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Russian Imperialism and the War Danger

Kremlin Policy in the Occupied Countries

An Editorial

James T. Farrell:

STALINIST LITERARY DISCUSSION

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Procuna Versus Munis:

ROOTS OF STALINISM IN 1918-23

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F. Forest:

LUXEMBURG'S THEORY OF ACCUMULATION

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TECHNOLOGICAL PROGRESS IN AGRICULTURE

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WORKERS PARTY

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THE NEW INTERNATIONAL

A Monthly Organ of Revolutionary Marxism

VOLUME XII

APRIL, 1946

NUMBER 4

EDITORIAL COMMENT—

THE NEW RUSSIAN IMPERIALISM

*Its Relation to the War Danger
Its Economic Policy and Aims*

The bad blood in Big Three relations that came to public view during the London Conference of Foreign Ministers in September, 1945, reached its boiling point last month as the world lived through a war of nerves reminiscent of the Munich days.

If the man in the street did not react with the frenzy of fear that swept the world during the Munich crisis, it was only because humanity is still too numb with the pain of six years' torture in total war to be sensitive to the new danger. A new world war less than a year after the end of the last one seems too monstrous to be possible. Man's mind, which has recorded almost limitless human misery for the last decade, rebels at the prospect of a new war—above all in the awesome shadow of the atomic bomb—and refuses to encompass it.

Yet the pattern that emerges out of every day's news shapes the terrible reality that World War II was not the last and drives it into man's consciousness. Russian troops march and counter-march in Iran. The American General Staff demands an extension of conscription. The American State Department supports Chinese efforts to force the Russians out of Manchuria. Russia announces a new Five-Year Plan which features tremendous outlays for armaments. The Americans proceed with "Operation Crossroads," the first realistic maneuvers for the age of atomic warfare.

With such concrete developments as the background, the war danger cannot remain vague and ill-defined. It is not "a war" but "the war" which looms. For the first twenty years following World War I the actual line-ups remained uncertain and Russia switched sides at the very outbreak of the war and then again during the course of it. However, today when the "little man" whispers the fear that will not be suppressed he does not ask about war in general but says, "Will we fight Russia?"

A World of Two Real Powers

The relentless struggle for survival through destruction of rivals that has characterized the monopoly capitalist epoch has produced a world which contains but two *real* powers. The second, third, tenth and eleventh rate powers find themselves tied to one or the other sphere. The lines are sharply drawn and the elbow-room for maneuvering between the power combinations that prevailed in the past is almost non-

existent. France's threat to "seek aid elsewhere" (i.e., in Russia) if the United States does not grant her the request loan, is harmless bluster and will be treated as such by Washington. How could it be otherwise when even Britain, which still *does* have an empire, finds it has neither the economic nor the diplomatic chips with which to bid against the American colossus? Some antiquated Lords who still see the world through Victorian spectacles may rise from their seats in the House to fume about "Yankee greed" that dictates a hard bargain in making a loan to Britain, but even they will be gently informed by solicitous friends any day now that "Britannia Rules the Waves" is merely a sentimental song that no longer corresponds to the facts.

The key to understanding the change which World War II has wrought in balance-of-power politics is to be found in the fact that, if the socialist revolution were set aside for the moment, the main question before the war was "Which of the capitalist powers will survive?" whereas today the question is "Will the world of capitalism or the world of bureaucratic collectivism survive?" Laval could journey to the Moscow of 1934 to sign a defense pact with Stalin against Hitler and achieve a diplomatic coup for France. But when the impetuous de Gaulle journeys to the Moscow of 1945 to sign a pact, he makes a meaningless gesture which leaves London and Washington unmoved. For in his less dramatic moments even the new Joan of Arc had to realize soberly that the fate of France was in the last analysis tied to the fate of the capitalist world of America and the British Empire. The capitalist class of France could be divided in the pre-war period between a pro-Axis orientation and a pro-Anglo-American orientation. But today the French capitalists cannot think twice when the choice is Moscow or Washington. The international line-up is not merely one of power combinations arising from the most advantageous economic and military alignments but basically one of a division into two hostile social orders—private capitalism versus bureaucratic collectivism.

The New Source of the Russian Power

It is this fact that gives to the emergence of the new Russian empire a significance much more fundamental than merely the recrudescence of *Russian* power. Bureaucratic collectivism is Russian just as early capitalism was English. And, conversely, bureaucratic collectivism is the source of the new

Russian imperialist power as early capitalism was the source of British imperialist power.

The new Russian empire occupies a strategic geographical position as a tremendous land mass that dominates Eurasia. No combination of European and Asiatic powers can counterbalance her. Beginning on the Arctic at the Finnish-Norwegian border, its boundaries run south to include Finland and the Baltic states, bisect Germany and Austria, encompass Poland, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Albania, turn east along the northern frontier of Greece to include Hungary, Rumania and Bulgaria, cross the Black Sea and dip south to include northern Iran and press upon the frontiers of Turkey and Iraq, proceed east across Asia to include Sinkiang, Mongolia, parts of Manchuria, northern Korea, Sakhalin Island and the Kurilias chain. This expanding land mass presses upon the world of Anglo-American imperialism in Central Europe, the Near and Middle East and the Orient. Specifically it gives rise to three exceedingly sensitive trouble zones—Manchuria, Iran and Germany. Russia chose these three spots, Germany by way of covert political machinations to gain control through a fusion of the Communist and Social Democratic parties and Manchuria and Iran through open military and diplomatic pressure, to test and prove her newly acquired strength vis-à-vis the United States.

Anyone acquainted with the history and economic theory of capitalist imperialism knows what motivates the obstinacy with which the British and Americans hold fast in Iran, the fabled kingdom of the "black gold" out of which Royal Dutch Shell and Standard Oil erect even more fabled kingdoms of the pound sterling and the dollar. Anyone acquainted with the "Manifest Destiny" of American imperialism to convert a billion Asiatics and the resources of a continent into a tremendous source of cheap labor, markets and raw materials knows what motivates the American State Department in giving such firm support to its Chinese vassal state in demanding that the Russians withdraw from Manchuria. Anyone who knows what Europe means to world capitalism will understand why the British and Americans play such a sharp game in the internal politics of the Central and Eastern European nations.

But what about the Russians? What do they want?

Here the most widespread illusions exist. We do not refer to the illusions that blind the devout and faithful adherents of the Kremlin Church. This malady is not new and we have dealt with it before. However, the war has unloosed a tremendous pro-Russian sentiment among the masses everywhere which is not to be accounted for on the basis of direct Stalinist influence. In part it rests upon the rôle which Russia played in helping defeat Germany. But it finds its supplement in the vague feeling that "Russia is different," a feeling born out of the loss of confidence in the statesmen and diplomats of the old powers who continue to reveal their total impotence before the task of organizing a peaceful world. Just as humanity finds it hard to force itself to regard a Third World War as a real possibility despite all the alarming symptoms, so it cannot force itself to believe that millions of lives were sacrificed to strike down the German "aggressor" only to be confronted with a Russian "aggressor." Having shed their last tear in the prolonged nightmare that has not yet ended for most of the war-weary peoples, many cling to the desperate hope that somehow "Russia is really different." Out of this hope against hope arise rationalizations about Russia's aims, efforts to construe them in the best possible terms and attitudes of withholding judgment because "it's all so unclear."

Yet, once the facts are faced objectively, without fear or

prejudice, Russia's actions leave no room for rationalization; they leave no grounds for construing in the best possible terms, nor are they even unclear.

Facing the Facts About Russia

The best way of facing the facts and, thereby, answering the question "What do the Russians *want* in the occupied countries?" is to ask "What do the Russians *do* in the occupied countries?"

Enough data has now been collected to establish the following outline of Russian economic policy in the occupied countries:

1. Russia strips the industries of machinery and other equipment and transports it to Russia. (Germany, Austria, Hungary, Rumania, Korea and Manchuria.)

2. Russia imports large masses of slave laborers to add to the slave labor armies of Russians who make up a sizeable percentage of her labor force. (Germans, Poles and political opponents from every nation in which the GPU has a free hand.)

3. Russia expropriates the capitalists to varying degrees and establishes a state-owned industry operated by native satraps of the Russian rulers. (Poland, German zone, Czechoslovakia, Baltic states.)

4. Russia carries through "agrarian reforms" which wipe out the large landowners and seeks to establish a small peasantry whose property stake ties them to the new régime. (Poland and East Prussia.)

5. Russia forces economic concessions and spheres of influence from states that remain politically independent of her. (Oil concessions in Iran.)

6. Russia maintains commercial outposts for purposes of trade in countries less developed economically than herself. (Manchuria.)

This listing of economic phenomena related to Russian occupation policy poses a formidable task of analysis and codification before we can definitively describe the *general laws* that regulate Russian economic policy beyond her own borders. However, a mere listing of these bare summations of policy permit us to conclude that in the over-all and basic aim Russia is *not* "different," i.e., Russian policy is motivated by the same aim of economic aggrandizement that has characterized every past exploiting class in history in its relations with subject peoples and which has come to be known as *imperialism*.

An analysis of the specific policies of Russian occupation will reveal, it is true, a considerable difference from the policies which Marxists have associated with the rule of finance capitalist imperialism. The basic economic needs out of which the imperialist policy of bureaucratic collectivism and the imperialist policy of finance capitalism spring are radically different. However, imperialism did not begin with finance capitalism. The British Empire spread from Hudson Bay to the Ganges during the period of mercantile capitalism. Feudal Spain appropriated half of the new world and ruled the Lowlands. The imperialism of the Czarist state carried the Russian flag over the vast expanse of Siberia, across Manchuria, across the Pacific to Alaska and the coasts of California. In the South it pushed the Turks over and beyond the Caucasus, contested their hegemony over the Balkans. It swallowed up the major part of Poland and drove Sweden out of Finland. Ancient times have known the imperialism of Rome and Carthage, based upon a slave economy. The most active imperialist force in the United States in the several decades preceding the Civil War was the land-hungry slaveocracy, con-

stantly pressing for annexation at the expense of Mexico. In the light of these many historical forms of imperialism, how ridiculous is the injunction that we refrain from describing Russian economic expansion as imperialist because it is different from finance capitalist imperialism!

The imperialist policy of the bureaucratic collectivist state, for all that it has in common with all historical imperialisms, is one that is peculiar to its own social order. However, what is distinctive is not the emergence of imperialist methods never before known to history but rather the combination by the Russians of phases of imperialist policy associated with all previous forms of imperialism, from that of ancient Rome to Wall Street. In this sense the exploitation of foreign resources by Russia reflect the exploitive societies, i.e., slave labor, serfdom and wage labor, yet combines them in such a manner upon the basis of a nationalized economy as to create an economic system qualitatively different than any previously known.

A Troublesome Problem of Theory

The fact of Russian economic aggrandizement has created a most troublesome problem of theory for those who continue to cling to Trotsky's outlived theory that Russia is a "degenerated workers' state" merely by virtue of the existence of nationalized economy. Russian expansion into Poland and the Baltic states in 1939-40 raised this problem in the Fourth International and led to the split in the American section. Trotsky and the majority of the Socialist Workers Party denounced the invasions by the Russians but supported Russia's rôle in the war as progressive because it represented the "superior" economic order. This was an extension of the theory that the "régime" was reactionary but that the "economic order" was progressive. Consequently, the invasions were a reactionary method of serving the needs of a progressive economy; consequently, the simultaneous denouncing of the method and support of the aim. (To comment on how this division between means and ends contradicts Trotsky's well-argued case for the interrelation of means and ends in his articles on "Their Morals and Ours," would carry us too far afield.) In 1940, the outline of Russian economic policy in the conquered territories was still too indefinite to generalize upon the nature of Russian imperialism. Its reactionary consequences in the *political* sphere were sufficient for the minority tendency, later to organize the Workers Party, to renounce the policy of "unconditional defense" and characterize Russia's rôle in the war as reactionary.

However, today we have the imposing evidence of Russian economic policy accumulated in a dozen countries under varying circumstances. The arguments of the "workers' staters" in 1939-40, particularly those which linked Russian policy to the military-strategic exigencies of the war, still had some degree of plausibility. Today, however, in the light of the vast evidence of Russian economic policy in a dozen countries under varying circumstances, the arguments of the "workers' staters" have not only been robbed of any shred of plausibility but have emerged in full flower as a thoroughly reactionary political line. It is only the internal contradictions of the theory that permit its adherents, by means of bad logic, to save themselves from being swept openly into the position of defenders and apologists of Stalinism. (The emergence of the pro-Stalinist faction of defenders of the "bureaucratic social revolution" theory among the French Trotskyists, led by an old militant, is a warning of what happens to "workers' staters" who seek to iron out the contradictions between their theory and poli-

tics. We will comment on this phenomenon at another time.)

The "workers' staters" have denied the existence of a class of exploiters in Russia by describing the bureaucracy as a "privileged stratum" which lives a parasitic existence by "cheating and robbing" the workers. Stories of looting and robbing still had an incidental character. But how explain the systematic appropriation of the means of production by the Russians in every country they have entered, that feature of Russian occupation policy that has been most consistently applied, whether in Berlin, Vienna, Bucharest or Harbin? If this is mere looting carried on by the bureaucracy in the same manner in which it "cheats and robs" the Russian workers, to what use do the bureaucrats intend to put this equipment? Is it merely as a trophy of the war that a lathe or forge is transported from Berlin to Moscow? Perhaps it will be placed in his cellar or his garage by some bureaucrat to be admired by his friends along with such other booty as cameras, pianos, or billiard tables? Of course not. It will be installed in a factory and used in production. How does the bureaucracy benefit from such "cheating and robbing" of the occupied countries? It is not the mere possession of the lathe from which he benefits but rather that which is produced on the lathe. But who produces it? The Russian worker. So, you see, the lathe is a means for the added "cheating and robbing" of the Russian working class by the "privileged stratum"! What odd language to describe the appropriation of means of production for the purpose of exploiting labor! Logic has ever taken its revenge upon those who sought to do it violence.

The ludicrous end of the attempt to describe Russian imperialism in terms of "looting" (just like they "rob and cheat" at home) has forced the "workers' staters" to seek a more basic explanation. They have now discovered that the economic basis of the Russian expropriations abroad is rooted in the attempt to carry through the fourth Five-Year Plan. "The régime sees no way out in the economic field save through the realization of the fourth Five-Year Plan, which cannot be achieved by the devastated country without the resources of the 'buffer zones.'" (*Fourth International*, March, 1946, page 103.) If the régime sees no way out except through the fourth Five-Year Plan and if the fourth Five-Year Plan can only be achieved with the resources of the "buffer zones" (how delicate!), is this not saying that that régime sees no way out except through the resources of the "buffer zones"? The economic policy of the Russians in the occupied countries is not, therefore, merely the "excesses" of the bureaucracy, not mere "looting," not the "cheating" and "robbing" by a "privileged stratum," but something which is fundamental and necessary to Russian economic operation and survival. Yet this very fourth Five-Year Plan was hailed by the same magazine in September as evidence that Russia is... a workers' state! ("The very projection of the fourth Five-Year Plan constitutes the latest corroboration of the correctness of our analysis of the class nature of the USSR as a workers' state, although badly degenerated under Stalinist rule.") It is a workers' state because it needs a plan which requires the economic exploitation of its subject nations! How those who swallowed the "counter-revolutionary workers' state" gag over the "imperialist workers' state"!

The dilemma in the realm of theory always appears, in one form or another, sooner or later, in the realm of politics. A theory which serves no political ends, which is not a guide in politics, is pretty much of academic interest at best; at worst, it is a substitute for politics. In the long run—it may even be said—the dispute over the class character of the Stalin-

ist state (workers' state, degenerated workers' state, badly degenerated workers' state, workers' state which has degenerated to the point where it is no longer a workers' state, capitalist state, bureaucratic-collectivist state) can thin down to an extremely ethereal business unless it is linked up with politics—the political program and the political struggle that follows from it. Indeed, what other real test is there of theory except “praxis,” the political struggle?

Let us take an example, and it is anything but an unimportant one: What political line do the “workers' staters” propose for the occupied countries? They say, with a notable lack of vigor, that they condemn the Russian occupation and looting of the means of production which leaves workers jobless and hungry and without any perspective of economic rehabilitation. From which it follows? From which—so far as they are concerned—nothing follows.

What *should* follow, it would be thought by anyone moderately well acquainted with Marxian politics, is the demand for the ousting of the Russian troops (as well as the Anglo-American, it goes without saying) or at least for the withdrawal of the Russian troops, and the demand that the looted machinery and the kidnapped workers be returned to their homeland.

Right here is the dilemma, however. Not only don't they make these demands, which are the *elementary* duty of every revolutionary socialist, but they can't make them. Give up the “buffer zones” that guarantee the success of the fourth Five-Year Plan (in English: that guarantee the further exploitation of the masses and the economic consolidation of the bureaucracy)? Give back the means of production that have become part of the property of the workers' state (in English: the workers' prison)? Impossible! If it is a workers' state (of any kind), then the newly-acquired means of production, including the slave laborers, have become the chattels of the workers' state and thus enhanced its economic strength; and how can “we” demand that anything be done to weaken the economic strength of the workers' state? Obviously, “we” cannot. If we make these demands upon the Stalinist bureaucracy, we may—God forbid—be implying that it is the state and that the property belongs to it and not in any sense to the Russian workers. Just as obviously, we cannot do that either. It conflicts, as it were, with our theory of Russia as a workers' state. And if the means of production belong to the workers in Russia, it is after all, pretty difficult to work up a lot of steam over the workers finding some property before it has been lost.

The “workers' staters” are tied by a long rope to the chariot of the “bureaucratic counter-revolutionary socialist revolution,” and the faster that chariot moves the shorter the rope becomes.

Bureaucratic-collectivist imperialism, or Stalinist imperialism for short, can no longer be considered an accidental or incidental phenomenon. It is rooted in the needs of the Russian economy. It springs from Stalinist Russia's irrepressible need to remake the world in its own image as the only means of establishing security for its own social form; the need to satisfy the pressing requirements of the state economy by extending the “primitive accumulation” from the “internal” field to the “external,” from the expropriation, first, of the Russian proletariat and, then, of the large “remnants” of the bourgeoisie” (kulaks), to the expropriation of the bourgeoisie of other nations (Germany, Hungary, Rumania) and of whole nations in the period of the Second World War and now of the fourth Five-Year Plan.

The existence of Stalinist imperialism, its rapacious and utterly reactionary character, are indisputable. Anyone who requires more evidence than has been supplied by the last few years, and most recently in the Baltic and Balkan countries, in Poland and Germany, in Iran and Manchuria, will probably be satisfied only if he himself is converted into a slave-laborer under the lash of the Stalinist empire.

It does not follow, in our view, that the future of this empire is in any way assured. Far from it. There has been such overwhelming evidence in our own days that this is the period of the agony and collapse of empire, that there is no warrant for the view that the Stalinist empire, based upon what is still one of the backward countries among the big powers, has the prospect of either consolidating its expansion or even of maintaining itself for long. The long overdue crisis inside Russia—broad hints of which are reluctantly revealed in Stalin's own recent speech—cannot be repressed by state force for very much longer. Not only that. The peoples conquered by Stalinism, and they now number tens of millions, suffer under a multiplication of class oppression and exploitation by national oppression. Far from strengthening the oppressor class and nation, the establishment of this condition only serves to undermine it and in good time to destroy it. What the bureaucracy may look upon as a conqueror's wreath around its brow will not be long in slipping down to a noose around its neck. The “national question”—that is, the rebellion of the millions of peoples enslaved by the Wehrmacht and the Gestapo after the German conquest of Europe—proved to be just such a tightening noose around the neck of all the Hitlers. The neck of the Stalinist bureaucracy will not prove to be any stouter. The mortal blow may very well be delivered first from the outer periphery of the Stalinist empire, for substantially the same reasons that Marx so many decades ago declared that capitalism would be struck fatally from its extremities, where it is weakest.

To wait passively for this to happen is to guarantee that it will at the very least be delayed. The interests of the working class and of socialist internationalism demand an *active* policy of political struggle against Stalinist imperialism. To “condemn” Stalinist “expansion” without a program of demands and struggle against it, is Gandhism. To “condemn” the annexations without actively fighting for the national freedom of the subjugated lands is, as Lenin said of Luxemburg and Pyatakoff in another connection, “inconsistent annexationism.” That at best; at worst, it is Stalinist apologetics.

The struggle for the victory of socialism is inseparably and increasingly bound up with the struggle for national freedom in the *advanced* countries, as we have repeatedly argued. This profoundly important truth is no less valid in the fight against Stalinist imperialism today than it was and remains in the fight against the imperialism of finance capital.

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The Roots of Stalinism

Bolshevik Policy During 1918-23

*The following polemical exchange is reprinted from the columns of *Revolucion*, organ of the Spanish group of the Fourth International in Mexico. Comrade Procuna's article appeared in the June-July issue of the paper accompanied by an announcement of the editors that they are devoting a page of each issue to open discussion, including contributions from "militants belonging to other working class groups." The statement adds: "We are interested in publishing those criticisms which they have to make of the Fourth International in general and of the Spanish group in Mexico in particular. We shall also publish articles written in defense of positions criticised by us. Whoever utilizes this page from now on has full freedom of expression. We ask only that the limitation of space be kept in mind. We hope that this page of free discussion will be transformed into a forum of working-class democracy that will justify its existence." We extend our congratulations to our Spanish comrades for this forthright statement on behalf of free, public discussion in the revolutionary workers' press. It is an example which all papers of the Fourth Internationalist movement would do well to emulate. As our readers are aware, THE NEW INTERNATIONAL has been conducted in this spirit ever since the split in the Socialist Workers Party in 1940 and the organization of the Workers Party.*

*Procuna's article was answered in the August-September issue of *Revolucion* by Comrade Munis, well known to the readers of the international Trotskyist press—Editors.*

Every member of the Fourth International ought to ask himself the following question: Why is it that since the death of Lenin, and more particularly since the expulsion of Trotsky from the Russian CP, and in view of the fact that so many revolutionary militants have broken with the Third International, the Fourth International has not been able to grow? Why is it that in spite of the appearance on repeated occasions of situations favorable to revolutionary action, the Fourth International continues to lead a sad sort of vegetable existence?

While one can discuss and logically enough explain the downfall of the Russian Revolution by the unfavorable conditions of the European Revolution, particularly in Germany from 1921 or 1923 on, one cannot explain the alienation of revolutionary militants from the Trotskyist organizations by the same reasons. It is obvious that after the experiences of the Russian and German revolutions, and much later the Spanish experience, nothing serious can be accomplished without a correct analysis of these historic events. The Trotskyist movement, like all other centrist groups, has always treated and continues to treat problems that at one time or another are very important in an isolated fashion. It still has, as yet, to make a fundamental analysis of these problems. It discusses them in an isolated fashion because there are reasons why it must avoid going to the heart of these questions. This is as true of the Trotskyists as it is of the Poumists; it applies as much to the left-Anarchists as it does to other centrist groupings. (We do not mention the Social-Democratic parties or the Stalinists, irremediably prostituted as they are to this or that bourgeoisie, to this or that imperialism.) The Poumists and their kind tremble with fear before the idea of provoking the displeasure of their beloved Socialist friends and of their own reformist followers; still less do they dare disturb the eternal vacillators in their own ranks. Partially, in the last analysis, these reasons hold true for the Trotskyists as well. But, in our opinion, what has prevented, and still prevents, a thorough

discussion on the all-important problem of the relation between the dictatorship of the proletariat and workers' democracy is the fear of subjecting to a stern analysis the Russian Revolution up until the death of Lenin and, proceeding from that, the program of Trotskyism and the program of the Fourth International. The discussion meets with a resistance that is shameful, but always tenacious, now from one side and now from the other; that is, from the Trotskyists, the Poumists, and their kind. This resistance springs from the administrative, centralist and anti-democratic ideas of the leaders of these groups, ideas these leaders absorb from the social environment in which they learn to function. For once having a bureaucratic post or aspiring to one, they do not regard the loss of what they have or many have lightly.

It is evident that revolutionaries ought not to feel their positions or freedom of action threatened by such considerations, and ought to engage in a serious discussion of the problem without any further delay. The notes which follow can serve, in our estimation, as a point of departure for such a discussion.

Degeneration in Russia

The main problem, in my judgment, is the following: To find the fundamental causes of the monstrous degeneration of the Soviet state, and also the fundamental causes of the decline of the Fourth International.

The fundamental causes, in the case of the Russian Revolution, can be summed up in the following points:

Objective causes:

1. The defeat of the European Revolution.
2. On the eve of October, the peasantry, representing 80 per cent of the population, supported the political struggle of the working class because it hoped to gain the land through the victory of the October Revolution. But after October, the poor peasantry, now converted into small proprietors, became the most powerful adversaries of socialist construction.
3. Though very concentrated and with a high degree of class-consciousness, the Russian proletariat was not, either numerically or economically a strong enough force in the country.

Subjective Causes: Confronted by a relationship of forces unfavorable to the working class, and under the pressure of the circumstances—civil war, intervention, disorganization of production, hunger, etc.—the CP, the subjective force of the October Revolution, took the following measures from the summer of 1918 on:

1. Creation of the Red Army, with a centralized command; the designation of officials by the central command; effective suppression of the soldiers' councils and other measures of the same kind, which transferred the power in the armed forces from the laboring masses into the hands of a centralized bureaucracy.
2. In the management of production, initially controlled and directed by the factory committees, the same transfer of power is repeated in favor of the central organs of the state as in the army.
3. In the Communist Party, the tendency toward centralization and the suppression of other workers' parties becomes

more marked at each succeeding stage and culminates in the absolute control by the central organs of the party over the organisms which constitute the foundation of the working class: soviets, unions, factory committees, coöperatives and soldiers' committees.

The situation described in these three points had already matured before Lenin's death, as his observations in the last period of his life bear witness. Bureaucratization was complete, the worker was no longer master of the factory. His material conditions now depended on functionaries appointed by the apparatus. His right to criticize disappeared in the same period when his ability to better his position was measured by his submission to the directives of the party. To all practical purposes the centralized, absolutist state already existed when Lenin died, and was controlled in turn by the centralized Communist Party, which imposed its dictatorial will upon the working class. In this manner the dictatorship of the proletariat, which should have been an instrument of struggle in the hands of the workers against the anti-socialist elements in the country, was transformed into the dictatorship of the Central Committee or of the Political Bureau over the working class. From the summer of 1918 until Lenin's death this period is characterized by the struggle between workers democracy and the dictatorship of the party apparatus, a struggle that ended in the triumph of the party apparatus.

The October Revolution, after having carried out the nationalization of the large industries, commerce and of the banks, had still not completely destroyed the capitalist forms of production and distribution. The peasant, the artisan and the petty merchant still existed and functioned on the basis of capitalist norms of production. In addition, the Soviet economy felt the heavy hand of foreign capitalism. Inevitably, the war between the socialist and capitalist sectors of production unfolded within the Soviet economy, accompanied by sharp ups and downs, from the beginning of the revolution up until the years 1932-33. From this time onward, the economy marches in a straight line, without any wavering, toward state capitalism and capitalism in general. Being in reality independent of the working class, the bureaucracy of the party, the unions and of industry, had interests which at each turn widened the breach that separated them from the proletariat and brought them closer to those strata of the population who had a stake in reëstablishing the privileges the possessing classes enjoy under the capitalist régime. Later on, after these strata had established their domination and given birth to a new capitalist class, the bureaucracy merged with them. This evolution gives the key to the anti-socialist and counter-revolutionary politics at which the Stalinists have arrived.

The Lessons of Russia

From the viewpoint of historical experience, beginning with 1849 and concluding with 1936, all the revolutions made by the working class—under its own banner or under the banner of bourgeois democracy—have led to the defeat of the proletariat and have saved the bourgeoisie, with the exception of the October Revolution. In Russia the proletariat launched the struggle under its own class banner and achieved victory under the leadership of a superb Marxist party that was openly followed by the revolutionary elements among the Anarchists, the Social-Revolutionaries of the Left, and by the Menshevik masses, who abandoned their leaders, the collaborators of the democratic bourgeoisie. This unique, positive example

of the proletariat's struggle for the conquest of power ought to serve as the groundwork of the workers' movement in its struggle against the capitalist state. The other experience, that is, the experience of October, in so far as it relates to the method of building the socialist society, indicates only what should be avoided, since it possesses not a positive but a negative character. Leaving aside the question of what form the organs of power will take which the workers will create in the revolution we believe approaching, we advance two leading ideas that we believe sufficient to serve as the basis for any grouping of revolutionary militants at this time:

1. From now until the day the proletariat takes the power: Our inspiration to be Lenin's program during the last war and the period of February-October, 1917. This applies also to the Allied nations, including Russia. 2. In the period immediately following the conquest of power by the proletariat: On one hand, an implacable struggle—a struggle that must be regarded as a question of life or death—everywhere against the old ruling classes, and those who oppose disarming them, the complete destruction of their state, their expropriation, etc. On the other hand, we must guard the freedom of opinion, speech, press and deliberation of the workers in the organs of power they have created. We must see to it that the workers' leaders themselves do not deprive the workers of the right to carry on the struggle against the remnants of the bourgeoisie, and do not take out of their hands the management of the shops, the factories and the land. Only those should be in the administrative apparatus who are absolutely necessary because of their technical skill and knowledge, and their decisions must have the approval of the groups of producers concerned.

Evidently, if this program is not to remain a dead letter, the workers must have the right to unite and organize themselves in political parties, free trade unions and other organizations which they find necessary.

It is imperative that the discussion on the points previously raised should open in the ranks of the Fourth International. The events which draw near do not afford us the luxury of choosing the time for such a discussion. We should be ready to profit from the experience of October. We ought to compel everyone in the ranks of the Fourth International to take a position for or against collaboration with the bourgeoisie; for or against collaboration with the Stalinist state; for or against the dictatorship of the proletariat; for or against workers' democracy. It is necessary to arrive at clarification of these questions, so that we can separate ourselves as rapidly as possible from the reformist and centrist elements in the Fourth International. The truth is that revolutionary militants with a Marxist tendency, and militants without a Marxist ideology, display a very reserved attitude toward us precisely because of our silence and lack of clarity on the problems previously mentioned. For this reason, the discussion cannot be limited to the ranks of our own party. It ought to be carried outside. Besides clarifying our own ranks, such an attitude will give us the opportunity to establish contact and to engage in an exchange of ideas with other revolutionists, and so provoke discussions on the same problems within the ranks of these and other working class organizations.

Mexico, D. F., March 12, 1945.

ENRIQUE PROCUNA.

Relationship of Program to Mass Influence

An Answer to Enrique Procuna

In the previous issue of *Revolution*, Comrade Enrique Procuna presented a polemical article called "The Fourth International and Working-Class Unity: Workers' Democracy and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat." Observing the large numbers of militants who have abandoned the Third International since the first symptoms of its political degeneration became manifest, Comrade Procuna asks why the Fourth International has not been able to grow on a large scale. Comrade Procuna puts a period to his question with the observation that one cannot explain these facts as one explains the degeneration of the Russian Revolution, by the unfavorable conditions encountered by the European revolution since 1923. "What immediately leaps to view," he says, "is the fact that after the experiences of the Russian and German Revolutions, and much later, the Spanish Revolution, nothing serious can be achieved without a correct analysis of these historic events." He thereby implies that the absence of this correct analysis has been, and is, an obstacle to the vigorous development of the Fourth International. And by lightly linking the Trotskyist movement with centrism, he attributes to the former the lack of a concrete and profound analysis of events so characteristic of the latter. With this mistaken method, he only succeeds in imitating centrism; that is, Procuna substitutes vague generalities for concrete analysis. I reproach him all the more strongly for this, since Procuna knows that if in the ranks of the Fourth International concept centrist deviations coupled with organizational conceptions intractable to criticism, they are not generally characteristic of the Fourth International, but apply principally to our American section, which we have been the first to criticize with the utmost vigor.

Of course, the downward trend of the European revolutionary movement is not sufficient to explain the limited growth of international Trotskyism. And the decline of the revolutionary movement did not follow a straight line, but occurred in zig-zag fashion. The process was not fatalistically predetermined, but was subject to the intervention of human consciousness; in so far, it must be added, as this consciousness was susceptible to the pressure of the Trotskyist movement. Our ideas were not the only force acting on the historical process. We had to contend against the negative power of the Social-Democracy and, above all, Stalinism. The latter, usurping the prestige of the Russian Revolution, which still dazzles the masses as the greatest exploit since the Paris Commune, was able to yield a great power of deception. This power of deception can be explained by the general law, "Being determines consciousness." The masses, including the majority of militants with some training, refused to believe that the Russian Revolution had been betrayed, and that the Third International, officially linked to it, represented the counter-revolution, and not the Russian Revolution. To grasp this reality, the living experience was necessary. It was given, and given painfully, by the triumph of Nazism in Germany, and its domination over Europe; by the barbarous Stalinist despotism in Russia; by the wanton destruction of the imperialist war, and by the new slavery imposed on Europe and the world in general by the Washington-London-Moscow combination.

Taking the Spanish experience primarily into account, I

believe that before the war the Trotskyist movement had some possibility of developing and of turning upward once more the descending line of the world revolution. But these possibilities were meager indeed, compared to the crushing number that led in the opposite direction. The reason why it could not take advantage of the opportunities which did present themselves is to be found in the inadequacies and defects common to any organization in the period of formation: extreme numerical weakness, meager material resources, inability to approach the masses, vacillation in critical situations, and many other impermissible factors. No serious militant can reproach the Trotskyist movement for not knowing how to build, in a few years and under the most disadvantageous conditions recorded by history, mature revolutionary organizations nothing short of perfect. Honestly posed, the problem reduces itself to understanding whether the organization, holding to a correct revolutionary line, is overcoming its defects as it develops or whether its growth is being hampered by incorrect political ideas. Obviously, the Fourth International falls into the first category. Even Comrade Procuna is compelled to admit that at no point in its career has the Fourth International been guilty of any theoretical misconceptions. But this is precisely why Procuna must reject what is surely the main—if not the only—reason for the limited success of the Fourth International in the pre-war period: the unfavorable conditions since 1923. Given the fact that these conditions have accumulated, and given the considerable experience already accumulated, we have the right to expect of the leading sections of the Fourth International a rate of growth which formerly required tremendous enterprise.

Connection Between Program and Growth

Like many other worthy militants, Comrade Procuna is guilty of a mechanical approach. Taking as his point of departure the admitted fact that economic conditions are ripe for the development of the socialist revolution, he is driven to the inevitable, though tacit, conclusion that a correct political program ought to be crowned with success. Conversely, failure to grow is but the direct reflection of a false political line. The social processes would proceed smoothly indeed if they were regulated by such a simple and automatic determinism. To refute this mechanical conception and to indicate the complex relation between revolutionary politics and success, it is enough to record the frequency with which the reformist and Stalinist parties have achieved great successes while pursuing false programs to a reactionary and criminal degree. The experience of the last ten years permits us to accept as axiomatic the idea that it is much easier to build big parties with an opportunistic political line than with a line that is revolutionary. The reason is obvious. Capitalist society presents no real resistance to the politics of the opportunist working-class parties. And so long as it lasts, these parties benefit from the inertia and lack of consciousness which existing conditions impose upon the masses. In critical moments such as those through which Europe is now passing, capitalism could not save itself without the aid of the opportunist working-class parties. So it is that within the framework of capitalist society these parties are granted the right to flourish on a grand scale. For the revo-

lutionary party it is otherwise. It encounters the iron ring of capitalist resistance; it must educate itself ideologically in a hostile world; it must reach a degree of practical efficiency and a numerical size that will permit it to undertake independent action; above all, it must dissipate the inertia and apathy imposed by both the capitalists and the opportunist working-class organizations on the proletariat. The proletariat is not waiting for a correct and finished program to fall from the skies, which it will then proceed to adopt and carry out in action. If it had the intellectual sensitivity and knowledge necessary to discriminate between revolutionary and opportunist politics there would be no need for the revolutionary party that gives the proletariat leadership in fulfilling its historic task. And to tell the truth, the proletarian vanguard is itself often enough found wanting in this very quality. A revolutionary party develops itself, first of all, in the struggle against the prejudices and bourgeois ideas that weigh down upon the majority of the exploited masses. The relation between correct program and success is not automatic; it is subject and subordinate to various factors, three of which can frequently be decisive even with the most correct program: a vanguard large enough to be in contact with the most active and conscious layers of the proletariat, the capabilities of the party in question, and conditions among the masses which facilitate its break with the opportunist organizations. Two parties who have accepted the same program are not equally capable. As for the working class, conditions do not always permit it to understand that the men and organizations in whom it has confidence are betraying it. So, before the war, the masses and many relatively advanced militants interpreted the opportunism and betrayals of the Stalinists as tricks or maneuvers, directed, in the last analysis, against the bourgeoisie. So great was the hope that the Russian government would remain faithful to the great revolution. Now, however, things begin to change. They change because the arguments employed by the Stalinists no longer have the apparent validity they had before; because Stalin himself is assassinating the revolution in the countries he occupies; because the Stalinist parties in Western Europe are serving as more powerful props for a severely shaken capitalist system than the reformists; and, above all, because we are entering a period of ascending development for the revolution.

The only concrete criticism which Procuna makes of the Fourth International is of not having conducted a "thorough discussion on the important problem of the dictatorship of the proletariat and workers' democracy," for "fear of submitting to a severe analysis the Russian Revolution up until Lenin's death and, consequently, the theories of Trotskyism, and the program of the Fourth International." But even if we were to accept his assertions as correct, it would be absurd to find here the cause of the limited development of the Fourth International in the pre-war period. The truth is that our analysis of Soviet degeneration seemed at that time false or exaggerated to the most capable and advanced militants of other tendencies.

I cannot judge Comrade Procuna's criticism of the Fourth International's program since he has had not made any. He has been content to make some superficial observations. However, he cannot deny that the only analysis of the Russian Revolution and counter-revolution in existence is that made by the Trotskyist movement. So much so, that from it emanates anything concrete that Procuna has been able to say on the subject. There exists, moreover, the theory of bureaucratic collectivism which departs from Marxism, destroying its concep-

tion of social evolution, and is more in the way of a declaration than an analysis. Whether or not my opponent leans toward this theory cannot be deduced from his article. At any rate, nothing more remains of his accusation than the supposed fear of critically evaluating the Russian Revolution up until the time of Lenin's death. Procuna does not have the right to make this accusation until he demonstrates that some ideas pertinent to this subject have been rejected. My reply, and I find it sufficient, is that I consider the discussion necessary, not because I think the analysis of the Fourth International false, but because it can be amplified and more directly applied in the struggle of future revolutions against the danger of Thermidor.

The totality of objective causes and the majority of subjective causes to which Procuna attributes the degeneration of the Russian Revolution and the defeat of the European Revolution in the preceding period are but a repetition of the analysis made by the Trotskyist movement. The ideas vaguely expressed in his article can be summarized in the following fashion: Starting in the summer of 1918, there begins in the Red Army and the factories a centralization of power which gradually withdraws control of the economy and army from the proletariat, virtually suppresses Soviet democracy and culminates in the total suppression of all opposition. This is the source of the Stalinist counter-revolution. While I cannot pause to refute every argument of Comrade Procuna, I must say to him that he commits an error in presuming that the Fourth International hypocritically seeks to maintain its prestige by repudiating its heritage, and for that reason singles out 1923 as the year One of degeneration.

In reality, the danger of Thermidor continually preoccupied the Bolshevik Party from the moment it took power. Unfortunately, most of what was said on this subject by Lenin, Trotsky and other leaders, has not survived in writing, or is hermetically sealed in the archives of the Kremlin. 1923 is simply a year of culmination, a year in which Lenin's disappearance from active political life precipitates the rapid progress of Thermidor. The previous existence of its germs in the organism of the state, the Soviets, and the Party is attested to by the following extract from Lenin's speech before the Congress of the Council of Economy in 1918: "There exists a tendency of the petty-bourgeoisie to transform the members of the Soviets into parliamentarians, or rather, into bureaucrats. It is necessary to struggle against this by engaging all the members of the Soviets in an active participation in the administration. In some parts of the country, the Soviets are being transformed into organs which differ in no way from the Commissariats." The Thermidorean symptoms did escape the eyes of the best revolutionists. Their efforts to avoid it were defeated, according to Lenin, because there are epochs, "in which the abundant ruins of the old ideas accumulate more rapidly than the scattered sproutings of new creations . . ."

Danger of Future Thermidors

Yet we must not attribute to the Thermidorean counter-offensive, founded on the economic and social ruins of the old society, and omnipotence which it does not possess. The experience of the Russian Thermidor ought to be carefully studied and employed against the future Thermidor which will not fail to threaten. The question Comrade Procuna poses is the great question of the revolutionary movement: how to avoid Thermidor. One can truthfully say that the conquest of power will seem like child's play; it will be far more difficult to prevent the masses from being misled, once more, by

a reactionary clique that springs from the ranks of the revolutionary cadre itself, and to uninterruptedly carry forward the work of dissolving the classes, political parties and the state.

It is impossible to deal adequately with this important question in a brief article. I intend to devote a special work to this question in the near future. But those who assert that the single ruling party is the goal of Bolshevism can put their minds at ease. The aim of the Fourth International is the democracy of the producers through their organs of power, with complete freedom for working-class parties loyal to the revolutionary regime. The best of parties, turned monolithic, tends necessarily to smother all opposition in its own ranks, and to liberate the tendencies toward degeneration. Nevertheless, the danger of Thermidor cannot be avoided by the simple expedient of giving liberty to all the parties within the revolutionary organs of power, because, among other reasons, two or more parties can degenerate just as well as one, and can unite their respective Thermidorean elements against the revolution. The concrete process of Thermidor embraces a multitude of factors, large and small, not easy to describe. One ought to remember that important as the economic basis is, which the victorious revolution inherits and develops, no less

important is the cultural level and intelligence of the common man. Between the one and the other, there is no direct relation. The connection must be made by the revolution. It must be understood that Socialism cannot be attained on the present cultural basis. A great spirit of responsibility is necessary—without which the indispensable discipline is realized through coercion—and also necessary are ability, the power to make critical decisions, vast practical knowledge, and a general level of intelligence which will make difficult the use of deceit and fraud, weapons used against the masses for forty centuries, and which Thermidor turns to superlative use.

In conclusion, I believe that the problem of the degeneration of the Russian Revolution and the struggle against future Thermidors must be posed against the background of the social contradictions which determine the function of the state, and consequently, of the political parties and working-class organizations in general, including the unions. Only by overcoming these contradictions, so deeply rooted in society, will the social revolution achieve an uninterrupted development, make an end to the government of men, and give way to an administration of things.

G. MUNIS.

Luxemburg's Theory of Accumulation

How It Differed with Marx and Lenin

Rosa Luxemburg's *Accumulation of Capital*¹ is a critique of Marx's theory of expanded reproduction as analyzed in Volume II of *Capital*. The question of the accumulation of capital has been the central theme of political economy. It was the subject of debate between Ricardo and Malthus, Say and Sismondi, Engels and Rodbertus, and Lenin and the *Narodniki* (Populists). Luxemburg occupies a conspicuous, but unenviable, position in this debate—that of a revolutionist hailed by bourgeois economists as having supplied “the clearest formulation” of the problem of “effective demand” until Keynes' *The General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money*.² It is typical of bourgeois economics that in 1945 they were discussing the market problem, which Marxists were discussing thirty years ago.

Prior to 1914 the stratification of production and the problem of accumulation were not posed as sharply as today in terms of the decline in the rate of profit. Accumulation seemed to the bourgeoisie then to be a question soluble by the expansion of the market. It is true that Luxemburg posed the problem in such terms. But her main preoccupation even then was with the collapse of capitalism. Methodically, however, she did depart from Marxism in the analysis of the question of the accumulation of capital, and it was inevitable, therefore, that

she arrive at false conclusions. What makes this a problem of the day is that her conclusions are repeated not merely by bourgeois economists but even within the revolutionary Marxist movement. The current preoccupation with “customers” and “markets” can best be answered by a restatement of Marx's theory of capitalistic accumulation and Luxemburg's deviation from it.

* * *

I. His Premise

Since the publication of Volume II of *Capital* the pivot of the dispute on expanded reproduction has been Marx's diagrammatic presentation of *how* surplus value is realized in an ideal capitalist society.

To understand the formulae one must comprehend the premise upon which they are built: a closed *capitalist* society, i.e., an isolated society dominated by the law of value.

For Marx the fundamental conflict in a capitalist society is that between capital and labor; all other elements are subordinate. If this is so in life, then the first necessity in theory, far more even than in society, is to pose the problem as one between the capitalist and the worker, purely and simply. Hence the assumption of a society consisting only of workers and capitalists. Hence the exclusion of “third groups” and, as he states repeatedly,³ the exclusion of foreign trade as having nothing to do fundamentally with the conflict between the worker and the capitalist.

A capitalist society is distinguished from all previous societies by being a value-producing society. The law of value has nothing in common with the fact that in other class so-

1. *Accumulation of Capital, a Contribution to the Economic Explanation of Imperialism*, by Rosa Luxemburg, 1st ed., published in 1913. There has been much confusion between this book and her *Antieritique*, first published in 1919, and called *Accumulation of Capital, or What the Epigones Have Made of the Marxist Theory—An Antieritique*. This was republished in 1923 as Volume II of her first book on *Accumulation*. In this article, Volume I of her work will be referred to as *Accumulation* and Volume II as *Antieritique*. *Accumulation* refers to the Russian translation by Dvoilatsky, edited by Bukharin and published in Moscow in 1921. *Antieritique* refers to the 1923 German edition.

2. Cf. M. Kalecki: *Essays on the Theory of Economic Fluctuations*, page 46.

3. Cf. especially *Capital*, Vol. II, page 548, Vol. III, page 300, and *The Theories of Surplus Value*, Vol. II, Part II, page 161 (the references to *The Theories*, etc., in this article are to the Russian edition).

cieties the worker was paid his means of subsistence. Here the thirst for unpaid hours of labor comes from the very nature of production and is not limited by the gluttony of the master. Value, the socially necessary labor time needed to produce commodities, is constantly changing due to the unceasing technological revolutions in production, and this is a never-ending source of disturbance in the conditions of production as well as in the social relations, and distinguish capitalism from all other modes of production. Marx's isolated capitalist society is dominated by this law of value, and Marx does not let us forget that this law is a law of the world market:

The industrialist always has the world market before him, compares and must continually compare his cost prices with those of the whole world, and not only with those of his home market.⁴

Thus, while Marx excludes foreign trade, he nevertheless places his society in the *environment* of the world market. These are the conditions of the problem. What is his purpose?

2. His Purpose

Marx's famous formulae in Part III of Volume II were designed to serve two purposes.

On the one hand, he wished to expose the "incredible aberration" of Adam Smith, who "spirited away" the constant portion of capital by dividing the total social production, not into constant capital (c), variable capital (v), and surplus value (sv), but only into v plus s. (The terminology Smith used for v and s was "wages, profit and rent.")

On the other hand, Marx wanted to answer the underconsumptionist argument that continued capital accumulation was impossible because of the impossibility of "realizing" surplus value, i.e., of selling.⁵

Marx spends a seemingly interminable time in exposing the error of Smith. That is because it is the great divide which separates both bourgeois political economy and the petty-bourgeois critique from scientific socialism. Smith's error became part of the dogma of political economy because it dovetailed with the *class* interests of the bourgeoisie to have that error retained. If, as Smith maintained, the constant portion of capital "in the final analysis" dissolved itself into wages, then the workers need not struggle against the "temporary" appropriation of the unpaid hours of labor. They need merely wait for the product of their labor to "dissolve" itself into wages. Marx proves the contrary to be true. Not only does c not "dissolve" itself into wages, but it becomes the very instrumentality through which the capitalist gains the mastery over the living worker.

In disproving the underconsumptionist theory, Marx demonstrates that there is no *direct* connection between production and consumption. As Lenin phrased it:

The difference in view of the petty bourgeois economists from the views of Marx does not consist in the fact that the first realize in general the connection between production and consumption in capitalist society, and the second do not. (This would be absurd.) The distinction consists in this, that the petty bourgeois economists considered this tie between production and consumption to be a *direct* one, thought that *production follows consumption*. Marx shows that the connection is only an *indirect* one, that it is so connected *only in the final instance*, because in capitalist society *consumption follows production*.⁶

The underconsumptionists construed the preponderance of production over consumption to mean the "automatic" col-

lapse of capitalist society. Where the classicists saw *only* the tendency *toward* equilibrium, the petty-bourgeois critics see *only* the tendency *away* from equilibrium. Marx demonstrates that *both* tendencies are there, inextricably connected.

3. The Two Departments of Social Production and the Conditions for Expanded Reproduction

To illustrate the process of accumulation, or expanded reproduction, Marx divides social production into two main departments—Department I, production means of production, and Department II, producing means of consumption.

The division is symptomatic of the class division in society. Marx categorically refused to divide social production into more than two departments, for example, a third department for the production of gold, although gold is neither a means of production nor a means of consumption, but rather a means of circulation. That is an entirely subordinate question, however, to the basic postulate of a closed society in which there are only two classes and *hence* only two decisive divisions of social production. It is the premise that decides the boundaries of the problem. The relationship between the two branches is not merely a technical one. It is rooted in the class relationship between the worker and the capitalist.

Surplus value is not some disembodied spirit floating between heaven and earth, but is embodied *within* means of production and *within* means of consumption. To try to separate surplus value *from* means of production and *from* means of consumption is to fall into the petty-bourgeois quagmire of underconsumptionism. As Lenin put it:

The postulate that capitalists cannot realize surplus value is only a vulgarized repetition of the quandary of Smith regarding realization in general. Only *part* of surplus value consists of means of consumption; the other consists of means of production. "Consumption" of *this latter* is *realized through production*. . . . Therefore the Narodniki who preach the impossibility of realizing surplus value ought logically to acknowledge the impossibility of realizing *constant capital* and thus to return to Adam Smith.⁷

This is fundamental to Marx's whole conception. It cuts through the whole tangle of markets. Marx's point is that the bodily form of value predetermines the destination of commodities. Iron is not consumed by people but by steel; sugar is not consumed by machines but by people. Value may be indifferent to the use by which it is borne, but it must be incorporated in some use-value to be realized. Alone the use-value of means of production, writes Marx, shows how important is "the determination of use-value in the determination of economic orders."⁸ In the capitalist economic order means of production forms the greater of the two departments of social production. And *hence* also of the "market." In the United States, for instance, 90 per cent of pig iron is "consumed" by the companies which produce it; 50 per cent of the "market" for the products of the steel industry is the transportation industry.

It is impossible to have the slightest comprehension of the economic laws of capitalist production without being oppressively aware of the rôle of the material form of constant capital. The material elements of simple production and reproduction—labor power, raw materials and means of production—are the elements of expanded reproduction. In order to produce ever greater quantities of products, more means of production are necessary. That, and not the "market," is the *differentia specifica* of expanded reproduction.

4. *Capital*, Vol. III, page 396.

5. When in this article the word "realization" is used in its underconsumptionist meaning of sale, it is always put in quotes.

6. V. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. II, page 424 (Russ. ed.).

7. Cf. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. II, page 32 (Russ. ed.).

8. Cf. Marx, *Theories of Surplus Value*, Vol. II, Part II, page 170.

Marx proceeds further to emphasize the key importance of the material form of the product for purposes of expanded reproduction by beginning his illustration of expanded reproduction with a diagram showing that, *so far as its value is concerned*, expanded reproduction is but simple reproduction.

It is not the quantity but the destination of the given elements of simple reproduction which is changed and this change is the material basis of the subsequent reproduction.⁹

The difficulty in understanding expanded reproduction lies not in the value form of production, but in the *comparison* of the value with its material form.

Marx's view is that in order not to get lost in "a vicious circle of prerequisites"—of constantly going to market with the products produced and returning from the market with the commodities bought—the problem of expanded reproduction should be posed "in its fundamental simplicity." That can be done by a realization of two simple facts: (1) that the very law of capitalist production brings about the augmentation of the working population and hence that, while part of the surplus value must be incorporated into means of consumption, and transformed into variable capital with which to buy more labor power, that labor power will always be on hand; and (2) capitalist production creates its own market—pig iron is needed for steel, steel for machine construction, etc., etc.—and that therefore, so far as the capital market is concerned, the capitalists are their own best "customers" and "buyers." Therefore, concludes Marx, the whole complex question of the conditions of expanded reproduction can be reduced to the following: can the surplus *product* in which the surplus value is incorporated go *directly* (without first being sold) into further production? Marx's answer is: "It is not needed that the latter (means of production) be sold; they can *in nature* again enter into new production."¹⁰

Marx establishes that the total social product cannot be "either" means of production "or" means of consumption; there is a preponderance of means of production *over* means of consumption (symbolically expressed as mp/mc). That not only is so but it *must* be so, for the use-values produced in capitalist society are not those used by workers nor even by capitalists, *but by capital*. It is not "people" who realize the greater part of surplus value; it is realized through the constant expansion of constant capital. The premise of simple reproduction—a society composed solely of workers and capitalists—remains the premise of expanded reproduction.

At the same time surplus value, in the aggregate, remains uniquely determined by the difference between the value of the product and the value of labor power. The law of value continues to dominate over expanded reproduction. The whole problem of the disputed Volume II is to make apparent that realization is not a question of the market, but of *production*. The conflict in production and therefore in society is the conflict between capital and labor. That is why Marx would not be moved from his premise.

II—LUXEMBURG'S CRITIQUE

I. Reality vs. Theory

The main burden of Luxemburg's critique of Marx's theory of accumulation was directed against his assumption of a closed capitalist society. She gave this assumption a two-fold meaning: (1) a society composed solely of workers and capitalists, and (2) "the rule of capitalism in the entire world."

9. Cf. Marx, *Capital*, Vol. II, page 592.

10. Same as footnote 8.

Marx, however, did not pose the rule of capital in the *entire* world, but its rule in a *single* isolated nation. When Luxemburg's critics¹¹ pointed this out to her, Luxemburg poured vitriolic scorn upon them. To speak of a single capitalist society, wrote Luxemburg in her *Anticritique*,¹² was a "fantastic absurdity" characteristic of the "crassest epigonism." Marx, she insisted, could have had no such stratospheric conception in mind. Nevertheless, as Bukharin pointed out, Luxemburg was not only misinterpreting Marx's *concept*, but misreading the simple *fact*, which Marx had most clearly put on paper: "In order to simplify the question (of expanded reproduction) we abstract foreign trade and examine an isolated nation."¹³

Luxemburg, on the other hand, argued that a "precise demonstration" from history would show that expanded reproduction has never taken place in a closed society, but rather through distribution to, and expropriation of "non-capitalist strata and non-capitalist societies." Luxemburg falsely counterposed reality to theory. Her critique sprung theoretically from this one fundamental error. She was betrayed by the powerful historical development of imperialism that was taking place to substitute for the relationship of capital to labor the relationship of capitalism to non-capitalism. This led her to deny Marx's assumption of a closed society. Once she had given up the basic premise of the whole of Marxist theory there was no place for her to go but to the sphere of exchange and consumption.

That there is no possible escape from this dilemma is most clearly revealed by Luxemburg herself. Some of the best writing in her *Accumulation* occurs in her description of the "real" process of accumulation through the conquest of Algeria, India, the Anglo-Boer war and the carving up of the African Empire; the opium wars against China, the extermination of the American Indian; the growing trade with non-capitalist societies, and an analysis of protective tariffs and militarism. Luxemburg had become so blinded by the powerful imperialist phenomena of her day that she failed to see that all this had nothing to do with the problem posed in Volume II of *Capital* which is concerned with how surplus value is realized in an *ideal* capitalist world. Neither has it anything to do with the "real" process of accumulation which Marx analyzes in Volume III, for the *real* process of accumulation is a capitalist process or one of *value* production.

Luxemburg, on the other hand, writes that:

The most important thing is that value can be realized neither by workers nor by capitalists *but only* by social strata who themselves *do not produce capitalistically*.¹⁴

It was not by accident that Luxemburg found that she could not discuss capitalistic accumulation without bringing in *other* modes of production. Errors of thought, even when committed by great Marxists, have a logic of their own. Just as it is impossible in the actual class struggle to take a position *between* the capitalist class and the proletariat, so it is impossible to take a position *between* the two modes of thought reflecting the role of the two classes in the process of production. Thus there was only one thing *theoretically* left for her to do.

11. The argument was complicated by the fact that, in the majority, her critics were reformists. She, on the other hand, attacked indiscriminately both the revolutionists and those who betrayed the revolution, labeling all her critics "epigones."

12. Page 401.

13. *Theories*, etc., Vol. II, Part II, page 161. Cf. also N. Bukharin: *Imperialism and the Accumulation of Capital*, 1925 (in Russian and in German).

14. *Accumulation*, page 245 (my emphasis—F. F.).

Along with all bourgeois economics, she buries, as we shall see, the whole distinction of value production.

2. The Market vs. Production

(A) *For whom?* According to Luxemburg, the Russian Marxists were deeply mistaken when they thought that the preponderance of constant capital over variable capital (symbolically expressed as c/v) "alone" revealed the specific characteristic law of capitalist production, "for which production is an aim in itself and individual consumption merely a subsidiary condition." To raise consumption from this subordinate position, Luxemburg transforms the inner core of capitalism into a mere outer covering. The relationship of c/v , she writes, is merely "the capitalist language" of the general productivity of labor. With one stroke Luxemburg is depriving the carefully isolated c/v relationship of its class character. Value production loses the specificity of a definite *historic* stage in the development of humanity. Luxemburg is thus driven to identify what Marxism has considered to be the specific characteristic law of capitalist production— c/v —with "all pre-capitalist forms of production" as well as with "the future, socialist organization."¹⁵

The next inevitable stage is to divest the *material* form of capitalism of its class character. Where Marx makes the relationship between Department I, producing means of production, and Department II, producing means of consumption, reflect the *class* relationship inherent in c/v , Luxemburg speaks of the "branches of production" as if it were a purely technical term! She first deprives the material form of capital of its capital content, then discards it because it has no capital content:

Accumulation is not only an inner relation between two branches of production. It is *first of all* a relation between capitalist and non-capitalist surroundings.¹⁶

Luxemburg has transformed capital accumulation from a substance derived from labor into one whose chief sustenance is an outside force: non-capitalist surroundings. To complete this inversion of the chief source of capitalist accumulation she is compelled to break the confines of the closed society, outside of whose threshold she has already stepped. Her "solution" stands the whole problem on its head, and she now implores us to drop the assumption of a closed society and "allow for surplus value to be realized outside of capitalist production."

This step, she says, will reveal that out of capitalist production could issue "either means of production or means of consumption."¹⁷ There is no law compelling the products of capitalist production to be the one and *not* the other. In fact, states Luxemburg without any awareness of how far she is departing from the Marxist method, "*the material form has nothing whatever* to do with the needs of capitalist production. Its material form corresponds to the needs of those non-capitalist strata which makes possible its realization."¹⁸

Difference on What Determines Production

For Marxism it is production which determines the market. Luxemburg, on the other hand, finds herself in a position where, although she accepts Marxism, she yet makes the market determine production. Once Luxemburg eliminates the fundamental Marxian distinction of means of production and means of consumption as indicative of a class relationship, she is compelled to look for the market in the bourgeois sense of

"effective demand." Having lost sight of production, she looks for "people." Since it is obviously impossible for workers "to buy back" the products they created, she looks for other "consumers" to "buy" the products.

Having thus departed from the Marxist method, she proceeds to blame Marx for not having used that as *his* point of departure. The Marxian formulae, writes Luxemburg, seem to say that production occurs for production's sake. As Saturn did his children devour, so here everything produced is consumed internally:

Accumulation is effected here (the schema) without it being seen even to the least degree *for whom*, for what new consumers does this ever-growing expansion of production take place in the end. The diagrams presuppose the following course of things. The coal industry is expanded in order to expand the iron industry. The latter is expanded in order to expand the machine-construction industry. The machine-construction industry is expanded in order to contain the ever-growing army of workers from the coal, iron and machine-construction industries as well as its own workers. And thus "ad infinitum" in a vicious circle.¹⁹

By means of her substitute of the non-capitalist milieu for Marx's closed society, Luxemburg is out to break this "vicious circle." The capitalists, she writes, are not fanatics and do not produce for production's sake. Neither technological revolutions nor even the "will" to accumulate are sufficient to induce expanded reproduction: "One other condition is necessary: the expansion of effective demand."²⁰ Except to the extent that surplus value is necessary to *replace* constant capital and supply the capitalists with luxuries, surplus value cannot otherwise result in accumulation, cannot be "realized." Or, as she put it:

They alone (capitalists) are in a position to realize only the consumed part of constant capital and the consumed part of surplus value. They can in this way guarantee only the condition for the renewal of production on the former scale.²¹

That the "consumed part of constant capital" is not consumed personally, but *productively*, seems to have escaped Luxemburg's attention. Capitalists do not "eat" machines, neither their wear and tear, nor the newly-created ones. Both the consumed part of constant capital and the new investments in capital are *realized through production*. That precisely is the meaning of expanded reproduction, as Marx never wearied of telling.

Luxemburg, however, instead of speaking of the laws of production based on the capital-labor relationship, has now no other refuge but the subjective motivation of the capitalists for profits. Capitalist production, she writes, is distinguished from all previous exploitative orders in that it not only hungers for profit but for ever greater profit. "Now how can the sum (of profits) grow when the profits only wander in a circle, out of one pocket and into another?"²²—that is, out of the pocket of the iron producers into that of the steel magnates into that of the machine-construction industry tycoons. No wonder Marx was so insistent upon establishing the fact that:

Profit is therefore that disguise of surplus value which must be removed before the real nature of surplus value can be discovered.²²

Luxemburg, being a serious theoretician, was compelled to develop her deviation to its logical conclusion. Where, to Marx, expansion of production meant aggravation of the conflict between the worker and the capitalist, to Luxemburg it meant "first of all" expansion of demand and of profits. She

15. *Accumulation*, page 222.

16. *Ibid.*, page 297 (my emphasis—F. F.).

17. *Ibid.*, page 247.

18. *Ibid.*, (my emphasis—F. F.).

19. *Ibid.*, page 229.

20. *Accumulation*, page 180.

21. *Ibid.*, page 244.

22. *Anticritique*, pages 407-8.

22. *Capital*, III, page 62.

contended that Marx *assumed* what he should have *proved*—that expanded reproduction was possible in a closed society. With her attention focused on imperialism, she overlooked that capitalism was developing to a much greater extent *capitalistically* (expansion of machinefactory within the home country) and *between* capitalist countries (e.g., United States and Britain) rather than through “third groups” or between capitalist and non-capitalist countries.

Luxemburg had left the sphere of production for that of exchange and consumption. There she remained. Having given up Marx's premise, she had no vantage point from which to view these phenomena. She arrived pivotless on the broad arena of the market, asking that the obvious be proved, while “taking for granted” the production relationship which the obvious obscured. Remaining in the market, there was nothing left for her to do but adopt the language characteristic of what she herself, in other circumstances, had called “the merchant mentality.”

B. "Pure Form of Value"

Luxemburg maintains that, although coal may be needed for iron and iron for steel and steel both for the machine-construction industry and for machines producing means of consumption, the surplus product cannot be reincorporated into further production without first assuming “the pure form of value,” which is evidently money and profits:

Surplus value, no matter what its material form, cannot be directly transferred to production for accumulation; it must first be realized.²⁴

Just as surplus value must be “realized” after it is produced, so it must after that reassume both the “productive form” of means of production and labor power as well as means of consumption. Like the other conditions of produc-

tion, this leads us to the market. Finally, after this has succeeded, continues Luxemburg, the additional mass of commodities must again be “realized, transformed into money.” This again brings us to the market and only after this has succeeded. . . . Closing the door to what Luxemburg thinks is the “vicious circle” of production for production's sake, she opens the doors wide to what Marx called “the vicious circle of prerequisites.”²⁵

Where Marx said that alone the use-value of means of production show how important is the determination of use-value in the determination of the entire economic order, Luxemburg leaves out of consideration entirely the use-value of capital: “In speaking of the realization of surplus value,” she writes, “we *a priori* do not consider its material form.”²⁶ Where Marx shows the inescapable molding of value into use-value, Luxemburg tries violently to separate them as if surplus value could be “realized” outside its bodily form. The contradiction between use-value and value which capitalist production cannot escape Luxemburg tries to resolve by dumping the total *product* of capitalist production into non-capitalist areas.

Luxemburg may have thought that she was thus freeing herself from “the vicious circle” of the Marxian schema. In reality, by freeing her thoughts from the laws of capitalist production, *Luxemburg was freeing herself from the actuality of the class struggle*. It is this which permitted her to abandon the premise of a closed capitalist society, and hence the implications and limitations of the Marxian categories.

(Editor's Note—The concluding portion of this study will appear in our next issue. It concerns itself mainly with “Marx and Luxemburg on the Breakdown of Capitalism,” being a discussion of the Marxist theory of crises.)

24. *Accumulation*, page 86.

25. Cf. Section I of this article, the matter relating to footnote 10.

26. *Accumulation*, page 245.

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Stalinist Literary Discussion

An Answer to Maltz and The New Masses

The American Stalinists are currently engaged in a heated literary discussion. Like all previous discussions of this kind, the polemics read as if they were concerned with a lynch campaign or a pogrom. Once again, the Stalinists are giving a deeper cultural significance to such words as "rat," "renegade," "degenerate," "fascist," "enemy of the people," "enemy of the working class," etc. And now, they are also adding a new word to the lexicon of literary criticism—"Browderite."

For years the Stalinist movement has used literature as a party instrument. This is the practical significance of their slogan which holds that "Art is a weapon." On every occasion that the Kremlin bureaucracy has changed the party line, there has been a corresponding change in the Stalinist cultural orientation. A study of the back issues of *New Masses* would clearly document this fact. In accordance with the party line, practically every contemporary writer of any significance or reputation has been damned and praised in this magazine, and often by the same man.¹ In recent years, the social-patriotic Stalinists had a corresponding cultural orientation corresponding to their politics. This was expressed in a vague patriotic populism. So long as a writer did not attack the party line he was allowed a certain latitude in which to move and yet could be praised and accepted by the Stalinist critics. With this formally loose policy, which was nonetheless managed with a bureaucratic whip that would be snapped at any writer who would threaten to direct a possible criticism at the party line, the Stalinists built up a broad cultural front of various kinds of fellow travelers: these included a large number of hack writers, radio writers, Hollywood scenarists: they gave a seeming political status to writers who came from café society, that upper slum of capitalist America: they collected pulp writers, detective story writers, worn-out poets and literary stuffed shirts. Now and then, one of their alleged critics, such as Samuel Sillen, would stuff a few of the pieties of Marxian phraseology into a book review or an article; now and then Howard Fast or someone else would pay passing respects to the dialectic. But withal Stalinist criticism was loosely populist.

The New "Left" Line

Now the Stalinists have a new line. Their left or pseudo swing is adventurous in its emphasis on class struggle, demagogic in its attack on monopoly capitalism, and, at the same time, it uses this new leftism to conceal the deepening reaction within the Soviet Union and as a cover-up for Stalin's nationalist-expansionist policies. The new line was established with the attack on Earl Browder, yesterday's beloved leader. If we would believe the Stalinists, Browder misled them for years: he derailed them from Marxist-Leninist-Stalinist theory, imposed a Wall Street line on them, acted as an alien element within their ranks, and fooled almost every one of them. The Communist Party has now expelled Browder. Those who fawned before him in the most servile spirit only yesterday are now attacking him with typical Stalinist venom. They call this attack a defense of Marxism. However, these Stalinists were such independent thinkers, such morally brave theoreticians, such politically capable men that almost all of them did not even know that they were fooled. They only learned that they were not following a Marxist line when a French Communist named Duclos—who had never been to America—wrote an article in French and told this to them. After Duclos told them that they were being fooled by Earl Browder, they flung themselves on the floor and grovelled in penitent confessions. The spectacle of these Stalinists admitting their errors, vying with one another in proclaiming their mistakes, announcing what dupes they were in the hands of their beloved leader—this furnished us with one of the most obscene political spectacles in recent political history. It was a variation of the Moscow Trials, a minor American Moscow Trial in itself. Now, however, they have confessed. Having done this, they are now "Marxists" again.

The literary discussion which they have now opened is, in essence, a concomitant of these developments. It is the literary and cultural corollary of their turn from social patriotism to demagogic leftism. In essence, then, it is a cultural swing from social-patriotic cultural populism to bureaucratic, leftist

cultural "class struggle." This is the way it must be understood.

II.

If we read *New Masses*, it seems that this new literary discussion began, believe it or not again, with *problems of conscience*. Back on October 23rd, Isidor Schneider wrote about the problems of conscience of the left writer. This problem is, briefly, to be seen in the moral dilemma—should he write art or should he write journalistic political propaganda? What should he do if the two don't seem to mix?

Concerned with this problem of conscience, the Stalinist writer Albert Maltz contributed a rather long piece, "What Shall We Ask of Writers?" to *New Masses* of February 12. Maltz's article was theoretically unclear and, in consequence, somewhat confusing. His confusion, however, was an old one in Stalinist writing. He could not distinguish between the politics of a writer and the art of a writer, and in consequence, he left them completely separated, and he argued that, in *New Masses*, the critics should discuss art in the book reviews, and that the editors, on the editorial page, should criticize—if they deemed this necessary—the politics of the same writer.² He distinguished between the writer as a citizen and as an artist. Then, he urged that a writer could be a good or even a great literary artist and, at the same time, a bad citizen. He appealed to the authority of Engels and to the example of Engels' admiration for Balzac, who was a monarchist in the period of the Restoration.³ He then cited some modern examples, and in his citations, he committed the unfortunate blunder of using me as his major instance. He praised some of my work, declared that he did not approve of the committees to which I belong, and also stated: "Farrell's name was a bright pennant in *New Masses* until he became hostile to the *New Masses*."⁴ He spoke, similarly, of Richard Wright. He argued that the novels of Wright and myself are to be considered differently than those of Arthur Koestler's. Koestler, he declared, "always writes with a political purpose so organic to his work that it affects his rendering of character." And, most inexcusably Maltz added that the liter-

ary future of Wright, and of myself, could not be predicted: in other words, he left it as an open question as to whether or not we were degenerated literary artists.

At the same time, Maltz complained of the "straitjacket" into which Stalinist critics were constantly trying to put the writer. He explained this straitjacket criticism by attributing it to the narrow application of the formula—"art is a weapon." He declared he agreed with this "doctrine" broadly, but that it has been abused and applied in the narrowest fashion. This, he affirmed, created endless difficulties for the writer. He confessed that it has created for him these problems of conscience of which Schneider spoke. Of course, it has for long been no secret that the Stalinists apply constant pressure on any writer who will allow them to do so. Nonetheless, it is important to note that Maltz—a loyal, patient, plodding Stalinist writer of fifteen or more years' duration—here admitted everything that critics of Stalinist literary practices long knew and stated in print. Maltz charged that these practices produced "schematic writing," "wasted writing"; he spoke of the results as a "calamity"; he stated that they aided in the production of works which were politically shallow as well as artistically inferior. He also remarked that as a consequence of this atmosphere the creative power of the writer was deformed.

Listen to him: "I know of at least a dozen plays and novels, discarded in the process of writing because the political scene altered. Obviously the authors in question were not primarily bent upon portraying abiding truths, either of character or of the social scene, but were mainly concerned with advancing a political tactic through the manipulation of character. Otherwise, a new headline in the newspapers would not have made them discard their work. I even know of a historian who read Duclos and announced that he would have to revise completely the book he was engaged upon."

Fate of Young Writers

This all reveals that the Stalinists use literature as a weapon of political tactics. The Stalinist cultural movement has always been the graveyard of promising literary talent. In the early 30's, for instance, there was a burst of creative energy: there were little magazines all over the country; young left wing writers were numerous; the Communist Party bragged about helping them; Michael Gold,

Granville Hicks (whom Gold of course defended when writers such as myself attacked him) and others saw the future of American literature in these young writers. Where are most of them now? What has happened to them?⁵ The Stalinists have to create anew, and almost from the ground up, the same kind of movement they once helped to create. For this they must find new talents. The old talents of the 1930's are almost all dried up. After all, living creative literature depends on creative effort, creative works more than it does on critical dicta. The new line which the Stalinists are now starting to lay down is something like that of their third period. This was proved a failure in practice. When writers were imposed on by the Stalinist literary bureaucrats, they fought back, and often they left the Stalinists bag and baggage. When writers were found who would write according to the proscriptions laid down for them, it became an almost insuperable task for the bureaucratic critics to get anyone to read their books. And with changes in the world political situation, this line was abandoned. The little magazines were liquidated. Archibald MacLeish, once described as a "fascist" by Mike Gold, and similar writers were courted, and the promising young left wing writers were shoved into the background, to be treated like poor relations.

Albert Maltz himself states that he is not an aesthete and that, perhaps, some of his formulations may not be sufficiently precise, but urges the reader to consider his main point. He asks that the writer be given greater freedom and that his work be not judged in terms of the immediate political needs of the movement. With this, it is obvious that anyone with the least bit of sense will agree, if he is not dragooned into disagreeing by Stalinist functionaries and party line critics. However, the way in which Maltz discusses his problems leaves the whole issue open to various confusions.

Literature and Politics

I can only comment on this as it is passing. The general relationships between literature and politics is a question which is both theoretical and empirical. It demands theoretical analysis and investigation. In this context, it is a problem involving the relationship, the series of correlations among different types of human activities. In correlating literature and politics, it is necessary to investigate the problem historically and to

note what has been the case in different periods of the past; and further it is necessary to note the differences between the problems of politics and the problems of literature. And, in turn, such an investigation requires that the investigator have his own values, that is that he be clear on what he wants for himself and for other men. If complicated problems of this kind are reduced to the question of applying political tactics, the entire discussion is most likely to be arid.

Finally, the state of consciousness of a period must be taken into account. The level of education in a society, the variations of level of education among the members of different classes, the context of the emotional problems of different persons in a society, all of this must be taken into account if one deals in the formulation of perspectives for writers and critics.

Maltz does not see the problem as so involved and as complicated as I have here indicated. He approaches it from the standpoint of a writer who has sat between two stools for years; a writer who has tried to be an artist and a party liner at the same time. He presents the problems from the standpoint of the dilemma which Stalinism imposes on loyal writers. In doing this he urges that more freedom be allowed to Stalinist writers. His appeal is better late than never and, in itself, it ought to be supported by the adversaries of Stalinism.⁶ In this sense, it is to be welcomed. But if Stalinist writers feel more free, they will strive more earnestly to understand themselves and the world around them, and they will write in such a way as to aid in blowing up some of the false claims of Stalinism. Because of such possible consequences of freedom, the Stalinists have to discredit Maltz. To confirm this, I need merely to point out that in practically every case where a writer refuses to let the Stalinists tell him what to think, they attack him and declare over and over again *ad nauseam* that he has degenerated artistically. In order to try to give the least warrant to such charges, they need to attack a writer's character; they need to castigate him for his political views: they need to put him into an amalgam with fascists, reactionaries and so on. Then, without analyzing his work, without letting their doped readers have any real idea of what they are doing, they correlate a literary production with political actions, real or invented. At present, in their ferocious attacks on Maltz, they are using Richard

Wright, John Dos Passos, Koestler, Silone and myself as scapegoats. Without showing differences in the books and in the orientations of all these writers, they are all lumped together as degenerates; and then the name of Ezra Pound is added to give a finishing touch to the amalgam. And to cap the climax, this is literary "Trotskyism." Why? Because by using this word here, they can then give a pretense of proof of their charge. They can cite the official version of the Moscow Trials as seeming proof. Ergo! writers are conspirators.

What Maltz was really trying to do in this article was to get the Stalinist bureaucrats to give him a little more literary freedom and, at the same time, to win from them permission to admire in public the same books he appreciates in private. But this is what he put his foot into: this is, also, a revelation of the reason why Stalinists don't want writers to create freely. Further, the naïveté of Maltz suggests how little Stalinism can educate the writer. How is it to be explained, for instance, that a writer like Maltz can be in this allegedly Marxist movement for something like fifteen years and yet he cannot learn from it, with all of its alleged theory, how to pose questions clearly, how to think about his own questions with some rigorously. Year in and year out, the Stalinists have appealed to the writer on the ground that they can help him in his work. Maltz exposes this appeal. He exposes it in his very person. The looseness of his article shows how little Stalinism has taught him.

III.

I have indicated the nature of the reaction to Maltz's article. In the same issue as that in which it appears, Isidor Schneider, literary editor of *New Masses*, also contributed one dealing with these same problems, "Background to Error." Here, I do not have space to discuss Schneider's article. Suffice it to say that he didn't take sharp issue with Maltz, didn't correct him for praising "renegade" writers and, in fact, he didn't really disagree with Maltz. Rather, he tried to show that there was more to be said on the questions and that the political and historical conditions had forced these errors on the Stalinist movement. He called for both a party apparatus literature and culture, and a freer fellow traveler one of the type that Maltz wants. In this sense, he said yes and he said no, and in order to do this, he wrote a new version of the Stalinist cul-

tural past in America. Inasmuch as the dialectic has been introduced into this controversy by Howard Fast and others, I might apply it to Schneider. Schneider does not know if he is yes, and doesn't know if he is no. Hegel used the word "chemism" to describe this condition of dialectical tension. It fits Schneider. He is a man turned into a dialectical chemism and he hangs suspended in dialectical *extremis* waiting until he is told whether he is yes, or whether he is no.

More importantly, it is significant to observe that Schneider has not been subjected to the same attacks as has Maltz. On the face of it, the situation suggests that poor Maltz was maneuvered into becoming a scapegoat. He can, thus, be turned into a horrible example of the dangers of "Browderism," "Trotskyism," "anti-Marxism," "fascism." If other Stalinist writers yearn to be as free as Maltz, they have received in advance an impressive warning that they had better keep their mouths shut.

Now, let me comment briefly on the nature of the attacks directed against Maltz. In a political report on the expulsion of Browder, Robert Thompson, a party functionary, characterized Maltz's article as "Trotskyite." Samuel Sillen, an alleged critic, wrote a series of articles in the *Daily Worker*. Leaving aside his attacks on myself, Sillen's articles are cut to the typical bureaucratic pattern. He states Marxist propositions in a generalized and slovenly manner, and associates himself with these propositions. He does not render them concrete in any manner. Then he hides behind Lenin. This is achieved by quotations. In consequence of this, if Maltz does not agree with Sillen, Maltz is, presumably, attacking Lenin. At the same time, Sillen piously admits that errors have been made, and even admits that the Stalinist critics — himself included — were misled by Browder. In fact, in the late 1930's, Sillen was describing Browder as the continuation of the American tradition, and when writing about literature, he would quote Lenin, quote or paraphrase Browder, associate them and present his own slovenly banalities as an extension of the views of Lenin and Browder. Withal, the following point can suffice in a discussion of Sillen. He says that Browder misled him; he admits that errors were made by himself and others. Then, what guarantee should anyone have that he is not now being misled, that he is not making new mistakes? Why should he be taken seriously, even by his own comrades, when

he was so easily fooled by Browder? Here is a passing sample of the meaningless drivel which he presents in Marxist language:

"Let us remember that the solution of our problem requires not a retreat from Marxism, but an ever more vigilant and militant struggle for Marxism in theory and practice."⁸

In *New Masses* for February 26th, Joseph North, one of the editors of *New Masses*, contributed an article, "No Retreat for the Writer." North has been a party journalist and editor for fifteen years or more. In this period he has justified every zigzag, every change of line! His capacity to think what he is told to think has had no apparent effect on his duodenum, his arteries, his heart—or his brain. He is a journalistic example of how a man can flourish if he is obedient. He has always been a mere journalist. Here he shines forth as if he were a theoretician. In the usual pattern of the third period, he opens his article by talking of world crisis. This pattern puts onto the shoulders of the writer, the burden of the crisis. He must be responsible. Hence, he must do what North says, just as North does what he is told to do. For the rest, North admits that he and his comrades have all made errors, and he states that they are all earnestly searching for clarity. But why? North has been, as he admits, a true Marxist for years. He has the Marxist science to teach him. He, along with endless others, have been denouncing all opponents for not being Marxist. Their denunciations of writers have been reprehensible, shameful. And North denounces anew in the same old spirit. He denounces me, he denounces Maltz. And yet, he declares that he doesn't have all of the answers, that he is groping for Marxist clarity. His humility would be touching if he were not so insolent. He admits his incompetence to discuss the questions at issue. And then, he launches forth into vituperation. Searching for Marxist truth that he admits he has not found, he interprets Maltz's article as one which could well "destroy the fruitful tree of Marxism." North's article is irrelevant to all theory. It has one real purpose, that of laying down anew the Moscow trial amalgam in *New Masses*. Furthermore, it needs to be pointed out that North, as a responsible editor of *New Masses*, allowed Maltz's article to be printed. He is, in the eyes of his comrades, a man who wittingly or otherwise allowed what is now called a "Trotskyite" article to appear in *New Masses*.

This leads me to remark that he had better hurry up and gain the Marxist clarity that he searches for in print.

The "High-Falutin" Touch

North, Sillen, Gold are merely routine in their attempts to refute Maltz. The real blow against the poor fellow is delivered by the writer, Howard Fast. Fast is not only the white-haired boy of the Stalinist cultural front: he is also one of the most distinguished cold storage patriots in these United States. And it is he who gives the high-falutin touch of art and theory to the controversy. Alongside of the North article he writes one entitled "Art and Politics." He charges that Maltz rests his article on a platitude; that Maltz doesn't quote Engels (which he doesn't either, if it means anything); that Maltz's proposals will liquidate the Marxist and the whole progressive movement in America; that Maltz does not know how to think; that Maltz praises Trotskyites; that Maltz's formulations are "shoddy," and that all of this leads to the road of sterility, whether it be that of fascism, neo-fascism, or of mere mediocrity. But that is merely a detail. In showing up Maltz, and giving us some real theory, Fast tells us: "One must look deeper than the obvious." And then, at the same time that he "destroys" Maltz, he also says: "Of course, we are not free from critical mistakes, vulgarity, incompetence; that we know, and the reasons for the situation are manifold. Some of these critical failings we have corrected; others we will correct." But he is sweating with profundity so intensively that he just doesn't go into details on the vulgarity, incompetence and mistakes to which he confesses. And we can be sure he will correct them, for he belongs to the Left, and how could mistakes not be corrected when you consider that "The Left has never denied change; it strives to understand change, which is the very essence of dialectics." But then, after showing that Maltz doesn't know much about the theory of art, speaking of that "far from admirale trio, Farrell, Wright and Koestler," and indulging in various types of literary Fancy-Dan shadow boxing, he dives down so much deeper than the obvious that he breaks what little head he has. Listen to him clinch his analysis with this lecture on art: "The writer, however, has a singular responsibility; for he must select from life those factors which suit his purpose; he must turn them into word-pictures and thought-pictures; and he must arrange them on

paper in such juxtaposition taking into consideration rhythm and emotion of sound and beauty of phrase, as to achieve that rare and splendid result we call art. Sometimes he succeeds, sometimes he does not; for in the best of worlds, art is not common. But unless he can engage in his original selection with a degree of clarity and understanding, and unless he can bring to his appraisal of life that relationship with life which we call philosophy, he will fail—even if he has the talent of the gods."

Believe it or not, this paragraph of Fast's is the high-water mark of the controversy. And Howard Fast most bravely hurfs it into the face of writers who are "far from admirable," who are sterile mediocrities, who are "reactionary." The cream of the jest here is that it is completely compatible with all that Maltz has to say if Maltz will only stop approving of Trotskyite books such as *Studs Lonigan* and *Black Boy*. After potter, denunciations, confessions, admission of errors, promises to do penance and then more denunciations, the formal content of the controversy—as distinguished from its political character—all boils down to a vague, pretentious and almost vacuous banality.

JAMES T. FARRELL.

1. Cf. "New Masses: Friends and Enemies," by Herbert Solow, *Partisan Review*, March, 1938. Solow made a brief and amusing little study of just this point. His article began: "The Communist Party—the *New Masses* in the literary field—is never content to 'prove conclusively' that all critics of Moscow executions, the People's Front or the American Writers Congress are fascist agents." Solow pointed out, then, how many "enemies of mankind" were former contributors to *New Masses* itself. He found that a number of writers were in this category. Also, he quoted from reviews of various writers at different periods, indicating how literary judgments had changed with the changes in the political line. The most amusing (but in a grisly way) instance of this which I know is the following. In 1935, Edwin Seaver praised and tried to apply views on literature which were expressed by Bukharin and Radek. I criticized these in my book, *A Note on Literary Criticism*. Seaver solidarized himself on literature with Bukharin and Radek. Shortly afterward, Bukharin and Radek were put on trial in Moscow.

2. I have tried to present my views on some aspects of these problems in my books, *A Note on Literary Criticism*, op. cit., and *The League of Frightened Phillistines*, New York, 1945. I hope I shall have the time to deal further with these problems in the future.

3. Although I agree with the comments of Marx and Engels on Balzac, I should like to add that by 1946 it is time for one to be able to like a book and yet not like the politics of the author, without having to support oneself by repeating that Marx and Engels admired Balzac. What are we to say of the moral character, the intelligence, the independent of spirit of people who can't say in public that they found interest or value in some work of art without, also, feeling constrained to support their admiration by this argument from authority?

4. In *New Masses*, August 19, 1936, I had a controversy with Isidor Schneider somewhat similar to this new one of Maltz's. I suggest that the reader compare what Schneider said then with his statements in "Background to Error," *New Masses*, February 12, 1946. I would add that the common practice of *New Masses* critics is that of admitting errors in general when they are criticized, and of then discrediting the particular critic by accusing him of wanting to liquidate Marxism.

5. In an article, "The Last American Writers Congress," printed in the *Saturday Review of Literature*, June 5, 1937, I discussed this point. I cited a number of the young writers whom the Stalinists hailed as promising in 1935, and noted on the meager quantity of the work they had produced. I further indicated that this was the case even though they had affirmed a view on literary creation which demanded that they show great fertility.

6. Merely for the record, and in no spirit of vengeance, I think it must be set down here that during all the years when Maltz patiently, ploddingly, loyally followed the party line, fellow writers of his were denounced and slandered because they tried to maintain their independence. Maltz was, then, silent on all of these questions. His silence now rebounds on him, for he is given the same treatment which he silently watched others receive. We might ask—how many others remained timidly silent because of the silence of Maltz and of others who may share his views?

7. Browder, when he delivered speeches to writers at writers' congresses, always managed to say precisely nothing. However, in 1937, he did launch into a vicious attack on Waldo Frank because the latter had, in a most feeble manner, asked some questions which implied the possibility of doubting concerning the official version of the Moscow Trials. Here, Browder himself laid out the lines of the amalgam for writers, and to this day that same amalgam is being used. It is a little gruesome to think that Browder is now being put into his own amalgam.

8. I'd make bold to remark that Engels would have described the writings of people like Sillen as rubbish. For that was how he described the parallel drive of the Sillens of his own day.

NOTICE

The publication of *The Fight for Socialism* by Max Shachtman has been delayed by reasons beyond our control.

We regret this inconvenience to the readers of THE NEW INTERNATIONAL who have ordered the book. Upon publication we shall immediately forward copies of the book.

Technological Progress in Agriculture

Notes on Recent Developments

American radicals, in their concern with the political meaning of current events, must from now on pay more attention to what is happening in agriculture. If one invention, a successful cotton-picker, displaces several million farm laborers, tenants and marginal owners, a great effect will be felt in all American life. For example, a shift of one million Negroes and poor whites from the southwestern cotton plantations to the cities and to the north will bring into sharp focus such already serious problems such as these: unemployed seeking work and further instability of some labor markets with attacks on trade union security; intensification of strained racial relations; increased housing problems, with related social consequences in civil liberties, education, crime and so on.

Yet the cotton-picker is only one of many items in the current revolution in agriculture. The change has been under way for years, but many phases have been intensified during the war. The cumulative effects of the revolution are about to strike at the American economy with almost avalanche effect.

This is a summary of only a few of the major developments and trends, given with the object of stimulating some attention to the subject. Many books and magazine articles have appeared, covering various phases in detail and with full statistics. But radicals have not given study to the implications of the great changes in agriculture, and it is time for intent study.

Technology

For some fifteen years the Rust cotton picker has been well publicized. Its menace to the stability of our society has been discussed in journals of every sort. This machine is now perfected and has gone into production. At least two other such machines are also to be produced at once by large farm machine manufacturers.

This machine requires great acreage for efficient use. The small farm and the tenant farm and sharecropper will be swiftly wiped out. It is estimated that up to seven million persons—mainly tenants and laborers and their families—will be made surplus in the southwestern cotton country within three or four

years. The size of the plantation, the cost of the machine, the possibility of immediate great profits are inducements to corporatism and a big business approach to cotton growing.

Most of the displaced will be Negroes and poor, uneducated whites in a region socially the most backward in the U.S.A. A small proportion of them have been organized with the greatest difficulty and idealism by the National Farm Labor Union (formerly called the Southern Tenant Farmers Union). But the majority will bring their poverty and ignorance with them when they migrate in search of jobs and homes. At the very least, those who go to the cities will form a fertile field for the activities of native fascists—a partial demonstration of this was given in Detroit and other war industry towns which attracted white Southerners on a large scale. They can provide a stock of strike-breakers in industry, especially if they arrive in large numbers in any cities.

Other technological advances are not as spectacular as the cotton picker, but cumulatively are a similar force. Here is a quotation from James G. Maddox of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, Department of Agriculture:

...There is considerable evidence that agriculture is in the midst of a technical revolution which may continue for many years. Machinery is doing a larger share of farm work, and doing it more efficiently than men and mules ever could. The familiar tractor is by no means the whole story. The cotton picker, the hay dehydrator, the corn picker, the flame cultivator, and a long list of other weird-looking machines promise to change farming almost as drastically as the steam engine and electric motor changed industry.

Increased Production

New Varieties. Many new food products have been developed in recent years. We are about to experience even greater accomplishments. Russia, Canada and all other agricultural countries are the scenes of extended experimentation which has already brought startling results.

One extremely interesting program is that of the use of the drug colchicine. This drug brings about changes in cell structure, causing mutations in plant or fruit forms. Changes in size, speed of growth, special qualities of flavor, tex-

ture or fiber are brought about. The mutations are usually total, that is, permanent new varieties are established and can be brought into commercial production.

Hybrid corns are another field of tremendously successful experimentation. Farmers buy hybrid seed appropriate to their own soils and districts and can get exactly the kind of corn they desire. In several states the change from old methods in the past ten years has been from 98 to 100 per cent. This was a field in which Henry Wallace pioneered and gained his foothold to national prominence. These new hybrid corns have expanded the use of corn in industry, provided better sources for cereals, animal foods and, of course, increased the supply available for the human market. One sidelight of importance is the control of the size of the stalk, resulting in easier handling by machinery. For example, the use of corn-harvesting machinery has increased; in 1925 it took 14 man-hours or more per acre, while in 1945 it took but six man-hours. It should be noted that use of expensive machinery is a vital factor in the trends in farm size and investment. The farmers' coöperative is one solution farmers have tried when they cannot afford the great costs; the big business farms, or bank-operated farms in some areas, are in conflict with coöperators. This is one key to the existence of several farm organizations with opposite political orientations.

Further citations of new varieties must include hay and grasses; sugar cane; beans for animal, human and industrial use; and wheat, where disease resistant types have received much attention.

Pest Control. The chemical DDT, a wartime product, is already well known to the public. The question of its use with growing plants is still undetermined, because of some dangers. Destruction of insects on a large scale means upsetting nature's balance for plant and fish life, and in plant pollenization. Its major use at present may be in insuring that a greater quantity of undamaged foods reaches the market.

The use of the airplane to dust cotton fields with pest-killing chemicals is familiar to those who attend the newsreels.

Animal Health. State and federal agricultural experiment stations have long served the alert farmer. A special contribution, which needs only brief mention, has been in the improvement of livestock. Steady gains have been made in conquering disease, improving breeds, and feeding for increased meat, milk and eggs.

Soil Management. Major expansion of agricultural production must be credited to the soil studies of the experiment stations. The farmer has been guided in regard to reclamation, use of fertilizers, planting programs, etc. Together with other activities mentioned, farmers with capital have been able to produce and market ever-increasing quantities. The Bureau of Agricultural Economics reports:

"In every year since 1939, the average yield of our 28 major crops has been 20 per cent or more above the 1923-32 average."

This in wartime, with a manpower shortage.

As yet only a relatively small proportion are able to take full advantage of the scientific knowledge available. Wilcox, a soils expert, claimed a few years ago that an area equal to the state of Colorado could feed the entire nation if just his own soils and fertilizing knowledge were applied.

A recent book, *Plowman's Folly*, by Faulkner, offers an entirely new approach. Faulkner reports experiments which prove the plow, standard and basic for thousands of years, to be harmful. He has worked out a non-plowing method of planting crops, with enormous savings in labor and cultivating machinery, and has obtained several more crops per season, with plants resistant to disease and insects and of better quality. His approach is extremely revolutionary and contrary to all established ideas, but his experiments are being carefully repeated in many stations. If his views are even partially sound, and are adopted by keen men, truck farming will be revolutionized overnight.

Chemurgy

Chemurgy is the name given to the use of plant products in industry. It is more properly discussed in the field of industrial change, but a few elements deserve examination.

One is the change-over in types of farming which may occur in some areas on a large scale if farmers find it more profitable to produce for industry. Some

of the products involved are plastics, sugars, chemical and medicinal raw materials, starch, gums, textiles, etc. Many of the industries are starting from scratch and are contracting with farmers for the supplies.

Under war stimulus, invention and application in this field reached great proportions. The best patents are in the hands of big corporations. They are in a position to buy up large land areas, use hired labor instead of contractors, and establish their plants in low-wage or unorganized regions. If contracting is continued, the corporations have the opportunity to improve on the methods of the big canneries, which now often exploit the grower. If new industries are successful, there will be problems of employment in those competitive plants that become outmoded. There will be organizational problems for labor, especially jurisdictional ones.

Hydroponics

Hydroponics is a system of growing a crop without the use of land. Plants are placed in beds or frames and the essential chemical needs are provided in a water solution in vats directly below. Advantages are the elimination of space, full control of heat, light and water, and the provision of exactly those plant foods required for the crop.

This method was an outstanding success in some of the Pacific islands, where it was otherwise impossible to obtain fresh produce for the armed forces. It is entirely possible to establish such a vegetable factory in a loft building or any large house, and to grow many crops the year around. The farm, long transportation, middlemen and all seasonal factors can be completely eliminated.

If undertaken by well financed groups, this process can make a real dent into present methods of trucking. It is a logical field for the entry of large chain stores, especially in collaboration with suppliers of chemicals, who have every cause to be interested. One of the big railroads has been using such products for several years in its diners. When the costs of growing and transporting vegetables from Texas, California or Florida to the Eastern market is considered, we have reason to anticipate much attention to hydroponics in the next few years.

Some Other Factors

Trends in general are of increased production with reduced manpower; of greater use of expensive machines which stimulate increased interest in agricul-

ture by financial groups. The rural population will continue to decrease, so that even sixty million jobs would mean extensive unemployment.

Some attempt is being made to convince the farm supporters of the present system that highly paid industrial workers are an advantage to them. (See "What's Ahead for the Farmer" in *Harper's*, March, 1945.) The National Farmers Union preaches unity with labor in terms of this common welfare.

As a whole, the American farmer has been well indoctrinated against "socialism" by every agency of information. But he is not resistant to some "socialistic" ideas that do not have the label. Because of his own needs, he has accepted the intervention of government in such matters as soil conservation, housing and electrification. The coöperative movement has grown tremendously, although too often presented as a panacea for all social and economic ills.

The soil conservation district should be mentioned. This program exists in 45 states and enables farmers to use the combined services of state and federal agencies to modernize. One farmer is reported to have increased his income in three years from an annual \$5,000 to over \$14,000. His costs were only \$159. This was in Republican, free-enterprise Vermont, but the farmer is satisfied to accept collective action and government aid when it is to his profit.

The more successful the researchers, inventors and coöperators are, the greater becomes the profit of the wealthy who can take advantage of a new development. Coincidentally, the greater the menace to the little fellow without financial resources. The combined application of the discoveries means surpluses, lower prices, and bankruptcies. (Of course, the term surplus is here used in terms of the market, not the needs of the people of the world.) If there are sudden population shifts, or an industrial depression, the greater will be the farm crisis, despite the technical proof that this is the age of plenty.

On the basis of these observations, it is probably no exaggeration to state that calamity and revolution are being born in agriculture. It is time for some study of the kind of education and propaganda to be presented to farmers to convince them to join in making their potential plenty available to a world that needs it.

G. H. FABIUS.

Book Reviews . . .

PRATER VIOLET, by Christopher Isherwood. Random House, \$2.00.

Christopher Isherwood is perhaps the most important English novelist writing today. He is a more facile writer than Maugham or Forster, and he writes from a richer experience. He is a finished craftsman, a fine stylist and a deliberate artist. His prose is unpretentious and deceptively casual. It is a colloquial prose that breaks down the wall between the spoken and the written language. His prose is so effortless, so unstrained, that it seems too, too easy. Isherwood is not unaware of the dangers of such facility. Cyril Connolly some years ago observed that Isherwood's protagonist, who is Isherwood himself, was "much less subtle, intelligent and articulate than he might be," and that Isherwood's work might become colorless reporting. "Isherwood," Connolly says, "while admitting the limitations of the style he had adopted, expressed his belief in construction as the way out of the difficulty. The writer must conform to the language which is understood by the greatest number of people, to the vernacular, but his greatness as a novelist will appear in the exactness of his observation, the justice of his situations, and in the construction of his book."

Isherwood meets his own criteria successfully. His Berlin books give the uneasy, heavy atmosphere, the peculiar political smell of Germany in the pre-Hitler era. Germany is communicated through a handful of characters from the Jewish upper middle class, the Berlin petty-bourgeoisie and the Berlin proletariat. They are memorable characters: Fraulein Schroeder, who has the damp soul of a boarding-house landlady, tortured by the pettiness of a constrained existence; Sally Bowles, a precocious, rootless English girl, without morals, orientation or goal; the Lindauers, wealthy department store owners, insecure and uneasy with the knowledge that their wealth cannot save them; Otto, the insensitive, conscienceless communist youngster, the brother in spirit and morality of millions of other German youngsters, communist and fascist alike; and Mr. Norris, the degenerate English adventurer, who embraces every possibility for profit and self-satisfaction from homosexuality to blackmail and communism.

Isherwood measures up to his own criteria, but are they enough? Until *Prater Violet*, he was only the observer, the stage manager, never saw the participant. He could relate a situation but he could never enter it, he could present a character but he could never penetrate it. Connolly here, too, was able to locate Isherwood's weakness: "He is persuasive because he is so completely bland and anonymous, nothing rouses him, nothing shocks him." Isherwood is aware of his detachment, demonstrated in the following account of a communist meeting and his own relation to it in his novel, *Mr. Norris Changes Trains*:

The hall was very full. The audience sat there in their soiled everyday clothes. Most of the men wore breeches with coarse woolen stockings, sweaters and peaked caps. Their eyes followed the speaker with hungry curiosity. I had never been to a communist meeting before, and what struck me most was the fixed attention of the Berlin working class, pale and prematurely lined, often haggard and ascetic, like the heads of scholars, with thin, fair hair brushed back from their broad foreheads. They had not come here to see each other or to be seen, or even to fulfill a social duty. They were attentive but not passive. They were not spectators. They participated, with a curious, restrained passion, in the speech made by the red-haired man. He spoke for them, he made their thoughts articulate. They were listening to their own collective voice. At intervals they applauded it, with sudden, spontaneous violence. Their passion, their strength of purpose elated me. I stood outside it. One day, perhaps, I should be with it, but never of it. At present I just sat there, a half-hearted renegade from my own class, my feeling muddled by anarchism talked at Cambridge, by slogans from the confirmation service, by the tunes the band played when my father's regiment marched to the railway station, seventeen years ago.

A New Element

Prater Violet contains a new element, which perhaps can best be defined as a need for intimacy, a participation in experience, a penetration into character. *Prater Violet* is the story of Isherwood's relation to Bergmann, a Jewish refugee film director, and the relation of both men to English society. They work together on a senseless film which is completely irrelevant to political developments. Bergmann frantically tries to convey to the English some sense of politics, and he is driven almost to hysteria by the indifference he meets. The pressures

of English life are too strong for him, and finally Bergmann buckles down to finish the stupid film. It is a moderate success, and Bergmann goes to Hollywood.

At a critical moment Isherwood feels he has failed Bergmann, and engages in the following self-criticism:

Perhaps I had travelled too much, left my heart in too many places. I knew what I was supposed to feel, what it was fashionable for my generation to feel. We cared about everything: fascism in Germany and Italy, the seizure of Manchuria, Indian nationalism, the Irish question, the workers, the Negroes, the Jews. We had spread our feelings over the whole world; and I knew that mine were spread very thin. I cared—oh yes, I certainly cared—about the Austrian socialists. But did I care as much as I said I did, tried to imagine I did? No, not nearly as much. . . . What is the use of caring at all, if you aren't prepared to dedicate your life, to die? Well, perhaps it was some use. Very, very little.

Isherwood has lost his detachment, and he has come to identify himself with a character. "Beneath outer consciousness, two other beings, anonymous, imprisoned, without labels, had met and recognized each other, and had clasped hands. He was my father. I was his son. And I loved him very much."

The book shows the effort and strain that Isherwood has undergone to reach this point. But the father-son relationship does not follow from the narrative. It is the Telemachus - Hamlet - Stephen Dedalus theme all over again, and demands for development more space than a novelette can give. And so, this novel is, in a sense, an artistic failure. But it is Isherwood's triumph.

The book is a protest against the utter irrelevance of our traditional and customary activities in the face of political and moral disintegration. The contrast between England and the continent is effectively presented: on the one hand, immersion in the meretricious, the inane, the inconsequential; on the other hand, the triumph of brutality and totalitarian values. It is a commentary on the entire pre-war era, and it ends in defeat. Bergmann, the cultivated European who struggles against totalitarianism, capitulates to the shoddy culture in England and the United States, and on the strength of his success with *Prater Violet*, obtains an offer from Hollywood. In a real sense, this book is the swan-

song not of an era but of a culture. It is the prose counterpart of Eliot's *Hollow Men*—less successful as a work of art, more confused but nonetheless equally pathetic.

RICHARD STOKER

FOR THEE THE BEST, by Mark Aldanov. Charles Scribner's Sons.

This novel, presenting us with a too-obvious parallel with the present in the post-Napoleonic era, offers an excellent excuse for intellectual sloth. The events after Waterloo seem as contemporaneous as those in today's newspaper, and they almost compel facile historical generalizations about the monotony and repetition of history. Aldanov is too clever to make the parallel explicit, but it is nonetheless present in the entire book.

The great question of the post-Napoleonic era was the domination of Europe, and the two great powers that confronted each other were Russia and England. Revolutionary organizations planned uprisings, alliances were formed to maintain the status quo, secret service agents were frantically collating information, and tension fixed the entire continent.

But the parallels, while suggestive, are more obvious than real. The loosely-organized, rhetoric-spouting Carbonari have little in common with the well-integrated, business-like world communist movement. Russia is not guided by a weak-minded Czar, and she is far more aggressive than she was then. No Russian leader is capable of withdrawing her, in the manner of Czar Alexander, from world politics. England is not the great power she was. The revolutionary upsurge today—and this is perhaps the chief difference—is not nationalistic but collectivistic (or, as far as the Stalinists are concerned, totalitarian) in inspiration, direction and purpose. The technological background, the social and economic context in which political events take place, are distinctively different. The rockets that Lord Byron, the outstanding character in the novel, intended to launch in Greece are remote in conception and consequence from the atom bombs of today. The contemporary stage has no rôle for a Byron, the quixotic dilettante, the amateur dabbler in conspiracy and revolution. Amateurs can no longer play at revolution. It has become a profession, demanding not intermittent devotion but professional training and complete absorption.

This is an unusually skillful historical novel, written by an excellent craftsman, recreating with economy of motion an entire age. It is, however, an outline, not an epic in the Tolstoyan sense. Its characterizations are meager and unrealized and, with the exception of Castlereagh, the historical personalities remain shadowy, unsubstantial figures. There are occasional flashes of macabre humor, indicating that the author possesses a satiric bent that he has unfortunately not indulged too often. When told that Castlereagh, the English Foreign Minister and actual ruler, had been insane, Czar Alexander comments: "A lunatic ruling a great country, and not a soul aware of it! I might add that England's affairs were never conducted better than under the insane Lord Castlereagh. What a real lesson to other rulers!"

What a real lesson to us.

RICHARD STOKER.

THE AGE OF JACKSON, by Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr. Little, Brown & Co., \$5.00.

The era of Jacksonian democracy is one of great importance in understanding the development of American capitalism and the history of the American working class. The importance of this period, however, is equalled by the misconceptions and distortions which have been broadcast about it. A significant contribution to the understanding of Jacksonian democracy has been made by Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., in his recent study, *The Age of Jackson*.

The traditional analysis of Jacksonian democracy pictured Andrew Jackson as the son of the western frontier and the whole movement one of the western farmers, in alliance with the southern planters, against the capitalist East. Inevitable trimmings surrounding this picture were the explanations of particular policies on the basis of the personal characteristics, background and peculiarities of Jackson himself: his love for his wife and vindictiveness against those who slandered her (Jackson's opposition to Clay and Calhoun), his loyalty to friends (the "spoils system"), and so forth and so on.

Schlesinger cuts away much of this trash. His major thesis is the relation between the Jacksonian democrats and the working class and labor movement of the cities of the east. While recognizing the support given the Jacksonians by the West and the South, he demonstrates that the heart of the Jacksonian

program conflicted with these interests. Jackson's stand against all "banks," the extension of democratic rights, the ten-hour work day, abolition of imprisonment for debt and other demands of the Jacksonians had earlier been emblazoned on the banners of the working class. Important leaders of Jacksonian democracy came out of the labor movement and the workingmen's parties; and the successor to the mantle of Jackson was not a frontiersman but the New York Democrat, Van Buren.

Yet, despite the contribution he makes, much of the significance of the period is not understood by Schlesinger. He accepts superficial phenomena at face value and ends by turning upside down the real significance of the Jacksonian movement. At bottom the fault lies with his conscious disavowal of historical materialism (page 432). He pays little attention to the basic movements of society at the time, the development of industry and the growth and organization of the working class. He bases his analysis largely on the writings of the Jacksonians and places an inordinate emphasis on the writings of the radical intellectual fringe of Jacksonian democracy. His point of view is that of a modern Roosevelt Democrat and he molds his analysis to conform to the needs of the present-day liberal.

The Age of Jackson pictures the Jacksonians as the leaders of a popular working class movement in much the same way that today's liberal pictures Roosevelt as a working class leader. In vulgar terms this idea is presented by the labor leaders as "Roosevelt organized the CIO." Schlesinger says of the Jacksonians: "Their aim was . . . to preserve capitalism and keep the government out of the hands of the capitalists" (pages 338-339). This distortion of the rôle of the government is nowhere borne out by the history of the period.

The Crisis of 1819

In 1819, nine years before Jackson came to power, the United States was hit by the first capitalist crisis. This was essentially a phase of the world crisis which struck Europe with the end of the Napoleonic wars but was aggravated in the United States by the collapse of a huge speculative boom supported in part by foreign capital. The crisis of 1819 did more than testify to the subjection of the American economy to the laws of capitalism and the world market. It served as a spur to the cleansing of the economy and intensified the movement

of capital to industry and production rather than commerce and speculation. It also served to wipe out the embryo labor movement that was forming in the years before 1819. But in wiping out the earlier labor movement (local trade societies which were largely benevolent rather than class struggle organizations) it made possible the establishment of a new labor movement on a higher level. The labor movement after 1819 quickly surpassed the earlier organizational efforts of the workers. While skilled journeymen were the first to organize, unions began to spring up among the newer factory workers. Even women workers in the textile mills organized into unions. In 1834, after a strike, 2,500 women formed the Factory Girls' Association in Lowell, Mass. Total union membership in this period reached an estimated 300,000 in the seaboard cities in 1836.

This period was also characterized by the first attempts at the unification of the labor movement in one national organization. In 1834 the National Trades Union was formed representing city-wide union federations from New York, Brooklyn, Boston, Newark, Poughkeepsie and Philadelphia. In addition, the working class turned to political action through the organization of Workingmen's Parties, to struggle for their demands. Mary Beard notes in her *Short History of the American Labor Movement* that "In at least fifteen states local labor parties were formed; at least fifty labor papers were founded to voice the aims and demands of labor; political organizations along the old, familiar lines of county and ward committees and conventions were established; and radical agitators demanding revolutionary changes came to the front" (page 36).

Demands of Labor

It was impossible for the labor movement of the 1820's and 30's to base itself on a conscious understanding of the nature of capitalism and the role of the working class. Capitalism was a lusty infant. The rising industrialism was threatening but unfamiliar. The working class was still a minority of the population and was in large part just immediately descended from the middle class and imbued with middle class ideology. But the position of the working class in society forced the workers *as a class* to struggle for the improvement of their social position. What is crucial to an understanding of the *Age of Jackson*—and what is completely lost to Schlesinger—is that the struggle to raise the social po-

sition of the working class *at that time* could only mean the struggle for the extension and democratization of the bourgeois-democratic revolution. This is indicated in the demands of the labor movement:

1. Free public schools.
2. Ten-hour work day.
3. Mechanics lien law.
4. Abolition of banks issuing paper money.
5. Abolition of the militia system (under which exemptions could be bought by the rich).
6. Abolition of imprisonment for debt.
7. Abolition of chartered monopolies.
8. Limitation of woman and child labor.
9. Universal suffrage.

Victory or partial victory in the achievement of almost all of these demands characterized the Jacksonian period. These demands were the heart of the great democratic movement. What is important to understand is the relation between the program of the labor movement and the capitalist class on the one hand and the government of the Jacksonian Democrats on the other. This relation can be seen most clearly through the struggle around the second Bank of the United States, one of the major issues during the Jackson administration.

The bank had been chartered by Congress in 1816 for twenty years. The charter set the bank up as a private institution with the federal government owning a minority of the stock and having a minority of the directors. The bank could issue paper money backed by its assets and was tremendously strengthened by the federal government's use of the bank as a depository for government funds. From its headquarters in Philadelphia and through its branches the bank wielded tremendous power—economic and political. It subsidized newspapers and magazines throughout the land and bought out state and federal politicians with generous loans and outright retainers. (Senator Daniel Webster was on the bank's payroll and was the bank's most ardent defender in the Senate so long as his retainer was received.) Its economic power was keenly felt by western farmers when it intensified the crisis of 1819 in the west by the drastic contraction of its paper money. The general practices of the Bank of the United States, in particular, the issuance of paper money, were followed in a more restricted sphere by the numerous state banks which were given monopolistic charters by the state legislatures.

Opposition to the Bank

Schlesinger points out that a twofold opposition arose to the Bank of the United States. The west and south bitterly attacked the control exercised by eastern capital over their destinies. They objected to the discrimination of the bank in favor of eastern land speculators at the expense of western farmers and southern planters. As debtors, however, they favored the inflationary practices of the state banks which, moreover, supported the activities of local speculators.

The second and more fundamental opposition came from the workers of the east. The working class went along in the general attack on the Bank of the United States. But it had an additional objective. The speculative activity of the bank and the indiscriminate issuance of paper money resulted in mounting inflation and skyrocketing prices which continually surpassed any wage increases that the workers were able to win. The working class was thus against the Bank of the United States but also against the issuance of paper money by *any* bank. This "hard money" program (the use of gold and silver exclusively in the lower denominations and exclusive control over the currency by the federal government) was the core of the workers' opposition to the bank.

Jackson and Van Buren, as Schlesinger accurately establishes, based themselves on hard money program. With the greatest political finesse they chose the Bank of the United States as their first target and rallied workers, farmers and planters against it. After the demise of the Bank was virtually assured, they proceeded to the second stage: the withdrawal of federal funds from the state banks, the establishment of a sub-treasury system and exclusive federal control over the currency. With this the early alliance was broken. The South under Calhoun became increasingly hostile to the administration and the western farmers and speculators found their Jacksonian ardor cooling.

All this is made clear in *The Age of Jackson*. But Schlesinger's conclusion is that Jackson represented the working class against the capitalists. It is true, of course, that the capitalists were overwhelmingly united against the Jacksonian program. What Schlesinger fails to understand, however, is that the existing forms and usages of capitalism had come into conflict with the further expansion of the capitalist system, had become a fetter on that system. The anarchic sys-

tem of bank money had been adequate for a commercial capitalism in which sufficiently large masses of capital could be accumulated through speculation. But just as speculation can lead to the quickest accumulation of masses of capital, it can lead to their quick dissolution. A much more stable financial system was required to encourage long term investment in productive capital and to make possible the much larger accumulations which industrial capitalism requires. The program of Jackson, therefore, was precisely the most far-sighted program of American capitalism.

But then why couldn't the capitalists themselves see this? Because most of the existing capitalists would be adversely affected since it was they who dominated and benefited from the banking system. And (partly as a result of this) because of the natural conservatism and fear of change which characterizes the big capitalists. The big bourgeoisie can only rarely see beyond the end of its nose. It is because of this that the state most truly acts as "the executive committee of the ruling class." Not by virtue of its representing the majority opinion of the capitalist class but because it can most clearly see the real, the long range, interests of the ruling class as a whole. Just as Roosevelt on many occasions forced through drastic measures to protect and stabilize capitalism *against* the wishes of the big capitalists, so Jackson, in his day, fought for a strengthened, expanding capitalism *against* the capitalists.

Workers Form Mass Base

The working class provided the motive power for the Jacksonian program. And this, too, is not unique. In all the greatest bourgeois revolutions, in England, in France, in the American Revolution, the big bourgeoisie, tied to the past with a thousand threads, feared the revolution, resisted it at every step. It remained for the lower middle classes and, to the extent that it existed, the working class, fighting for *their own* position in society, to carry the revolution through.

Schlesinger has his fingers on the key to the understanding of the relation between the capitalists, the state and the working class but is unable to grasp it. In discussing the fight against the monopolistic corporation charters, which restricted the development of capitalism in a manner similar to the banking system, he points out that the Jacksonians fought for general incorporation laws which would allow anyone to start a

corporation. He attributes this to the desire of the government to extend democracy and protect the workingman. But he is confused by the result. "The fate of the Jacksonian economic legislation," he says, "was that common historical irony: it on the whole prompted the very ends it was intended to defeat. . . . Capitalism, in the end, gained a new moral force from the incorporation laws" (pages 338-339). He doesn't stop to consider the validity of the "ends" which he attributes to the Jacksonians.

To examine the other points of the Jacksonian program in this light is impossible in such limited space. The pattern, however, is the same. To round out the picture we need only turn to the one plank in the working class program which flowed solely from the needs of the working class: the ten hour day. Here, again, Schlesinger places the Jacksonians at the head of the movement and credits Van Buren with leading the fight for the ten hour day, introducing as evidence Van Buren's executive order instituting the ten hour day on federal public works in 1840, the last year of his administration. Ignored is the long and bitter struggle of the working class in the years preceding the executive order and the fact that the executive order was not effectively enforced until later, when the workers exerted additional pressure. In a like manner present day liberals ignore the valiant labor struggles of the 1930's and the March on Washington Movement of 1940 and credit Roosevelt with the Wagner Labor Relations Act and the Fair Employment Practices Committee.

There are two other questions which Schlesinger treats which have great significance and are especially pertinent today. One is dealt with in a chapter on the Whig Party, gradually changed its political propaganda from an open defense of the rule of capital to the glittering generalities so familiar today: the "peepul," democracy, home, patriotism—these were the new slogans. To Schlesinger's credit, he notes the change—but is blind to what it signifies. Says Schlesinger: "The metamorphosis of conservatism revived it politically but ruined it intellectually. The Federalists had thought about society in an intelligent and hard-boiled way. Their ideas had considerable relevance to the conflicts and tensions of the life around them. But the Whigs, in scuttling Federalism, replaced it by a social philosophy founded, not on ideas, but on subterfuges and sentimentalities" (page 279).

Degeneration of American Politics

His praise of the Federalists is entirely justified. The great Federalist statesmen, Hamilton, Madison and others, had the clearest picture of capitalist society. *The Federalist Papers*, written by Hamilton, Jay and Madison, could well rank as a textbook on the nature of the state. Even the Jeffersonians of that day, although with less theoretical clarity, presented a valid picture of capitalist society. With the first Jackson campaign, however, there was indicated the tendency toward the brawling, meaningless political campaigns that soon characterized American politics, a tendency that was completed in the Whig campaign of 1840 in which William Henry Harrison was swept into office on the slogans of hard cider and a log cabin and "Tippecanoe and Tyler, too!"

Why this change? Was it caused by the intellectual degeneration of the leading politicians? Not at all. There is an excellent and practical reason for the change: *the rise of the working class*. At the dawn of capitalism, when the only serious antagonist to the capitalist class is reactionary feudalism (which was a threat on the American continent), the rulers can afford to speak the truth. With the growth of the working class in numbers and the development of its organizations, there rises the instrument for their overthrow. From this comes the desperate need to hide the real nature of capitalism, to bury the truth beneath "subterfuges and sentimentalities." It is no coincidence, therefore, that the Jacksonian period, which witnessed the remarkable growth of the American working class and its powerful intrusion on the national scene, should also be the period in which demagoguery and bribery should first establish their uninterrupted rule in American politics.

The second question of interest is the parallel Schlesinger draws between Jacksonian Democracy and the Roosevelt New Deal. Schlesinger's uncritical defense of the Jackson Democrats is in reality (and in places almost openly stated by him) a defense of the New Deal. Having assumed an identity between Roosevelt and Jackson, Schlesinger goes to great lengths to defend the Democratic Party tradition, distorting history to the point of crediting the Jacksonian Democrats with the initiative in organizing the anti-slavery movement and founding the Republican Party. Despite this, however, there is some validity to the analogy. The simi-

lar relation in which Jackson and Roosevelt stood to the capitalist class was considered above. In addition, there are some superficial facts which point to a parallel: both ruled during periods of change and crisis; both, as individuals, were mediocrities before they achieved the presidency and the greatness in each was brought out by the times in which they lived and the problems with which they were faced.

But there is a fundamental difference between the two periods which must not be lost sight of. The age of Jackson was the age of expanding capitalism, an age in which the tremendous resources of the American continent and the rapidly expanding productive forces *could* be used, even though in vastly different degrees, to improve the condition of all classes. The gains, political and economic, which the working class and the people as a whole won in the Jacksonian period were genuine and sweeping. It was this which gave to Jacksonian democracy the character of a broad popular movement, a genuine people's movement. But the age of Roosevelt is the age of dying capitalism, an age in which society is torn by deep-going and permanent crisis, by bloody wars, by the most profound insecurity. The role of Jackson was to release the expansive powers of capitalism. The role of Roosevelt was to preserve the bonds with which capitalism today confines and restricts society. Under Jackson progress was in the direction of capitalist development. Under Roosevelt progress lies only in the overthrow of capitalism.

MARTIN HARVEY

MODERN MAN IS OBSOLETE, by Norman Cousins. The Viking Press, New York 1945. 48 pages & Appendix. \$1.00.

The opening of the Atomic Age has produced a flood of articles, books, pamphlets and magazines dealing with both the technical aspects of atomic energy and with its effect on society. An editorial dealing with the latter, by Norman Cousins in the *Saturday Review of Literature*, aroused nation-wide acclaim on the part of many sections of American society, from members of the Supreme Court downward. This book, an expansion of that editorial, has likewise aroused wide attention in the United States and abroad. This book reveals the impact of the new Atomic Age on bourgeois-democratic public opinion, and at

the same time shows the inability of the bourgeois mind to answer the problems posed.

Cousins' thesis is that modern man is obsolete. By "modern man" he means (although he is not too clear about it in his own mind) the modern social order, its economy, its relations of human beings to each other, its politics, its philosophy, its culture. By "obsolete" he means to say that this social order cannot prevent the self-extinction of the human species. Therefore this social order will be abolished, either by mankind, or by the atomic Third World War which will abolish it together with mankind.

World Fear

The beginning of the Atomic Age has brought less hope than fear . . . This fear is not new; . . . But overnight it has become intensified, magnified. It has burst out of the subconscious and into the conscious, filling the mind with primordial apprehensions.

So the volume begins, expressing the *terrible fear* which has gripped humanity of what will happen with this weapon in the hands of the present rulers of the world, should another war come. The author realizes that the enemy is not atomic energy itself, but *modern war* which would use this energy for the destruction of mankind; he therefore proceeds to search for the cause of war. In so doing, he arrives at some near-Marxist ideas, but also reveals his bourgeois limitations.

After satisfying himself, by quotations from biologists, anthropologists and entomologists, that war is not the inevitable result of *human nature*, he says that war is an expression of his extreme competitive impulses, which have been acquired basically from his environment.

Dominating this environment has always been an insufficiency of the goods and the needs of life. From Biblical days up through the present, there was never a time when starvation and economic suffering were not acute somewhere in the world, leading to conflict not only within nations but among nations.

To avoid an atomic war, therefore, it is necessary that man curb his competitive impulses. At the same time this change has become so *necessary*, it has also become more *possible*:

Yet all this has been—or can be—changed by the new age. Man now has it within his grasp to emancipate himself economically. If he wills it, he is in a position to redirect his competitive impulses; he can take the step from competitive man to cooperative man. He has at last unlocked enough of the earth's secrets to provide for his needs on a world scale. The same atomic and elec-

trical energy that can destroy a continent can also usher in an age of economic sufficiency. It need no longer be a question as to which peoples shall prosper and which shall be deprived. There are resources enough and power enough for all.

Cousins says that "The change now impending is in many ways more sweeping than that of the Industrial Revolution itself." The dropping of the first atomic bomb "marked the violent death of one stage in man's history and the beginning of another. Nor should it be necessary to prove the saturating effect of the new age, permeating every aspect of man's activities, from machines to morals, from physics to philosophy, from politics to poetry . . ." In confused and often contradictory formulations, he, nevertheless, sees the *tremendous resolution in the productive forces* constituted by the opening of the Atomic Age, facing society with such problems as to imperatively require the overthrow of the present social order for their solution.

Not being a Marxist, Cousins does not see the *class character* of modern society. For him, therefore, society is "Man," a Jekyll-Hyde entity. "Man" (the good) fears what "Man" (his evil alter ego) may do with the atomic bomb. Listen to the following:

It is here that man's survey of himself needs the severest scrutiny, for he is his own greatest obstacle to the achievement of those attainable and necessary goals. While he is willing to mobilize all his scientific and intellectual energies for purposes of death, he has so far been unwilling to undertake any comparable mobilization for purposes of life. He has opened the atom and harnessed its fabulous power to a bomb, but he balks—or allows himself to be balked—when it comes to harnessing that power for human progress. Already, he has been given words of synthetic caution. Even as he stands on the threshold of a new age, he is pulled back by his coat-tails and told to look the other way, told that he will not see the practical application of atomic energy for general use in our lifetime. If it works out this way, it will not be because of any lack of knowledge or skill, but only because of the reluctance in certain quarters to face up to the full implications of the Atomic Age which does not exempt the economic structure any more than it exempts man himself.

Now, abstractly, this is true. However, it is of little use, in deciding how we shall act, to say merely that "man is his own greatest obstacle." The point which Cousins doesn't see is that this *obstacle* to mankind's progress is represented by the handful of capitalist monopolists, a class which in its desperate attempt to maintain its power is willy-nilly pushing man toward a new World War. It is this class which is revealing itself to

humanity as the force which mobilizes science for the purpose of death, and which impedes the use of science for the purpose of life.

World Government

What change is required to bring man's social structure into harmony with his newly found ability to create sun-power on earth? 'Cousins' answer: Man must curb his competitive impulses. And since the competition which expresses itself in war is competition among nations, the author concludes that the most crucial aspect of the necessary change is "the transformation or adjustment from the national man to world man." He continues:

At present he is a world warrior; it is time for him to grow up and to become a world citizen. This is not vaporous idealism, but sheer driving necessity. It bears directly on the prospects of his own survival. He will have to recognize the flat truth that the greatest obstacle of all in the Atomic Age is national sovereignty. Even back in the old-fashioned Rocket Age before August 6, 1945, strict national sovereignty was an anomalous hold-over from the tribal instinct in nations. If it were anomalous then, it is preposterous now.

It is preposterous because we have invested it with non-existent powers. We assume that national sovereignty is still the same as it always was, that it still offers security and freedom of national decision. We assume it still means national independence, the right to get into war or to stay out of it. We even debate the question of "surrendering" some of our sovereignty—as though there is still something to surrender. There is nothing left to surrender. There is only something to gain. A common world sovereignty . . .

Can it be that we do not realize that . . . no longer is security to be found in armies and navies, however large and mighty? . . . That in an Atomic Age all nations are directly accessible to each other—for better or worse? . . . That the only really effective influence between peoples is such influence as they are able to exert morally, politically, ideologically upon each other? That the use of disproportionate wealth and abundance of resources by any nation, when applied for bargaining purposes, do not constitute influence by the type of coercion against which severe reaction is inevitable? . . .

The need for world government was clear long before August 6, 1945, but Hiroshima and Nagasaki raised the need to such dimensions that it can no longer be ignored.

In a world where it takes less than it took to get from New York to Philadelphia in 1787 . . . all natural distances and barriers vanish. Never before in history has the phrase, the human family, had such a precise meaning. This much all of us—American, European, African, Asiatic, Australian—have in common: Whether we like it or not, we have been brought together or

thrust together as member of a world unit, albeit an unorganized world unit."

Marxists have said for decades that modern technology has unified the planet's economy and made national states obsolete. It required this colossal technological revolution, the unlocking of the energy of the atom's nucleus, to reveal this fact to wide layers outside of Marxist circles. *No national defense, no national security is possible. We are all one world.*

This is so commonplace for Marxists that we but dimly realize the *enormous revolution in the thinking of society* revealed when a respectable bourgeois-democratic editor writes, in effect: "We can not longer be patriots of the U. S. A., we must be world-citizens," and is acclaimed by thousands of respectable industrialists, legislators, scientists et al. There is now a growing movement for world government, and its representatives in Congress have even introduced bills to achieve this purpose!

The Atomic Age has in effect dealt an ideological death-blow to national separatism, chauvinism and patriotism, to the ideological walls separating the people of the various nations.

The author then proceeds to answer eloquently and effectively various objections to world government, and various less drastic alternatives proposed to prevent atomic war. We cannot go into these here, except to mention one argument often heard: the fear that world government can become a world tyranny. Cousins correctly points out that man faces this problem in the creation or operation of government on any level. Limited as he is by bourgeois ideology, he sees, however, that just as a national government can be either democratic or fascist, so can a world government be either of these. A socialist would add that a world government, like a national one, can be controlled by either the capitalist class or the working class. The former would mean world tyranny; the latter, world freedom.

World Socialism

The widespread feeling that world control and planning are necessary is accompanied by popular concern that this control be democratic, subject to the people's will. The basis for this is a distrust of any group monopolizing power, especially that power resulting from its control of atomic weapons. The bourgeois liberal, who does not understand the class nature of modern society, imagines that if you have the political

forms of democracy such as exist in the United States today, the *people* will rule. He wants to extend such democracy to the world government. Cousins draws heavily on the experience of the thirteen American colonies in the formation of the United States, devoting an Appendix to excerpts from *The Federalist*. He proposes a similar procedure in the formation of a World Federation, advocating, as against a conference of governments (such as the UNO), a "Constitutional Convention of the United Nations," in effect a World Constituent Assembly.

Marxists regard hopes of a world bourgeois democracy as utopian. Even if it were realized, Wall Street would dominate it through its economic power (supplemented where necessary by naked force and "democracy" of the Rankin-Bilbo variety). For this reason Moscow violently opposes the idea of world government, preferring its present "sovereignty" through the veto power in the UNO.

Yet Marxists should support demands for a World Constituent Assembly, by which we mean an assembly of the elected representatives of the *people* of the world. However, we always point out that: to prevent making of atomic bombs, there must be inspection of every factory, power plant, laboratory and storage facility in every country in the world. This would necessitate such an army of police inspectors armed with tyrannical powers as would mean the greatest bureaucracy the world has ever seen, serving the world dictatorship of a One Big imperialist power; or such inspection can be accomplished by *workers' control on a world scale*, since only the working class is numerous enough and so situated in the economy as to be able to detect anti-social uses of atomic energy, anywhere in the world. The only alternative to world imperialist dictatorship is the Socialist United States of the World. If a World Constituent Assembly were ever realized, Marxists should propose the foregoing program to that body.

World Bomb

The atomic arms race is on, beneath the diplomatic double-talk. A few years from now, if not stopped by revolution, it will result in the whole world sitting on—not a powder keg (that is a horse-and-buggy concept)—but on a pile of plutonium. This idea is permeating and will saturate the consciousness of millions. It is bound to be followed by the recognition that the national state and

the monopolistic production-relations of modern capitalism are responsible. Says Cousins:

Change requires stimulus; and mankind today need look no further for stimulus than its own desire to stay alive. The critical power of change, says Spengler, is directly linked to the survival drive. Once the instinct for survival is stimulated, the basic condition for change can be met.

That is why the power of total destruction as potentially represented by modern science must be dramatized and kept in the forefront of public opinion. The full dimen-

sions of the peril must be seen and recognized. Only then will man realize that the first order of business is the question of continued existence. Only then will he be prepared to make the decisions necessary to assure that survival.

The value of this book for Marxists, aside from serving as a barometer of bourgeois public opinion under the impact of the Atomic Age, is to prove once again the impotence of the bourgeoisie, and the inability of the best of its liberal spokesmen, to cope effectively with the crisis. Modern liberalism, too, is obso-

lete. The *labor movement* will have to deal with this literally life-or-death question and take a stand on it. It is the duty of Marxists to urge and guide such action by the labor movement. And those advanced workers who realize that the issue is *Socialism or Atomic Death*, and who want to do something about it, must not delay in joining and building the revolutionary vanguard party so necessary if we are to prevent the world explosion of the plutonium pile.

GEORGE W. TOBIN.

From the Archives of the Party

Founding Principles of the Workers Party

1. The party aims at the achievement of state power by the American workers as part of the international proletarian revolution and for the purpose of establishing a classless socialist society. It bases itself on the revolutionary traditions of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Trotsky, whose fundamental ideas are crystallized in the program of the Fourth International. The aim of overthrowing the mightiest imperialist power in the world and reorganizing society on socialist foundations determines the nature, the task and the activities of the party.

2. The party bases itself unequivocally on the principles of Marxism, that is, the theory and practice of the proletarian revolution. Marxism is not a finished and immutable dogma, but a guide to action of the militant working class. Marxism, far from having been "refuted" by modern social developments and conflicts, has been confirmed by them—if it is understood as a means of interpreting and changing society—and remains the only means whereby these new developments and conflicts can be understood. Since Marxism is by its very nature a revolutionary, living theory and not a set of stone tablets, it must be constantly enriched and modified, in the spirit in which it has been developed up to now by its greatest proponents, and in the light of new events and experiences. In this sense, the party considers itself an aggressive champion of Marxism, a defender of its principles from the attacks of all its enemies.

3. The party emphasizes that, as a party of the international revolution, its main task is the organization and leadership of the struggle for socialism in the United States. Preoccupation with the position and problems of the labor movement in other countries has only too often meant ignoring the position and problems of the labor movement in this country and has been the pretext for not analyzing and participating actively in the class struggle here. The party aims to break with this spirit of pseudo-internationalism. True internation-

alism means the application of the lessons learned from the world-wide struggle against capitalism to the struggle against the main enemy of the working class at home as the best means of advancing the interests of the international revolution. The real test of the American revolutionist is not so much his opposition to British, French or German capitalism, or even to Stalinism, but to the ruling class and its social system in the United States.

4. In the sense indicated above, the party does not hesitate to call itself an American party, the party of the American working class fighting for the revolution in the United States. This demands, however, that the party have or acquire a thorough knowledge of the economic and political situation in the country in order that it may be able effectively to center its main activities in the American class struggle. The movement in this country has all too often displayed a more intimate knowledge of the situation in the Soviet Union or China or France than of the United States. It is imperative to make a radical change in this respect. If the party is to gain the confidence and leadership of the American workers, it must root itself in the American scene. It must study and analyze the history and the economic position of American imperialism; it must study and analyze American politics not only in general, but in their concrete and daily development; it must study and analyze the American labor movement. These studies and analyses, however, are worth while from only one standpoint, namely, that they will enable the party to take active, intelligent and effective part in the class struggle in this country, to intervene promptly and directly in American politics, and not merely to write about them as literary observers. What is said about the problem on a national scale applies with equal force to the problem on a local scale. The party must train its membership that its knowledge of the situation "abroad" is surpassed by its knowledge of the labor movement and the political situation locally, so that in each

locality the party is able to participate directly and in time in the local labor movement and in local politics. From the lowest unit to the highest, the party must learn to react with fully energy to the needs and struggles of the American working class. The respect, confidence and support of the American masses can be won in no other way.

5. Participation in the class struggle as an effective force is possible for the party only if it is imbued with a spirit of action and combat. The working masses will not come to the party if it confines itself to telling them what they ought to do. It must show by example, by its own militant activity in the midst of the workers and side by side with them, that its program and leadership are worthy of their support. There is no other way for a propagandist group to develop into a party of the masses. This dictates an overwhelming emphasis upon party activism, day in and day out, and not limited to rare and isolated spectacular occasions. This means a constant training of the new (and old) members to the conception that the party demands of each and every comrade a basic minimum of activity on party assignment. This means a constant selection and advancement of the active party members and a sifting out of purely book members who retard the work of others. A party facing such enormous tasks, as ours does, must place corresponding responsibilities before its membership from top to bottom. It must be the aim of every branch to assign each member a specific task each week, thus doing away with the paralyzing division between "doers" and "non-doers." It is not necessary to approach every comrade, especially the new recruit, with such an attitude as will result in alienating him from the party immediately. But the orientation of a party of action and of individual responsibility must be kept firmly in mind until it is thoroughly established that the party is a serious organization of combat and not a casual discussion club for passing visitors.

Otherwise the party will surely decline into a futile reformist sect.

6. The party cannot grow out of its present stage of a propagandist group unless its ideas, its program, its slogans are adopted by wide sections of the working class. Our party is the party of the working class. The socialist revolution is the revolution of the working class. The party can exert no influence at all in the American class struggle unless it exerts an influence in the working class. Hence, its main efforts must be directed toward winning workers to its ranks, primarily from the trade union movement. The proletarianization of the party is not only one of the most important guarantees of its revolutionary integrity, but is indispensable to its development as a decisive political factor in the country. The problem of acquiring an overwhelming working class predominance in the party is not to be solved mechanically or by the mere repetition of the wish. It is in the first place a political problem. It is solved by the political activity of the party. If the activity of the party, its slogans and campaigns, correspond to the needs and interests of the workers, the workers will respond to the appeals of the party. But this activity, these slogans and campaigns must be directed consciously and deliberately to the workers—primarily to those organized in the mass organizations, although not to the exclusion of the unorganized. Systematic, planned efforts must be made in every locality for members to establish contacts with individual workers and groups of workers. Every party member must consciously direct his efforts toward becoming a propagandist and organizer of his fellow workers in the shop and neighborhood. Every party unionist must understand that his duty in the union—best fulfilled by being the ablest, most active and most class-conscious union militant—is to advance the influence and forces of the party in his organization. The party as a whole must concentrate on helping each individual member solve the problem of winning to its ranks those workers with whom he has contact. Experience, especially of the Stalinist party, shows that the initial isolation of the party from the workers in a given locality can be overcome by the selection of concentration points—factories and unions in the locality—at which a determined and systematic campaign of agitation and propaganda is conducted. A serious party of action must establish a network of such concentration points throughout the country. Without it proletarianization remains an empty phrase.

7. A revolutionary party functioning in present-day United States must direct its attention for the whole next period to two of the most down-trodden and dispossessed sections of the American working class: the Negro masses and the "locked-out generation," the youth, each of which occupies a special position in the country and must be treated as a special problem. The neglect of the Negro problem is the disgrace of the American revolutionary movement. The extremely modest efforts made up to now show what a vast reservoir of recruitment and revolutionary potentialities is repre-

sented by the Negro masses. A branch functioning in a city with a Negro population is not worthy of the name of a revolutionary organization unless it recruits Negro workers into its ranks. Special attention must be devoted to this problem by the press, literature, agitators and organizers of the party. Similarly with the youth. The unrelieved crises show them that they have literally nothing to gain by maintaining capitalism and everything to gain by overturning it. A party branch which does not have a youth organization functioning side by side with it is only half a branch. The youth, combining studies with activity in the class struggle, is the most important single reserve of the party and its indispensable auxiliary. The party must root out the rotten reformist attitude toward the youth expressed in a contemptuous superiority, in the attitude of seeking to confine the youth to doing the "dirty work" of the party and nothing more. At the same time, the party must help the youth organization overcome the tendency to decline into a sectarian "super-political" movement and aid it to become a broad mass movement of militant youth, a training ground for the party and the class struggle. The party must give special assistance to the youth in establishing contact with industrial workers and the mass labor organizations, where the talents and energies of the young militants best serve the movement. It is most significant that, except for the Stalinists, ours is the only organization that has a youth movement of any importance. This is a precious revolutionary acquisition which must be constantly expanded.

Danger of Bureaucratism

8. The tragic experiences of the international labor movement, and in the Soviet Union particularly, with the ravages of bureaucratism, have made all workers rightly concerned with the problem of workers' democracy. Bureaucratism is the product of the social influence, ideology and pressure of the bourgeoisie in the labor movement, undermining, corrupting and demoralizing it. As an unrelenting fighter against class-collaborationism, the party must at the same time become the outstanding enemy of bureaucratism in the working class movement. Opposition to bourgeois democracy in nowise signifies opposition or indifference to workers' democracy; on the contrary, opposition to bourgeois democracy without counterposing workers' democracy is only grist to the mill of fascism. It must not allow the slightest taint of bureaucratism or tolerance toward bureaucratism to stain and discredit its name. Above all, it must relentlessly combat the pestilence of Stalinism, which darkened the inspiring beacon light of the Russian Revolution and which has alienated millions of workers from the revolutionary movement and the cause of socialism. The socialist movement, socialism itself, cannot be built by bureaucrats or by bureaucratic methods, but only be destroyed by them. Socialism must be and can only be the achievement of the democratically-organized, class conscious action of the working masses in power.

9. The party, therefore, is organized on

the basis of democratic centralism. True party democracy is possible only on the basis of an active membership able to and capable of controlling its leadership, and a responsible elective leadership which justifies itself by the correct policies it pursues and the activities which it engages in. A party fighting the class war must be a centralized and disciplined organization, which demands unity in action on the basis of democratically determined policies. This concept must not, however, be debased into the bureaucratic dogma that since the party "is at war," a régime of military-barracks-discipline must prevail. The right of discussion and of free criticism of the party leadership and policy is a membership right, at all times, to be modified only by the strictly imposed requirements of party activity. Without a rich, free and variegated internal life, party democracy (and, in the long run, the party itself) is made impossible. A leadership which is satisfied with obedience, regardless of how obtained, has already abandoned the most elementary conceptions of party democracy. A membership which gives such obedience simultaneously surrenders party democracy.

Party Education

10. An ignorant and uninformed membership is the bureaucrat's paradise. The first prerequisite of party democracy is an informed membership. An indispensable element of such information is a regular, all-year-round bulletin in which the party leadership gives a regular accounting of its stewardship, informs the membership of its important decisions and motivates them, differences in the leadership or the ranks, and permits the free discussion of problems of party organization, activity and current policy. However, the discussion of important political questions is caricatured and rendered meaningless if it is carried on by an "educated caste" on the one side and an uneducated membership on the other. The training of every party and youth member in the fundamental principles of Marxism, in the main elements of international and American politics, becomes, therefore, one of the best assurances for the preservation of meaningful party democracy. The arming of the party membership with the theory of Marxism is meant not only to equip it for more effective participation in the class struggle, but also for more effective participation in the inner life of the party, in the development of its policies, in constantly improving the relationships between the leadership and the ranks. A party member indifferent to continually learning more about the fundamental theoretical principles of the movement is a party member who will be tolerant toward bureaucratism, or rather, who will become an easy victim of a bureaucracy, not only in the labor movement as a whole, but specifically, in his own party.

11. From this follows the need of constant attention to the theoretical development of the party. Every new member of the party, and especially all of the youth, must pass through at least an elementary series of study groups. Every branch of the

party must set aside regular periods for educational discussion, either on a theoretical question or a problem of current politics. The educational work of the party must be guided and centralized by a special national department. The regular publication, distribution and study of the party's theoretical organ must have the attention of the entire party and youth, and not merely of a select group of "specialists." This organ must be one of the strongest pillars of the party. It must treat the fundamental, theoretical problems of the movement from the Marxian standpoint. It must deal mainly, however, with the problems and position of American capitalism and the American labor movement, and demonstrate that the new generation of Marxists in this country are not only capable of repeating what Marx and Lenin said but of conducting independent and much needed investigations and analyses of new problems, of new political and social phenomena. It must not fear the discussion of new or even old problems on the ground of an "orthodoxy" which has more in common with divine revelation than with genuine living Marxism. It should rather seek to continue the really best traditions of the Marxist movement, and its theoretical discussions, of the pre-war days in Germany and Russia which made possible the enrichment of the arsenal of Marxism by such thinkers as Mehring, Luxemburg, Lenin and Trotsky.

Party Press

12. Just as the theoretical organ of the party must devote itself mainly to propaganda, so the popular political press and literature of the party must devote themselves mainly to agitation, i.e., to concentration on the immediate political slogans and campaigns of the party. If these campaigns are to mean anything, however, it is necessary to make a sharp turn from the old, humdrum propaganda methods. The press must truly be a popular political press for the American worker. If it is to influence and to be read by the American worker, it must be written in a style and a language that will make our ideas accessible to him. That means, firstly, an end to the "professional jargon" of our movement which is unintelligible to him. It means an end to long and unread articles and to heavy, obviously labored propaganda efforts. It means writing about questions which not only concern him but in which he is interested—questions of American politics and the American labor movement, not to the exclusion of international questions, to be sure, but nevertheless with the main emphasis on what he sees about him and what he knows about. It means, also, a paper to which the workers and worker-readers contribute, the adoption and extension on a large scale of that "correspondence to the editor" which features all the

popular bourgeois papers. It means the attempt to center and continue the agitation of the paper on a central campaign for a given period of time, as contrasted to desultory, fitful agitation from week to week. This applies even more strongly to pamphleteering. The bulk of the party's pamphlets must be extremely cheap in price, extremely popular in presentation, devoted always to a single question, in most cases a question that is topical and related to the American scene. The party can well afford to model itself, in this field, on the best examples of agitational work in the pre-war socialist and syndicalist movements in this country. The lecture tours of party speakers, which must be systematically conducted, should also be arranged in the same spirit. In all its agitational and organizing work, the party must emphasize to the American workers that it is not a movement concerned primarily with things and problems which they now feel to be alien or remote from them, but primarily with the things and problems he feels are most acutely his, that it considers it to be, in a word, its task as internationalists to lead in the struggle for the revolution in America.

April, 1940.

The Class Nature of the Stalinist Parties

A Resolution Submitted for Discussion

The document that appears below was presented at the recent Plenum of the National Committee of the Workers Party by Comrade Garrett, as a statement of views prepared by way of opening a discussion in the party on the question of Stalinism. Without voting on the views presented in the document, the Plenum devoted a lengthy and fruitful discussion session to it, and decided to initiate an educational discussion in the party on the question. It is here presented with the full admission of the writer that the document is far from complete in its investigation of the problem, and that all its formulations are by no means definitive. Its publication in THE NEW INTERNATIONAL is intended to initiate the discussion in order that, on the basis of such a discussion a finished party document may be prepared.—Editors.

* * *

1. Russia emerged from the Second World War as one of its two principal victors. To the degree that the relations between Russia and the rest of the world have undergone a significant change has a change of equal significance developed in the international role of Stalinism, hence in the role of the Stalinist parties. Bureaucratic collectivism has extended its domain and military position, and, coupling its new strength with the crisis of European capi-

talism, it has altered the objectives of the Communist Parties to conform more specifically to the requirements of bureaucratic collectivism as a unique and uncertain social system.

Stalinism, as the greatest organized threat to socialist mass action on an international scale, has its well-spring in the Russian counterrevolution. The defeat of the revolution outside of Russia in the early 1920's, and the consequent isolation of the workers' state, produced the reactionary theory of "socialism in one country." In the wake of this theory and the outrageous international policies it dictated, a series of terrible defeats were inflicted upon the revolutionary socialist movement, culminating in its virtual destruction. Simultaneously, the defeat of the revolution outside of Russia, and the impossibility of building socialism in one country, set into motion that chain of historic circumstances which produced, through the triumph of the counter-revolution in Russia, the entirely new and unforeseen class state we have described as bureaucratic collectivism.

2. During the pre-war years, Russian foreign policy sought to secure the frontiers of Russia against attack. Thus it cultivated a reasonably powerful Germany as a mid-continent bulwark against English, French and American intervention. Thus, too, it

reduced the Communist Parties of the world to border patrols of the Kremlin. The Stalinist Parties served generally to maintain the status quo—either by "respectability" or by the threat of provoking revolutionary actions, according to which best suited the purposes of the Kremlin in its relations with any given country.

In its new position of continental colossus, and conqueror, Russia no longer needs an independently strong Germany. And by the same token it is able to direct the Stalinist Parties towards perspectives more intimately in accord with the ideology and objectives of bureaucratic collectivism. We are therefore compelled to amend our evaluation of international Stalinism in order to bring this evaluation up to date with the new developments.

As Trotsyists, we have traditionally described the Stalinist Parties as agents of the Kremlin or as social patriots executing the role assigned them by the Russian foreign office. However, accepting the reasoning of comrade Trotsky, we also predicted that under the momentum of social patriotic policy first dictated by Stalin's needs the Stalinist Parties would become independently and permanently social patriotic, regardless of what subsequent orders came from Stalin. That is to say, we predicted that the Stalinists in America, once em-

barked on the roal of social patriotism, would end their subservience to Stalin and remain a social patriotic party. Facts, however, have proved us in error. In reviewing the general correctness of our evaluation of Stalinism and, in arriving at a new evaluation of Stalinism, we are obliged to discard what has been proved wrong, and to add what is new.

Doing that, we arrive at the following evaluation:

The Stalinist Parties are an internationally organized ANTI-SOCIALIST and ANTI-CAPITALIST force whose aim it is (a) to defend and extend the power of the Russian ruling class, and (b) where class relations in the capitalist countries make possible the development of Stalinism into a mass movement with decisive influence, to overthrow capitalism and replace it by bureaucratic collectivism.

3. It is no more possible for bureaucratic collectivism than for socialism to establish a more or less historically permanent stability on a national scale. Bureaucratic collectivism therefore seeks to create for itself international conditions of stability in economy and politics (as did capitalism in its day, as will the proletarian dictatorship in its day). At one stage, while the new ruling class is taking shape, and general international conditions require it, it is the exclusive duty of the Stalinist Parties to defend Russia by compromise with the bourgeoisie or by militant action. With Russia's new strength as a war victor, and in the conditions of capitalist instability, and in the arse for the extension of bureaucratic collectivism by defeating both the capitalist class and the working class. This development manifests itself on different levels, depending upon the degree of capitalist convulsion and the relationship of class forces in any given country.

In the Baltics and in parts of the Far East bureaucratic collectivism has imperially spread its rule through military conquest and outright territorial acquisition. In Yugoslavia, Tito's puppet government is establishing bureaucratic collectivism through liquidation of the native ruling class and suppression of the masses. In France, the situation has sufficiently developed to disclose the objectives of Stalinism, although the issue is far from having risen to the point of decision. In the United States, where capitalism enjoys a relatively greater stability, and where the CP is still far from the mass movement it must become to effectuate its role, its activities and objectives are necessarily restrained to the traditional framework of simple service to the Russian ruling class.

The objective condition for the development of Stalinism in the capitalist countries is the inability of capitalism to re-establish any kind of organic stability, the bankruptcy of the old ruling class and the disruption of the socialist movement. In France the social system has reached a degree of disequilibrium, and the Stalinists a degree of mass influence, to make it possible for them to consider, however distant it may at the moment be, the question of power. To take power, Stalinist reaction must simultaneously engage in the defeat of

the capitalist system, and in the destruction of the socialist movement. Thus the issue there (omitting for the present vital international considerations) can only be decided by the outcome of the class struggle, principally the destruction of the proletarian movement through actual combat or absorption. And there is the great obstacle to Stalinist triumph.

In making our analysis of the new phenomenon of bureaucratic collectivism in Russia we carefully avoided predictions as to the ultimate stability and duration of this historical monster. For that, we said (and must again repeat), is an issue that can only be decided in the actual development of the class struggle. So especially is this true of its international aspirations as a social system. *It has not yet won a single major class battle outside of Russia.* It has strengthened its power tremendously through annexation or puppet rule, but it has not yet triumphed as a system of class rule over any significant proletariat or bourgeoisie—as capitalism triumphed over feudalism—despite its tremendous forces and reserves. Stalinism, sweeping to power in France, would change the character of our epoch. Precisely for that reason, it would find itself embroiled in actual combat with Britain and America should it take any serious steps towards exclusive state power and war with American imperialism is certainly far from Stalin's desire or capacity today. Stalinism has won a victory in Yugoslavia, but Yugoslavia is far distant in the scale of historical decision for the class forces that would have to be defeated in France. And there is no reason to believe that over there is has entirely crushed the resistance of the workers and peasants who were deceived by Tito and will yet seek to throw off the yoke.

4. Unlike all other reactionary movements we have known, Stalinism has a mass base in the working class. This is a point of extreme significance. Stalinism is able to appear as the champion of the working class precisely because its object is to destroy capitalism as well as to enslave the proletariat. *It does propose* to nationalize property. However, nationalized property without political control of the working class is, as we have learned, not socialism, but bureaucratic collectivism. The nationalized property belongs to the state, the state belongs to the bureaucrats, and the proletariat continues to be exploited as a class.

In executing its first duty, defense of the Russian ruling class, the Stalinist Party may and often does (as it has in the United States) support bourgeois parties and engage in obvious anti-working class actions. Similarly, it may instigate and support working class action against capitalism (a) as a threat against anti-Russian policy (for example in the United States today), or (b) to make headway among the working class so that it can improve its effectiveness as an agent of Russian Stalinism, and, at a later stage strike out more boldly on its path towards bureaucratic collectivism.

Stalinism is totalitarian, but it is a peculiar kind of totalitarianism. It is, at once, anti-socialist and anti-capitalist; and it attracts the working class. Stalinism un-

derstands the meaning of the class struggle. It understands that it must have the intervention of the working class to defeat capitalism. Attracting the working class through its anti-capitalist appeal, it utilizes the working class for its own reactionary ends. Thus, *the Stalinist parties are not working class parties*, but totalitarian parties with a mass base in the proletariat. They do not advance the cause of the proletariat in any sense whatsoever, not even in the limited sense in which the reformist parties are compelled to do solely their very nature and historical function.

While it derives its mass base from the working class, a symptomatic source of Stalinist recruitment and ideological direction is the labor bureaucrat, the declassed intellectual and middle class professional who see no way out of the dilemma of capitalism save through Stalinist rule. Together, all these form a significant social grouping in the Stalinist Parties. Certain labor bureaucrats whose interests clash with sinking capitalism precisely because their position rests on labor, see the possibility of retaining their privileged position in the much higher level of Stalinist rule. Scientists, professors, literati, middle class elements of all kinds face the impossibility of capitalism, and see in the Stalinist organization of a planned economy an opportunity to save themselves, to exercise their skills under conditions of extreme social privilege. While policy does not emanate from this group (it generally never from the Russian bureaucracy), they nevertheless influence it in the sense that they form a top social layer or grouping whose interests are most adaptable to bureaucratic collectivism.

The Stalinist game is a completely reactionary game which can only end in disaster for the proletariat if successful. Should they gain complete ascendancy in such a country as France, through decisive influence over the working class and state rule, they would bind the working class in a bitter totalitarian vise. The class struggle would continue and eventually triumph, but only after doubly severe, doubly hard sacrifices had been imposed on the working class. We cannot, therefore, give any kind of support to Stalinism, either electorally or otherwise. Because of the peculiar nature of this reactionary movement we may sometimes have to enter into certain forms of collaboration with it (as in certain strikes or unions they control). But we must relentlessly wage warfare, class warfare against Stalinism, as we wage it against capitalism. Whether this involves working among the genuinely proletarian elements it has sucked into its movement, or attacking it from the outside, our obligation remains the same: to expose the Stalinist parties as anti-working class, to destroy their influence.

5. Because bureaucratic collectivism has spread its wings, it by no means signifies that the issue is thereby settled. Neither history, nor the working class have yet yielded. We have said that it is the historical duty of the working class to defeat international capitalism, to create its proletarian dictatorships that will usher in the next stage of world history, socialism. That

is still our view, it is still the key to our entire program. Capitalism has created the conditions which make it possible for humanity to advance to a higher social order through proletarian conquest. Should bureaucratic collectivism triumph universally, it would have proved that the proletariat was incapable of organizing for power in this period, that unable to take power from collapsing capitalism it had to yield for a period of uncertain duration to a new system of exploitation into which history had been deflected from its natural course. But that is a long way from being established. Socialism is still the first point on today's historical agenda.

A combination of unusual circumstances—the usurpation of power by a bureaucracy in a country where the proletariat had already defeated capitalism—gave birth to the monstrosity of bureaucratic collectiv-

ism. Impulses toward bureaucratic collectivism exist in the capitalist countries, notably among those who would free themselves of capitalist chaos and still retain a privileged position in society. But that is all. Stalinism has not yet so completely fastened itself on the proletariat that it can bend it to its bureaucratic will. It has one advantage: the absence of an organized socialist movement of mass proportions. Therein lies the weakness of the proletariat. Therein is Stalinism's great opportunity.

The class struggle, however, continues. The socialist movement can be regenerated. Inside and outside the Stalinist parties are the proletarians who, once again organized in a revolutionary party, under the inspiration and activity of a program that speaks their needs, not only can but will fight the class struggle against capitalism and

against Stalinism. Stalinism is already beset by opposition in Yugoslavia. Mass resentment must run high in the countries it has annexed as well as in Russia. There are signs of a declining influence in France. Vast numbers of French workers are outside the Stalinist movement and are socialist in consciousness. In the United States, the Stalinists are nowhere near having decisive mass influence. A defeat visited upon Stalinism in such a country as France would have its immediate repercussions elsewhere. The reconstitution of a mass socialist movement in France, or the United States, would sound the death knell of Stalinism and capitalism equally. That is our unrelinquishable need, our greatest obligation: the building of the revolutionary party.

EMANUEL GARRETT.

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