounds that Willkie had more basic differences with McNary than with Roosevelt.) But Roosevelt to date has refused even to recognize publicly the existence of an opposition candidate. The points raised by Willkie day by day are answered, not by Roosevelt, but by the obscure political hack, Boss Flynn of the Bronx.

If Roosevelt has felt it beneath his dignity to campaign, his opponent has done enough talking and travelling for both of them. Willkie has talked himself hoarse without saying anything in particular. The one issue he has been able to dig up is—the Third Term! For the rest, his speeches have been full of sound and fury, signifying nothing.

A cursory review of Willkie's speeches reveals that he is definitely FOR the following (1) democracy; (2) profits; (3) national defense; (4) business ("There are, including farmers, over 10,000,000 private businesses in the United States."); (5) more aid for the farmers; (6) more aid for labor; (7) more aid for business; (8) more aid for all other

groups and subdivisions of the population not included under the three aforementioned heads; (9) common sense; (10) Roosevelt's foreign policy; (11) Roosevelt's domestic policy (except it should be more efficient); (12) prosperity; (13) peace (unless it is necessary to go to war); (14) the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and Abraham Lincoln. On the other hand, Willkie has taken a firm stand AGAINST the following: (1) red tape; (2) inefficiency; (3) high taxes on business; (4) Hitler; (5) an unbalanced budget; (6) unemployment (his remedy: more jobs); (7) the Roosevelt Administration (except for its foreign and domestic policies).

Sometimes Willkie's speeches sound like echoes of the Hoover-Landon campaigns—the hopeless, moth-eaten, unreal laissez-faire philosophy of “no governmental interference with business” (as though the very survival of business today were not dependent on governmental “interference!”), “a balanced budget”, “lower taxes”, “encourage private industry”, etc., etc. But there is also a new and completely contradictory note: unlike Hoover and Landon, Willkie has put himself on record as favoring the retention of almost all the New Deal social reforms and of its whole program of business regulation, including the SEC and TVA. Apparently, he wants to have his cake and eat it too, as in the following crude attempt to combine both philosophies: “It is my belief that private industry can be so stimulated by encouragement, by the government, that the flow of capital through adoption of new tax laws will reduce the present unemployment to an insignificant amount. I don't think then there would be any need to abandon any of the social legislation, the minimum wage law or the social security.”

The suggestion that, after the election, Roosevelt will offer a cabinet post to Willkie may not be so fantastic. He would certainly fit in better than either Knox or Stimson. This would be the final turn of the screw in the disintegration of American parliamentary democracy.

There are two major groups of issues in the campaign, on both of which the two chief candidates are in complete agreement. These are: (1) foreign policy—the attitude of the United States towards the rise of Germany and the decline of the British Empire; (2) domestic policy: the devolution of bourgeois democracy into Bonapartism through extension of the executive power and the undermining of the authority of Congress. The two are, of course, closely connected, the bourgeoisie finding that, because of the terrible speed and pressure of the crisis, it can protect its interests only by short-circuiting the processes of democracy. Hence Willkie, agreeing on foreign policy, has been unable to capitalize politically on the domestic issues. Let us look in more detail at how these issues have been sidestepped in the Roosevelt-Willkie campaign.

Willkie, The Blitzkrieg Baby

More than once during the campaign, some of the old-line Republican chieftains have tried to get Willkie to make at least a gesture, however demagogic, of opposition to the more extreme pro-war acts of the Roosevelt Administration. They saw a large body of isolationist votes without any candidate to turn to, and they wanted to harvest them. But Willkie has refused to concede an inch to such counsels, for he well knew why he was nominated and what the big

bourgeoisie—of which he is personally a member as well as a mouthpiece—requires of him.

Willkie got the Republican nomination partly because he had some of the political “it” which Roosevelt has, partly because he aroused a real crusading enthusiasm among stockbrokers and Park Avenue matrons (“the Bryan of the rich”, in Alice Longworth's phrase), but chiefly because Hitler was winning his *Blitzkrieg* against France and Belgium in appallingly little time. All through the winter, when the war was in its “quiet” stage, the leading contenders for the Republican nomination played, like their party in general, a demagogic “anti-war” game designed to make political capital out of the powerful isolationist sentiment of the masses. Taft, Vandenburg, and, after considerable fence-sitting, Dewey—all took this line. As a principled and conscious Wall Streeter, however, Willkie had from the beginning lined up with Roosevelt on foreign policy. When the *Blitzkrieg* came, the business community suddenly realized that Roosevelt had been a far-sighted imperialist, and that the threat to American imperialism from the Nazi war machine had become *the* all-important issue. At the Republican convention, a curious conflict took place between the professional politicians who wanted a more stable and amenable candidate and who were also willing to play around with the war issue in order to keep as many isolationist votes as possible, and their big business backers, who insisted on putting the war issue first. The business forces won out and Willkie was nominated.

The same conflict—with the same results—has cropped up now and then in the campaign, between political bosses who want first of all to win the election, and Willkie, who wants first of all to save American imperialism. Heroically refusing to make “a political football” out of so sacred a matter, Willkie is losing the election for the same reason he won the nomination: because he supports in every detail the Roosevelt foreign policies. With a fidelity to principle worthy of a better cause, he has thrown issue after issue away. Despite the widespread unpopularity of peacetime conscription, he came out for it even before Roosevelt did. He refused to make even minor concessions: although 140 Republican Congressmen voted to delay the draft until an attempt had been made to raise enough men by voluntary enlistment, Willkie, “disregarding strong pressure from members of the Republican organization”, came out flatly for immediate conscription. He had no criticisms to make of the Administration's South American commitments at the Havana Conference. He endorsed the most audacious strokes of Roosevelt foreign policy—the military alliance with Canada and the trade of destroyers for British naval bases. With the basic elements in Roosevelt's defense policy—control by business men, “encouragement” of private industry through liberal amortization and war profits tax provisions—Willkie naturally had no quarrel. And even such a development as the Rome-Berlin-Tokio alignment against the United States has found Willkie with nothing much to say, despite the cautious efforts of Arthur Krock of the *N. Y. Times* to show him how he can find an “issue” there. Willkie can find no issue because the forward policy of the Roosevelt Administration in the Pacific is precisely the one which he, and his Wall Street friends, have long favored.

Thus on the crucial issues of war and conscription our “democratic” political system provides no channel for the expression of the opposition to the Roosevelt policies of a large section of the electorate. Among the farmers of the

midwest, among the unemployed, among the industrial workers, among the Negroes there is a deep-rooted, inarticulate isolationist and anti-conscriptionist sentiment. The Negro press, ardently pro-New Deal in general, is the only section of the American press which is still predominantly isolationist. Both the CIO and AFL, as well as the Railroad Brotherhoods, have come out against peacetime conscription.

One ironical by-product of this situation is the remarkable staying-power of the Communist Party. At the time of the Soviet-Nazi Pact, it looked as though the C. P. had once for all committed suicide as a mass party. The effects of the Pact were serious, it is true, but it is now clear that the C. P. is far from through. They still control the American Youth Congress; they have a new peace "front"; the *Daily Worker* and *New Masses* still appear, and there is also *Friday*. Above all, the hold of the Stalinists on influencing CIO unions has not been broken. After the Pact, Lewis began a "purge" of the Stalinists, but his campaign stalled and is now abandoned. In fact, Lewis himself has more or less tied up with the Stalinists, and the CIO seems to be splitting in half on the C. P. issue, with the leadership of such important unions as the seamen, the longshoremen, the transport workers, the communications workers and the Newspaper Guild playing along with the party. Undoubtedly a major factor in this amazing survival of Stalinist influence on the American labor movement is the fact that the C. P. is the only mass party which (for whatever reasons!) speaks against war and conscription.

Taking 'Politics' Out Of Politics

When Congress spent a few days debating the question of peacetime conscription, the reaction of the press and of the Administration was that all this talk was "wasting time" and that "delaying action"—an attitude similar to Hitler's when he speaks contemptuously of "parliamentary chatter-boxes". For the fact is that when a modern capitalist enters into a crisis as sharp as the present one, the traditional practices of bourgeois democracy become luxuries which the ruling class cannot afford. The more clear-sighted bourgeois politicians press to take politics out of politics, that is to make all issues *administrative* rather than *political* questions. The line of policy favored by those in control of the State is assumed to be generally agreed upon and the only question is how it can be most speedily and efficiently carried out. Roosevelt has pushed ahead in this Bonapartist direction as rapidly as he dared, as in his unsuccessful attempt early in the summer to get Congress to adjourn. In the campaign he has brushed aside Republican criticisms of the defense program as shabby attempts to "make politics out of national defense".

The most striking example of this tendency was the famous destroyer deal with Britain. Two years ago the Ludlow Amendment was an important issue: should Congress have the power to declare war or should the people themselves, by referendum, exercise this vital power? The decay of American democracy may be gauged by the fact that today even Congress has become too uncontrolled and democratic an institution to be permitted to vote on such important matters as war or peace. The destroyer deal, which amounted to putting the country into the war on the side of England, was negotiated and consummated in strictest secrecy by Roosevelt and a small clique of Administration

insiders. Not until they read the papers on September 4th, did the members of Congress know anything about it. For months Roosevelt had been negotiating the deal with the British authorities, but there was not time for even a week's debate on it in Congress. (Since such a debate might have imperiled the whole affair—and American imperialism doesn't play around with matters as important as this.) The gist of the lengthy legal opinion rendered by Roosevelt's Attorney-General Jackson was that the trade was an "executive" matter and hence of no concern to Congress.

Here was an issue Willkie, as a crusader for "democracy", might have been expected to seize upon. And indeed he did condemn the manner of making the deal (while approving the deal itself) as . . . "regrettable". A few days later he grew even bolder: the deal, he said, was "arbitrary and dictatorial". But it was clear his heart was not in his work. He quickly dropped the issue. Speculating rather sadly on the poverty of issues which Willkie had been able to find in the campaign, the conservative columnist Arthur Krock of the *N. Y. Times* tried to suggest how Willkie could make the heavens ring with denunciations of Roosevelt's high-handed and disingenuous tactics. "Should Mr. Willkie be able to do this," he concluded, "and there is a favorable public response, he will have a major issue. But the accomplishment is difficult because Mr. Willkie is also a foe of isolation . . ." Krock, however, did not mention the chief difficulty: that Mr. Willkie, as an exceptionally intelligent and conscious representative of the bourgeoisie, recognized clearly not only the dangers of isolationism but also of the usual democratic procedures.

"I'll Do It Better"

. . . is the most inspiring campaign slogan Willkie has been able to create. The bankruptcy of the Republican Party is dramatically expressed in this belated revival of the old "put a business man in the White House" slogan which elected Hoover in 1928. A more efficient administration of the same basic policies—that is what Willkie's campaign platform boils down to. It is not a very exciting slogan, and even here Willkie hasn't got an issue, even here he has been unable to make political capital out of the glaring defects in the rearmament program undertaken by the Roosevelt Administration.

The target would seem to be wide as a barn door. More and more evidence is appearing that things are not going at all well with the "defense program", that there is no coordinated centralized control, that the political appointees, Knox and Stimson, are incompetent to run the war and navy departments, that businessmen are delaying production for the Government until they extort better tax and amortization terms, and that, in the years in which Roosevelt was working up the war hysteria ever more openly, remarkably little progress was made in providing the munitions and ships and planes to fight a modern war.

"The armament program is making progress, but more slowly than was hoped and intended," states the current *National City Bank Letter* in a section on "Delays in the Armament Program". And Leonard P. Ayres, the well-known economist of the Cleveland Trust Co., has written a pamphlet, "The Progress of Preparedness" in which he compares with 1917 the speed and efficiency of America's current rearming, very much to the disadvantage of the latter.

A few sentences are worth quoting:

Our best guides for judging the progress of our present preparedness effort are still the records of what we did 23 years ago in the World War. Probably we ought not to be too much astonished or disheartened if we find that our rate of progress now is a good deal slower than it was then. . . .

There are two conclusions about which there has been general agreement among those who have testified about our military needs during recent months in the hearings before the House and Senate Committees on Military Affairs. The first is that at present we are utterly unprepared for modern warfare even on a small scale. Neither the Regular Army nor the National Guard has the tanks, scout cars, field artillery, anti-tank guns, anti-aircraft guns, or even the aviation equipment essential for taking part in the kind of fighting that has been going on in Europe this year. . . .

The other conclusion is that the creation of the industrial capacities for making munitions is in itself a long and slow process. . . . It did not take us anything like as long in 1917 and 1918 to make munitions as it seems to take now. . . . If it would have taken us two and a half years to create a condition of self-sustaining military preparedness at the rate at which we were moving in 1917 and 1918, how long will it take us at the rate at which we are moving now? However that question may be answered, there is another one behind it which asks whether we are likely to be allowed that much time.

Here, then, is a wide-open issue—and yet one which, on closer inspection, the astute Roosevelt has also managed to shut tight in Willkie's face. For one thing, when Willkie attacks Roosevelt for "hostility" to business and claims that only a "business man's" administration of the arms program will get results, his attack draws little blood. For both the war and navy departments are in the hands of the respectably conservative Republicans, Knox and Stimson, while the executives in charge of the armament program are such eminent businessmen as Forrestal of Dillon, Read; Knudsen of General Motors; Nelson of Sears, Roebuck; and Stettinius of U. S. Steel. To Willkie's charges Roosevelt, *via* Flynn, retorts in effect: Who would you put in any better? Perhaps you would replace Stettinius of U. S. Steel by Fairless of U. S. Steel? Or substitute Sloan of General Motors for Knudsen of General Motors? Or, indeed, not Flynn or Roosevelt but the businessmen themselves often supply the answer to Willkie, so that we have the absurd spectacle of Knudsen and Stettinius, in defending their administration of the defense program, indirectly defending Roosevelt's policies against the criticisms of their fellow Wall Streeter, Wendell Willkie.

Even more embarrassing to Willkie, in his efforts to make "national defense" a campaign issue, is the obvious fact that the main outlines of Roosevelt's policy are entirely agreeable to the business community. As it is finally emerging from Congress, the legislation on amortization allowances of war-materials plants and on wartime profits and taxation is extremely "liberal", in the businessman's phrase. Furthermore, much of the delay and confusion in getting the arms program started is due to the refusal of private business to accept war orders until they get the kind of terms they wanted. There is no "issue" for Willkie there. Willkie did make one attempt to pick a quarrel in this sphere, when he objected to the proposal, endorsed by Roosevelt, to give the President power to condemn and seize plants and industries which refused to cooperate on war orders. But since this power had existed in 1917 as well, Willkie's objections had little effect, and his advisers later had to admit he had made a tactical error.

It is typical of the political impasse in which Willkie finds himself that, after Congress had passed the legislation giving the President wartime powers to "conscript" industry, the all-important rules of procedure under which this

power may be exercised were formulated not by Roosevelt, not by Hopkins or Ickes or Corcoran or Cohen but by a member of the Defense Commission named Donald M. Nelson, who is on leave of absence from a top executive post in Sears, Roebuck & Co. How can a hardworking "business candidate" make any headway when his opponent does things like that?

The "Appeasement" Issue

We have seen that Willkie is losing the campaign because he can find no issues, and that he can find no issues because Roosevelt is pursuing a policy both in foreign affairs and in "national defense" which is acceptable to the American ruling class and hence which is identical with the policy Willkie himself would follow if he replaced Roosevelt. Does this mean there is, then, no difference between the two presidential candidates?

There is a difference, but it is not in the candidates nor in their campaign issues, but rather in the social forces behind each of them. Even more than in 1936, this election is splitting along class lines. (An interesting sign, by the way, of the ripening of the social crisis of our capitalism.) Willkie seems to have even less trade union support than Landon had, nor did the working class show its hostility to Landon in any such dramatic form as it did towards Willkie in Detroit, Pontiac, Flint and the Chicago packinghouse district. The press is even more solidly behind Willkie than it was behind Landon. The *N.Y. Times* has forsaken its traditional Democratic allegiance for the first time in its history to support Willkie. A recent survey by *Time* showed that, out of 120 of the largest dailies in the country, 78% were for Willkie, with 13% "undecided" and only 9% for Roosevelt.

Since in this country as in France and England, there are strong "appeasement" currents within the ruling class, it is not surprising to find Willkie, despite his foreign policy, getting the support of the appeasers. Henry Ford is for Willkie and is reported to have had a mysterious and highly secret interview with him on campaign matters. Hoover, of course, is in Willkie's camp, nor has Willkie dared to repudiate Hoover's frankly pro-appeasement speeches. And there are even more embarrassing supporters. Willkie repudiated Father Coughlin's endorsement, but his gesture did not dispose of the awkward question why did Coughlin prefer Willkie to Roosevelt? According to the *N.Y. Times* of August 28, the Bund organ, *The Free American and Deutsche Weckruf und Beobachter*, has been urging its readers to elect Willkie. (The *Times*, which is especially sensitive on the score of Willkie's appeasement following, buried the item on page 14.) When Wallace labelled the Republicans the party of appeasement, he was not too far wrong.

In one sense, this is all slightly academic at the moment, since there seems to be very little chance of Willkie winning the election. But the appeasement issue will not die even if Roosevelt is reelected. For Roosevelt, though somewhat more independent than they would like, has never resisted the wishes of the business community on any vital issue. And there is already some evidence that these wishes may begin to shift their direction soon after the election. The ultimate joke of this campaign may turn out to be that the foreign policy which both parties united to endorse may

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American Labor and Politics

THE present political campaign, coming in the midst of the Second World Imperialist War, calls our attention again to the question of organized, independent working class politics in the United States. It is commonly known as the Labor Party question. It is the chief purpose of this article, and one to follow, to inquire into the causes underlying the failure of the workers in the United States to develop a national independent working class political party, and to suggest a program, procedure and technique for accomplishing this end.

It is customary when discussing the failure of the workers in the United States to form a national labor party, to make comparisons with the situation in England where the workers resorted to organized independent political action as early as 1893 with the formation of the Independent Labor Party under the leadership of Keir Hardie. This was followed in 1900 by the Labor Representative Committee which shortly became the British Labor Party. In the United States however, despite the fact that the first labor party in the world was formed here in 1828, no national mass party of the working class exists. It is necessary to examine the roots of the present situation if there is to be any opportunity at all for remedy and correction.

In order to have independent working class political action there must be first of all a clearly differentiated industrial working class, a proletariat. The factory workers must outweigh in relative importance and strength the agricultural workers in a country. Due to the fact that the Industrial Revolution in England occurred long before in the United States, industrial capitalism was firmly established in England by the time of the Reform Bill of 1832. This was not the case in this country where the factory system was not entrenched until after the Civil War. The factory system and industrial capitalism threw up a comparatively large proletariat in England at a time when agriculture was predominant in the United States. Trade union membership in England had reached 8,300,000 by 1920. It has scarcely reached this figure in this country in 1940.

Background Of British Labor Party

This earlier development of industrial capitalism and the factory system in England with the accompanying development of a factory proletariat and attendant economic and political grievances, played a determining role in the formation of the trades unions and working class political parties. The political disabilities of the English workers were numerous. As late as 1837 the Peoples Charter was demanding universal manhood suffrage. The working class had fought alongside the bourgeoisie for the Reform Bill of 1832 but came out of the fight still disfranchised. In 1867 only one sixth of the adult males in England could vote. In this year the "settled" working class was given the ballot. Agricultural laborers were not enfranchised until 1884. In contradistinction to this American workers voted quite early; not as workers however but as "citizens". In fact the workers in the United States were enfranchised before the British industrial middle class. This integrated

the working class into the regular political parties and retarded independent working class political action.

Not only is it true that a working class developed earlier in England than in the United States and that the objective conditions for the formation of a labor party were perhaps more pronounced, the differences in the structure of the two governments must be taken into account. The "government" in the United States represents one party. There is no opportunity for another party to get into the "government". We have not known coalition governments in this country and anything except strict party government and responsibility is frowned upon. A political party must win the election and take over the government in its own name. It holds power for a set period of four years and may be re-elected for another four years.

This is not the case in England. There a workers party not only can get a sizeable representation in parliament but depending on the size of the parliamentary block may determine who shall form the "government" and also enter the cabinet. The chief executive is not chosen by the electorate directly but by parliament, that is by the House of Commons. The working of this system has been demonstrated on several occasions when the British Labor Party has blocked up with the Liberal Party and won seats in the cabinet and on two occasions has become the "government."

Special Position Of American Workers

While such a factor as the structure of the state set-up and the parliamentary procedure tend to discourage the formation of an independent working class party this is not all nor the most important. We have mentioned the fact that in the United States the workers got the right to vote earlier than the English workers. They were citizens. We must add to this the effect of a higher standard of living possible with an expanding capitalism in a very large country, abounding in natural resources including, for a period, cheap land and free land. Legally the American worker was equal to anybody else. He could rise in the world; he could become an employer and own his factory. He could become a member of his state legislature, governor and even president. Theoretically he could accomplish all these things even before the British worker had the right to vote. And he could do this according to law and, as he was taught, within the framework of the two party system.

The English worker did not have these advantages. He did not live in a land flowing with milk and honey for him. The fact that the situation in the United States as pictured to the worker was highly colored and somewhat mythical did not destroy the fact of a real difference. And workers from all over the world, including England, came to this country for freedom and wealth.

We want to come now to the most fundamental and relevant considerations in the matter under discussion. We have pointed out the early formation of the British proletariat resulting from the development of the factory system in England. Tremendous organized economic actions followed. The trades unions grew in power and numbers. But they

hit a stone wall in the form of repressive governmental acts and resistance from the employers. Because of the conditions mentioned above the English workers were forced into political action. Some drastic change in the government was necessary even before they could preserve their unions and use these organizations for the improvement of their living conditions.

Importance Of Political Leadership

The mere fact of the necessity of some kind of change in order that the working class could have more breathing space and more effective organization, of course was not a unique need of the British working class. That was true of the United States also. In both countries the workers were in need of independent working class political action. However the English workers had one decisive advantage over the workers in the United States: they had developed not only a trained leadership for their economic struggles but more important a trained and competent political leadership.

This leadership had developed not only inside the trade union movement but alongside it in the socialist movement of England. The idea of independent political action developed early under socialist influence. This tended toward throwing up strong independent working class leaders. The Independent Labor Party was formed in 1893 with Keir Hardie, a socialist, as leader. According to the program of the party it was organized "to secure the collective ownership of all the means of production, distribution and exchange." While it is true that ILP leaders did not take this part of their program very seriously, they were definitely for independent political action, albeit with a reformist and gradualist slant.

Farther to the left than Hardie and his group was the Social Democratic Federation lead by Hyndman. Their influence in pushing the workers to political action was of considerable proportions. Also about this time came the Fabians and the idealistic Socialist League of William Morris. All of these together and particularly the Hardie "socialists" with their "new unionists" and the SDF of Hyndman gave the British working class a political leadership not even approached by the workers in the United States.

The development of such a leadership was not fortuitous. It arose out of something more than the objective conditions that we have mentioned. This leadership was the offspring of the work, the efforts and the teachings of Karl Marx. Marx and Engels were marching in front of the workers of England. This is true despite all the backslidings and shifting of their leaders such as Hardie and Hyndman. They had learned at least the rudiments of independent political action; political action of a class in society. This was the influence of Marx on the English working class movement.

Taff Vale Case Forces Workers Political Action

Furthermore the British workers early began to learn that they must intervene in the government as a class political group. This was vividly borne in on them in the Taff Vale Case of 1900. Employees of the Taff Vale Railway Company went on strike and their union, the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants was fined 23,000 pounds and an injunction granted. This decision was not based on the violence that had occurred in the strike but on the alleged

civil damage done the company by the strike itself. The fight against this decision resulted in the formation of the British Labor Party.

The objection may be raised that the above incentives for the formation of an independent working class party also hold for the United States. This is partially true if one takes the difference in objective conditions into account. It is also a fact that the labor movement in the United States has had its Taff Vale cases. There were the Homestead, Pullman, Coeur d'Alene strikes and the Danbury Hatters' case. None of these and other significant strikes and government actions against the workers lead to political action as did the Taff Vale Case in England.

Early Socialists In U.S.

But let us examine the history of working class leadership in the United States. There has been a socialist movement in this country also. The Socialists of 1886-88 tried to win the labor movement to socialism. They failed in this effort and reacted in some measure against the trades unions. The socialist movement developed the conception of themselves as the political agitators and left "trade union matters" to the leadership of the unions. There was always a gap between the party and the unions. In a desperate effort to do something about politicalizing the union, the Socialist Trade and Labor Alliance was formed in 1895 as a dual organization to the American Federation of Labor. This like its successor of later years, the Trade Union Unity League was a complete failure both from a trade union and political viewpoint.

The failure of the socialist movement to develop any effective and real political influence in the working class left the field to the trade union leaders; to such leaders as Powderly of the Knights of Labor and Gompers of the American Federation of Labor. The General Assembly of the Knights of Labor went on record in 1890 for an independent political party but nothing resulted. The Knights had not yet come abreast of the times even sufficiently to form an economic labor organization based exclusively on the skilled workers who were at that time the main section of the working class. It is not likely therefore that Powderly would have understood the meaning of workers' political action on a class basis.

Gompers was the key figure. Although he began his career as some sort of a socialist he quickly repudiated any allegiance to the socialist movement or its ideas. The A. F. of L. convention of 1893 had submitted to it a political program. The program said that the British workers had begun independent political action as an aid to economic action. The attempt was made again at the 1894 convention. Gompers definitely opposed this program and said that the claim that the English movement had started independent political action was a "fake." The influence of Gompers decided the question and by 1895 the A.F. of L. had adopted its present policy of "reward your friends and punish your enemies."

Gompers' Role In Trade Unions

To understand Gompers' role it is necessary to understand what the situation was in the trade union movement and its relationship to industry. In the 80's the A.F. of L. was the progressive section of the labor movement. It was

a working class economic movement based on the skilled workers over against the hodge-podge Knights of Labor that took in small employers and other non-working class elements. Gompers believed that the skilled workers had to be consolidated in economic organizations. He rejected any suggestion that economic organization would not do the job for the workers just because there had been several important defeats. Despite the fact that the government had moved in on the workers in the Homestead Steel strike, the Coeur d'Alene silver mine strike, the Buffalo switchmen and the Tracy Tennessee miners, Gompers still insisted that the workers could win by purely economic action. Neither he nor the workers seemingly understood the tremendous strength of the modern corporation and its influence over the government. Gompers was correct when he insisted on the power and permanence of the unions but he acted as though he had no understanding of their weakness and shortcomings. The point to emphasize is that the task before the American workers was not one that could be entrusted to the official trade union leaders. It was a political task for which they were suited.

The final consideration that we want to take up now is the fact that the period when the British labor movement was comparable to the movement in this country there was step toward independent political action. This step was not taken until there was a fundamental change in the character of the British unions. The English workers did not begin independent political action until the organization of the unskilled workers began. Before this the English trade union leaders had ideas similar to those later adopted by Gompers in the United States. The craft unions dominated

the Trade Union Congress in England just as the craft union later dominated the American Federation in this country. Furthermore the workers in the United States separated from the middle class at a later date in the U.S. than in England. This did not occur here until the last decade of the 19th century. Then the workers began developing "wage consciousness." The unions began to seek contracts with the employers.

Even after this however the movement was still dominated by the skilled craftsmen, the "aristocrats of labor." They were difficult to replace and could gain their demands at least in part by economic action. Things did not change until the industrial union movement developed after the big spread of the mass production industries. It was only then that workers began thinking of independent political action on a national scale. Independent political action is a result of political education and unfolding class consciousness. The decisive factor for this consummation is an organized, articulate, political leadership with a sharply defined working class political program and dedicated to militant class economic and political action.

In this short article we have only attempted to show some of the reasons for the existence of a national labor party in England and its absence in the United States. There has been no attempt to evaluate the British Labor Party, its early or present leaders. It is not the purpose of this article to enter into the merits of the labor party question; that is whether or not a labor party can or should be formed in the United States. These matters will be considered in a following article.

— DAVID COOLIDGE

What Next in Latin America

THE MOST STRIKING feature of the situation created by the new imperialist war is the fact that the days of the national state are definitely numbered. It is now clear to every one, even to the most imbecile of Latin-American purists, that national sovereignty is a discredited juridical fiction and that the national state has perished in the ruins of the *Blitzkrieg*.

The most unmistakable symptom of that arterio-sclerosis which afflicts capitalist economy is the chronic paralysis of the world market. If, after the spectacular debacle of 1929, certain countries here and there were able to climb out of the pit of depression, it was at the expense of the world market and not thanks to the enlarging of this market. This was the epoch of "socialism in one country" in Russia, of the high tariff walls erected by the Hoover administration, of the closing to free trade of the British Empire at the Ottawa conference, and above all, of German autarchy. We see today how all this is ending: in the most irreparable ruin of the entire bourgeois social order. What is the effect of the present war. To reconstruct the unity of world economy on new and "super-imperialist" bases. One thing is clear: this new construction will not be erected on those obsolete foundations, historically outmoded even before 1914, which nonetheless still haunts the senile dreams of the dotard at the head of the State Department in Washington.

No, the unity of world economy will not be re-established by the automatic workings of the world market, but will rather be recreated more and more chaotically under the political direction of the conquering imperialism. Nor will this latter content itself with redrawing abstract and fictitious frontiers; it will reach down to the economic substructure of each country and will extirpate those productive forces which do not fit into its plans. That is what Hitler is already doing in Europe, and what Japan is desperately trying to do in Asia. And the United States? Yankee imperialism also, a little belated, has just discovered its "world mission." And to prove to the world that he has outgrown the provincial phase of his development, Uncle Sam has thrown the isolationists overboard and entrusted his banner, in the coming period, to one of two self-declared interventionists, Messrs. Roosevelt and Willkie.

Latin America, too, begins to understand what lies ahead of her and is nervously discussing her uncertain future. Her ruling classes, like her governments, hardly know what to do, presenting the same pitiable spectacles as the little dictators, the light-opera kings and the other worthy chieftains of the small nations of Europe. One and all, they are torn apart by interests and sentiments of the most contradictory sort. The people of the cities, oppressed and sweated, hate fascism, hate dictatorship, but, with plenty of bitter experience already behind them, distrust everything and

everybody. The inhabitants of the interior—in Europe they would be called “peasants”—live almost outside the orbit of civilization, in an apparent vegetative indifference, but they mull over ancestral social hatreds which sometimes bursts out suddenly in dark movements of religious fanaticism or even of nomadic banditry in the style of Robin Hood.

That national independence which was won for the whole of Latin America early in the nineteenth century has been for almost a hundred years a convenient juridical fiction under cover of which England, while exercising her economic hegemony and—when it came to a showdown—her political control, could leave to the native landed proprietors the expense and trouble—and also the honors—of policing and governing the continent. Part of the bargain, of course, was plenty of leisure for eloquent speeches in the “parliaments”: in the last century Brazil had a constitutional and parliamentary monarchy, *à l'Anglaise*.

The last world war roughly marked the end of that era. The decay of the world market, the isolation of national economies which resulted and the chronic crises of agriculture—all these developments, in bringing about their economic ruin, also undermined the political power of the great landowners. On the other hand, industrialization made its definitive entry into Latin America; the struggle between American and English imperialism became sharper; and a rising national bourgeois class appeared on the political stage raising the banner of economic emancipation . . . from English dominance. (In Central America and in the northern part of South America this struggle turns against the younger Yankee imperialism, whose voracity and dangerous proximity have cost Mexico and the Caribbean countries so dear.)

The post-war political upheavals throughout the continent are all more or less expressions of these phenomena. This was the golden age of its bourgeois nationalism. But, alas, it became every day clearer that as South American Marxists had predicted, this young nationalism, which arrived so late on the international stage, found no favorable climate to grow in. Such Marxists have proved to be right, and Haya de la Torre has been proved wrong.

Gloomy indeed is the future of the bourgeois national state in Latin America. The groups which, as a result of the political ferment of the last two decades, now find themselves in power—these are exhausted. Consider, for example, the grotesque acrobatics of a Vargas, a political chameleon of the lowest type who, to keep himself in power, has finally discovered economic “nationalism.” in the name of which he pulled off his last *coup d'état*. Such adventurers cut less and less of a figure. The nationalistic policy of Vargas is a complete failure. To justify his *coup d'état*, he suspended payments on foreign debts and “rebelled” against imperialist exploitation, proclaiming the economic independence of Brazil. Two years after these fine promises, he found it necessary to recommence paying service on the foreign debt despite the complete exhaustion of the country's resources, and had no other alternative except to begin once more to pay court to international capital, humbly knocking on Uncle Sam's door to ask for a little money in return for a lien on the national resources. He returned thus, after a thousand detours, to the old policy of his predecessors which consisted in making periodical international loans. But the conditions for such a policy are today much less favorable in a world which has come to such a degree of disintegration that decisive *political*

considerations weigh heaviest. Regardless of his personal sympathies, Vargas' only hope of escaping his fate is to sell himself to Hitler, which he would do willingly enough if he could be sure that this bird would flit, victorious, out of the melee.

Vargas' misadventures repeat themselves to a large extent in the other American countries. At the other end of the continent we now see the final upshot of the courageous efforts of Cárdenas, the only really progressive representative of the whole Latin American bourgeoisie, who seriously tried to win the economic emancipation of his country. The Mexican bourgeoisie, base and cowardly like all the bourgeois classes of young countries in our stormy era, has allowed its only leader to fall, preferring to submit and bargain with the imperialists rather than to have to follow the hard road of energetic resistance. This is why Cárdenas has no successor: Camacho and Almazan both repudiated his policies in advance. And that is also why Washington has not intervened with the “big stick,” refraining from interfering with the devious machinations of Standard Oil designed to light the flames of civil war in the country and raise to power its man, General Almazan. The Department of State must have good reason to believe it can count on Camacho.

Only the popular masses can carry to its conclusion the work begun by Cárdenas—indeed only they can even keep it going. But the urban masses and the workers in Mexico were directly or indirectly bound to Moscow (partly through the medium of the Communist Party, partly through such petty-bourgeois leaders, bought by Stalin, as Lombardo Toledano). Under the given conditions, Cárdenas could have persisted in his anti-imperialist campaign only by arousing the peasant and proletarian masses; but this he could not do since it would have meant passing beyond the social limits imposed by his own class loyalties.

Chile is in process of going through an analogous experience: the masses of the people, in a splendid outburst, put into power a Popular Front government which, for the first time in the history of the Western hemisphere, includes socialists. Also for the first time in our continent's history, the Stalinists have played a role of the first importance in the bourgeois politics of a country. However, if the movement of the masses in Chile has played a much greater role than in Mexico, in that a “left-wing” government has come into power, this Chilean government, despite the participation of the two big “proletarian” parties, is far behind Cárdenas in what it has actually accomplished. The power of Cárdenas did not rest, unfortunately, on the support of the organized and conscious masses; it rested on the army, of which he was one of the leaders, and especially on the peasants of the *ejidos*. But we have known ever since Napoleon that the political support of the small peasants can never be translated into anything except dictatorship. And there is the contradiction before which Cárdenas halted: he was in reality a dictator in spite of himself, even though personally a most sincere democrat. No bourgeois democrat, however honest and courageous, will be able to go farther than he did. Consider Chile. Thanks to its social structure, which concentrates the population in cities and in the mining districts, its political evolution is more advanced than that of Mexico. And yet the Popular Front government has already reached an impasse before it has even completed the first half of its term. Its nationalist and anti-imperialist policies have withered before they came to bloom. The expression of

this impasse is to be found in the conflicts within the Front, the internal crisis of the Socialist Party which has lost its entire revolutionary wing, the ever-diminishing prestige of Stalinism, and the advances being made by Aguirre to the old conservative groups, who have always governed the country, in order to disembarass himself of his "left-wing" friends whose support has become much too compromising.

In Cuba, after almost a dozen years of plots and counterplots, Sergeant Batista at last has decided to don the bourgeois frock coat of "the president of the republic," determined to take up again the Machado policies as though nothing had happened since then. In Argentina, the radical party, put out of power in 1929 by the Uriburu *coup d'état*, is preparing to regain control of the nation in the name of democracy and cooperation with foreign capital.

Thus, after a decade of trial and error, the wheel has come full circle: the ruling classes have had enough of these so-called "nationalist" policies. Their countries are in ruins; their mineral and agricultural products pile up without finding outlets; although the price of raw materials has sunk low, they must continue to exchange these products for the increasingly expensive manufactured goods which they have to import. The cost of living constantly increases, but the national income does not rise. Their financial reserves disappear but not their international obligations, which continually drain out of the country the meager resources they possess. The only remedy to hand is inflation, which they are already using. And that in turn makes still more inescapable a resort to imperialist loans, under still more Draconian conditions, not to mention the fact that this time it is no longer a matter of purely economic transactions but of political directives from the creditor State towards directly and openly political ends, which is to say it is a question of direct control. Once more these Latin nations will become the prey, either through recolonization or through dismemberment, of the powerful warring world imperialisms.

* * *

The most oppressive of all the imperialisms, the most voracious and implacable, which sucks, like an enormous leech, all the energies of the Latin American peoples, is . . . the gentle and benevolent American democracy. And never has this exploitation been exercised with more cruelty, sophistication, injuriousness and hypocrisy than under the civilized "good neighbor" régime inaugurated by the second Roosevelt, who, a cultivated gentleman, has neither the rough brutality of the first, nor the missionary crudeness of Woodrow Wilson.

The American bourgeois press never stops complaining how badly the Latin Americans treat their generous Wall Street benefactors. The latter act as though they were being attacked, robbed, beaten. They cry for help, but the police, whether because they are negligent or because they are secretly in the plot, let their attackers go free. Journalists and politicians, senators and specialists, financiers and industrialists weep inexhaustibly about "our properties stolen by Mexico." Daily they fulminate against "the dishonesty of those Brazilians who don't pay the interest due us." or "those Argentinian fascists who don't want to buy our products," or "those ungrateful Bolivians who have expelled Rockefeller from the Chaco," *etc., etc.*

Any honest observer must repudiate this obscene propaganda. The hired journalists prove daily that the American market is the great source of revenue for the whole of Latin

America. They discourse endlessly on the famous balance of trade in favor of Latin America. From 1936 to 1938, the United States bought \$83,000,000 more of goods from their southern neighbors than they sold them. These figures are produced with a great air of triumph. They merely forget to look at the other side of the medal: they pretend not to know that this famous trade balance had already turned into a deficit by the end of 1938. They pretend above all to be ignorant of the fact that in those same two years, 1936-1938, the United States received from their southern vassals in revenues from direct investments—without mentioning other payment such as freight and insurance—more than \$480,000,000. If to that one adds another \$150,000,000 as bond service, interest and amortization of loans, the total will be a comfortable \$630,000,000. Deduct from this sum the \$83,000,000 from the favorable trade balance, and you will have a realistic picture of the situation. As these kinds of payments are termed "invisible," we do not find them mentioned in the imperialist press. In any case, in order to have had the balance of trade (commercial, "invisible," and everything else) between the United States and Latin America come out even in the period, 1936-1938, the United States would have had to buy in those countries, above what it actually bought, almost \$867,000,000 worth of goods. When one considers that in 1938 total importations into the United States from Latin America came to only \$550,000,000, then it is clear that it is utopian to expect any such increase.

But that is not enough for the Wall Street bloodsuckers. To plant in the consciousness of the American petty bourgeoisie jingoistic resentment against the "deep-rooted dishonesty" of "these Latins," the imperialists try to put over the idea that American investments down there bring in no return and have turned out very badly. But the reality does not correspond to the legend artfully worked up to mislead the petty bourgeoisie. Despite these miserable times of crisis and war, these investments continue to yield considerable profits, according to Report No. 4 of Subcommittee II of the Advisory Inter-American Economic and Financial Committee, of Washington, presided over by Mr. Sumner Welles in person. The same reports frankly recognizes that these investments as a whole—which, including loans to governments, come to a grand total of \$4,051,000,000—have not turned out so badly after all . . . for the investors. It states furthermore:

In contradiction to what is currently expressed, in spite of delays in the servicing of debts, the restrictions imposed by exchange control, *etc.* . . . North American capital invested in Latin America taken as a whole has yielded a profit which is not unlike that obtained from investments in the United States itself. At any rate, an all inclusive analysis of those investments reveals that *more dollars have returned to the United States than were invested by this country in Latin America.*

The actual role of Yankee imperialism in Latin America is purely parasitic. Following the 1929 crisis and the political convulsions which rocked Latin America, the American government decided to halt further capital investments in countries south of the Rio Grande. At the same time, contrary to all that is taught about the stimulating function of the exportation of capital, the halting of these investments did not cause any fall in Latin American purchases in the United States. The fact is that the balance of trade began precisely at this time to swing favorably

towards the United States. Thus it was neither the war nor the resulting loss of the German market which caused this situation; the loss of the European market merely aggravated a tendency already ten years old. In the 1926-1930 period, trade between the two regions balanced up in favor of Latin America by an average \$155,000,000 a year. In the following five years, this average fell to \$136,000,000. From 1936 to 1938, it averaged no more than \$27,000,000, and in 1938 alone it came to a net deficit of \$79,000,000.

Yankee Parasitism

Thus American capitalism, showing the characteristics of premature senility, lives like a retired coupon-clipper at the expense of Latin America, feeding on rents and interest payments on capital invested or loaned long ago and which has already been paid back several times over. And this rapacious and parasitic policy has flourished precisely under the sign of the "good neighbor". American liberals salve their consciences by contrasting the present peaceful era of the "good neighbor" with those past decades when Uncle Sam did not hesitate to kill a few "dagoes" in putting his affairs in order. But in that day, although loans were often accompanied by gunboats, it could be said that part of this money filled a useful function in serving to develop certain natural resources or in opening up railroads into virgin wilderness. But today it is extortion, pure and simple. And this is what the liberals hail as the golden age of Latin American relations!

Not content with drinking the last drop of blood from this anemic economy, the Yankee imperialists wish in addition to exact from these peoples a slave-like obedience. And so when these countries turn towards Europe, whither in 1938 they still sent 54% of their total exports, when they submit to the conditions imposed by the Nazis in world trade, Wall Street has the insolence to cry out: "Beware of fascism," They forget, these apostles of light, that from 70% to 90% of the export trade of Argentina, of Bolivia, of Uruguay, and of Venezuela depends on European markets. And what do these superheated "democrats" do to wean away Latin America from its dependence on Europe and "save" it from Hitler? They require simply that their bond interest be met in due form; that they be paid in gold and hand-somely for their merchandise; and that the Latin Americans, rather than submit to barter trade with Germany, throw into the sea their surplus coffee, wheat, beef, bananas, hides, oil, sugar and cotton.

As long as these contradictions exist, important sections of the ruling classes of the countries to the south will cling to European markets as their last resort. And if it turns out to be necessary, for this, that they accept the conditions which the masters of Europe impose, that they put on a shirt of brown or any other color, that they shout "Heil Hitler!", raise their arm, pronounce other cabalistic syllables and make other ceremonial gestures—they will do all this. Such is the moving force behind the Nazi penetration of these countries.

Unable to absorb the total export production of Latin America, Yankee imperialism can uproot the fascist growths only by also establishing its continental autarchy, that is to say, to reshape the economy of these countries in such a way as to transform it into a simple complementary economy to fit into the productive and military apparatus of the master-nation. Nor will this come about without the

kind of "surgical interventions" Hitler is applying in Europe.

The Latin-American national bourgeoisie now have only two choices: to submit to the American "new order" or to the Nazi "new order". Their national economic independence thus becomes a nocturnal fantasy dissipated by the glaring light of day. The continents are becoming "totalitarianized", willy nilly. Profound and irresistible economic and historical necessities sweep away with a blind force the old national frontiers. This formidable simplification of geography is being achieved, in default of international workingclass action, under the stormy aegis of the permanent counter-revolution of imperialism. The national state cracks and falls into pieces but the plutocratic kernel remains, keeping all its monstrous privileges.

The colonial slaves will henceforth have no archaic frontiers dividing them; they will then feel themselves to be, in each hemisphere, a single oppressed people. We may say it will then be easier to mobilize them against the common enemy: imperialism. At all events, the fortuitous obstacles, the secondary enemies which so often block the path and obscure the real goal, these will have been removed by the counter-revolution itself.

As the young bourgeois nationalism has fallen into premature senility, from the depths of the masses there will spring up a new patriotism, this time on a continental scale. There can be no turning back to restore the chaos of yesterday.

The world has never seen a new social class establish its dominance over society without bearing the seeds of the future and without possessing that all-embracing outlook it must have to represent, in a given historical period, the general interests of the whole community. Once the landed gentry and the bourgeoisie of Latin America have fallen, there is nothing more for them to do but bow their head beneath the yoke of the new conqueror. But the masses—the workers, the peasants, the intellectuals—will still have their word to say. Theirs will be the task of uniting the Americas in proletarian fraternity and of rebuilding their New World on the foundation stones of peace and socialism. But this great revolution can be accomplished only with the collaboration of the American working class.

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The Willkevelt Campaign

(Continued from page 185)

need to be changed almost as soon as the votes are counted. The open threat of the Rome-Berlin-Tokio axis to engage the United States on two ocean fronts together with the mounting evidence that the nation's war machine will not be ready for a modern war for at least two and a half years more—these developments may well set up a strong appeasement tide in business circles. The mechanics of it are peculiar: *up to a certain point*, the worse the situation of the "democracies" and the more threatening the gains of the totalitarian states, the more imperative it seems to American imperialists to get into the fight. But once England's position appears so unfavorable as to be almost hopeless while the "have-nots" close ranks on a world scale against their American rival—then those business interests which have been shouting loudest for intervention and war may suddenly discover the advantages of temporarily accepting as a *fait accompli* the new world order—trading with the Nazis on a "sensible, businesslike" basis and hoping to gain time to build up their own war machine with a view to a future settling of accounts.

Even if England holds out all winter, such a shift in ruling class sentiment is quite possible. If England goes under, however, and Hitler definitely wins the war in Europe, then there seems no question at all in which direction this sentiment will shift. The September issue of *Fortune* contained the results of a poll conducted among 15,000 executives of large corporations. Three of its findings are of special interest here: (1) 88% thought Willkie would handle foreign policy better than Roosevelt, (2) only 2.6% were "definitely opposed" to trading with a Hitlerized economic bloc in post-war Europe; (3) less than half favored a policy directed towards the expansion of foreign trade, while almost a third favored "U.S. contraction towards self-sufficiency". Thus these big business leaders, almost all of them for Willkie, are for doing business with Hitler if he wins (which of course would only be possible with an appeasement policy) and a large minority of them are for an isolationist economic policy, which would also lead to an appeasement perspective. *Fortune's* definition of "the foreign policy of American business" is quite accurate: "economic opportunism".

As for how Roosevelt would be likely to react if the business community began to press for an appeasement policy, one answer was given at a meeting held a few weeks ago in Washington. Some fifty bankers, economists and New Dealers discussed the question: how to finance "national defense"? There was some technical disagreement as to whether inflation (favored by the New Dealers) or deflation (favored by the bankers) was the preferable course, but when Lawrence Dennis, the quasi-fascist economist, made some cynical remarks about the New Deal "using defense as a WPA program of which the Republicans have to approve", the atmosphere became heated. The heat came from *both* the bankers and the New Dealers. Jerome Frank, head of the S.E.C., retorted to Mr. Dennis: "You don't like capitalism . . . You think it is bound to fail and you want to see it fail, and you hate to see a program that will work and preserve capitalism. I think this program is going to

preserve capitalism. I think the investment bankers are going to get business out of it." After Mr. Frank, arose Mr. Benjamin Bottenweiser, a partner in the great Wall Street firm of Kuhn, Loeb & Co.: "We may quarrel with some of the methods and some of the views of the present administration, but the charge was made that the New Dealers are against capitalism, and that is completely unwarranted. If that is so, I don't know the meaning of capitalism."

We may take it for granted both that Mr. Bottenweiser knows quite well the meaning of capitalism, and that he and his colleagues in Wall Street have also acquired by now a fairly accurate knowledge of the nature of the New Deal. If Hitler wins this winter, the rest of the American people will rapidly acquire the same knowledge.

— DWIGHT MACDONALD

Statement of the ownership, management, circulation, etc., required by the Acts of Congress of August 24, 1912, and March 3, 1933, of

The NEW INTERNATIONAL

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State of New York, County of New York, ss.

Before me, a notary public in and for the State and county aforesaid, personally appeared Max Shachtman, who, having been duly sworn according to law, deposes and says that he is the editor of the *The New International* and that the following is, to the best of his knowledge and belief, a true statement of the ownership, management, etc., of the aforesaid publication for the date shown in the above caption, required by the Act of August 24, 1912, as amended by the Act of March 3, 1933, embodied in section 537, Postal Laws and Regulations, to wit:

1. That the name and addresses of the publisher, editor, managing editor, and business managers are:

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3. That the known bondholders, mortgagees, and other security holders owning or holding 1 per cent or more of total amount of bonds, mortgages, or other securities are: None.

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Sworn to and subscribed before me this second day of October, 1940.

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