

The New _____
INTERNATIONAL

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U. A. W.

**THE ISSUES AND FACTIONS IN THE
PRE-CONVENTION STRUGGLE**

By Ben Hall

The Jewish Problem After Hitler

By Albert Gates

By Robert Stone :

**THE PLUNDER OF
SOUTH AFRICA-II**

By Albert Goldman :

**RUSSIA: WHAT IS
THIS MONSTROSITY ?**

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Attention, New Readers: The branches of the Workers Party have made special effort to get copies of this issue into the hands of as many UAW militants as possible. We especially want you to read our analysis of "The United Automobile Workers Before Its Convention," by our Detroit correspondent, Ben Hall. We invite your comments on this article and we urge you not to miss future issues of THE NEW INTERNATIONAL. This magazine is loaded each month with articles on all questions of vital importance to the labor movement in the United States, with material on international questions which now more than ever are part of our daily lives.

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We have at this writing ordered 500 extra copies above our normal circulation of 3,000. But we have received indications that by the time we go to press it will be necessary to print 1,000 extra copies to distribute to members of the UAW and other unionists.

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THE NEW INTERNATIONAL

A Monthly Organ of Revolutionary Marxism

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NO. 7

Convention Struggle in the UAW

An Analysis of the Issues and Factions

I

A time-capsule history of the American labor movement would record that at one time any union member aspiring to a ready popularity could enjoy the applause of his listeners by an impassioned appeal: "Let's keep our union out of politics." This homely precept is now abandoned. The modern labor movement on Election Day and every day is preoccupied with political problems. Even the stronghold of pure and simple "unionism," the AFL, is yielding to the inescapable compulsion toward political action. The theory that labor must abstain from politics is a fossil remains of an outlived era.

The cry "Keep the union out of politics" has given way to a new complaint: "There's too much politics in the union." The speech of a Political Action Committee director who insists on more attention to political action will conclude with an appeal for less "politics" and more "unity" in the union. At the coming convention of the United Automobile Workers Union, the delegate who naively admits that he frowns upon the union's political action program will not be refuted or criticized. He will simply be ignored or ridiculed. Let the same delegate, however, decry the supposed evil effects of "politics in our union" and he will win the approval of the claque.

Inside the union, "politics" refers to the factional caucuses or groupings which are formed on the basis of definite platforms or more often on the basis of loyalty to an individual who symbolizes a certain platform or type of unionism and to the conflicts and debates between these groups in their struggle for "power," that is, for a majority of the union. Politics-in-the-union is an inevitable and desirable aspect of the union-in-politics. Once it has decided to engage in political action, the labor movement must decide what kind of political action it favors. It must (and does) choose between the existing parties and sub-parties and platforms—or it must create new political parties and work out new political platforms. These decisions cannot be made without conflicts inside the union. In the near future, an intensification of politics inside the union cannot be avoided. The old policies of the labor movement are crumbling. They must be replaced.

When the top union officialdom crusades against "factionalism" and against "political groupings" in the union it means: "No politics except our own." The labor officialdom itself represents a political tendency and a "faction" in the labor movement. It represents the political tendency of bourgeois or pro-capitalist politics. Its hatred of all other groupings signifies that it seeks a monopoly for its own politics. Similarly, the Communist Party tolerates no "factionalism" in

the unions which it controls for it seeks a monopoly for Stalinist politics.

The distaste of the rank and file for factionalism derives from entirely different considerations. They want a solid, unified union which can resist attacks from the employers. In their minds, "factionalism" is frequently equated with the reprehensible policies of the Communist Party, which aims to convert the union into a tool of Russian foreign policy. Or, it may appear exclusively or primarily as a conflict between individuals without ideas or ideals, for the sake of personal advancement. Such an appearance is often deceptive. The conflict between individuals often hides a deep-going fight between serious tendencies and opposing principles. Such is the case in the United Automobile Workers Union. Politics inside the union movement must not be abandoned but raised to a higher, more principled level. The UAW is distinguished in this: the political struggle inside the union has reached a stage more advanced than in any other union. This struggle will erupt at the coming convention in the conflict between the Walter Reuther caucus and the Addes-Thomas-Leonard-Communist Party bloc.

II

In the two opposing factions, three distinct political tendencies criss-cross. They are:

1) *The conservative, pro-capitalist officialdom.* This tendency, which supports the "orthodox" CIO policies of Philip Murray and tail-ends the so-called liberal wing of the Democratic Party, is divided into two sections: (a) the pro-Stalinist wing, taking in the bulk of this Murrayite tendency, represented by R. J. Thomas, Richard T. Leonard, and to a lesser extent by George Addes, and which is the main strength of the anti-Reuther bloc; and (b) the anti-Stalinist wing, which includes the small number of supporters of the Association of Catholic Trade Unionists and the followers of August Scholle, president of the Michigan CIO Council and regional director of the CIO.

(2) *The Communist Party.* The Stalinists are represented by a whole group of secondary officials. Their chief task is, of course, to adapt Stalinist politics to the concrete situation in the UAW and if possible to manipulate the union in the interests of the reactionary Russian ruling class. The main link between them and the Murrayite pro-Stalinists is George Addes.

(3) *A strong militant wing* which opposes the Stalinists from the left and at the same time remains dissatisfied with the official Murray CIO policies.

The fundamental clash in the UAW pits the radical militant section of the union against the conservative officialdom, which is supported in the fight by the Communist Party. By aligning himself with the radical wing, Reuther, who is himself a left-wing bourgeois labor official, was able to catapult himself into the presidency of the UAW.

The faction fight which arouses intense passion on all sides is not the product of capricious temperaments or inflexible ambitions of the top leaders but the expression of a deep-seated rumbling in the ranks. The basis for the present fight was laid by the militants during the war when they carried on a struggle against the whole united upper officialdom, including Reuther, Addes, Thomas, the Stalinists—all of them.

War Record of Labor Leaders

Unity of the top bureaucracy was cemented by its unanimous approval of the program of "Victory Through Equality of Sacrifice" as the summation of its policies for the war years. The no-strike pledge, speed-up of production, the surrender of premium pay for Saturday and Sunday work, all these concessions and more, were to be the unconditional contribution of the workers to the "war effort." In return, the labor leaders required only the right of pleading with the capitalist class to make "equal sacrifices" and the privilege of whining and grumbling when it did not. (Later, the officials urged industrial workers to spend their off-days aiding in farm work in their areas to overcome the agricultural labor shortage. The capitalists, however, were denied this happy pastime.) To help win the brave new world of peace, plenty, liberty, equality and security (which we are now presumably enjoying) the leaders bowed before the War Labor Board as the supreme arbiter of labor relations; they accepted freezing of wages by the government; they swallowed every bitter pill served up by Roosevelt and later by Truman, gagging only at the most poisonous acts such as the proposals to militarize the labor movement by drafting all strikers. In short, they abandoned the class struggle.

These policies adopted by the labor leadership because its fundamental loyalties linked up its interests with the victory of the capitalists in the war, soon placed it in a very precarious position. The role in society of the pro-capitalist labor leadership is that of a middleman between the working class and the capitalist class. It trades its support among the workers for the privileges and prestige granted to it by the government and the bourgeoisie. But to retain its position at the head of the working class it must be willing and able to deliver concessions from the capitalist class to the working class, or at least to help shield the working class movement from attack. It is able to defend the existence of the capitalist system only by fighting against the capitalist class to a limited extent and by limited means.

The stability of the UAW leadership was undermined when it abandoned the class struggle against the capitalist class while the latter continued its class struggle against the workers. In April, 1942, in a flush of excessive zeal, it surrendered premium pay for week-end and holiday work. Other unions, however, did not follow suit. In August, the officialdom, still united, made the disgraceful demand that all unions be compelled to make the same sacrifice; if not, the UAW would reverse its decision. The concessions were not conditioned by any sacrifices of the capitalist class, only by the sacrifices of other unions. This measure, pushed through a convention with great difficulty, has only one explanation: it was calculated to protect the UAW officialdom from competing

bureaucracies of other unions who might offer more to the workers and edge the auto union leaders out. This little example shows how rifts can develop between different sections of the union bureaucracy and how sensitive the leaders are to this fact.

Without leadership during the war, a militant rank and file and secondary leadership carried on guerrilla warfare against the employers. Hundreds of "wildcat" walkouts involved no less than tens of thousands of UAW members. Because the top leadership repudiated these strikes, denounced them, and with a wearisome persistence invariably demanded an unconditional return to work, these strikes inevitably became demonstrations against the leadership itself. In 1944, the banners carried by the pickets at the Chrysler Highland Park plant (Local 490) read: "Fight for the boys who fight for you. The company fired part of your leadership. The International UAW-CIO fired the rest."

Unanimity in the ranks against the leadership prevailed when the International Executive Board deposed leaders of local unions who refused to order their men back to work. The ranks voted these men back to office with huge majorities. The Board ruled that no local could process the grievances of men penalized for unauthorized strikes. W. G. Grant, president of Local 600 at the Ford Rouge plant, followed suit by refusing to handle the grievances of more than a hundred workers. The membership rewarded him properly by defeat in the next local elections. The decision of the Board became a dead letter. The ranks of the union revolted against proposals to restore piecework in the name of "incentive pay" and sent it down to defeat at the 1943 convention.

Rank and File Resistance

Increasing tension between the militant rank and file and the top leadership reached its culmination at the 1944 convention with the formation of "The Rank-and-File Caucus." Without the support of a single member of the International Executive Board, this caucus won 40 per cent of the delegates to its proposal for outright rescinding of the no-strike pledge. Even after the whole top leadership had united to drive through a motion to reaffirm the pledge, the caucus successfully fought for a membership referendum on the question. It elected its own national steering committee. It published its own national paper, the *Rank and Filer*. It began to form the basis for a new, substitute union leadership. A vigorous, self-confident stratum which opposes the Stalinists and the conservative bourgeois labor leadership and is sympathetic to radical policies was the backbone of the Rank and File Caucus.

The Addes-Thomas-CP bloc opposed the radical rank-and-file movement with irreconcilable hostility. Basing themselves on a more conservative section of the membership, they fought grimly for a consistently conservative program. The impact of the rank and file movement on the top leadership was displayed in the actions of Walter Reuther.

1942: The UAW officials ignored their differences in a festival of mutual admiration and support. Reuther, who of course had endorsed the "sacrifice" program, seconds the nomination of Addes for secretary-treasurer at the convention. Richard T. Leonard nominates his "good friend, Reuther" for vice-president and Addes rises to second the nomination. There are no opposing nominations. The bureaucratic sky seems cloudless. But under the blows of the rank and file, the solid front of the leadership breaks in two.

1943: The fight against incentive pay begins. The first

crack appears in the bureaucratic wall. Reuther steps out to lead the forces opposed to piecework. He gains the support of the militants in this fight.

1944: The rank-and-file militants, developing more swiftly than Reuther, take up the fight against the no-strike pledge. But Reuther, a "responsible" leader concerned with promoting the war, cannot go along. To avoid losing control of the militant movement he proposes a compromise: let us retain the pledge in war industries and abandon it in the industries reconverted to peacetime production. The rank and file spurns this compromise; Reuther gets only a handful of votes for his proposal.

1945: The war is over. UAW President R. J. Thomas at a Board meeting complains that the rank and file is out of hand; the leadership has lost control; he does not know what to do. Reuther, freed now of the wartime restraints, says that the leadership itself must issue a call to battle and restore its dwindling prestige. Using his post of General Motors director as a base, he wins the leadership and calls the GM strike. The other members of the Board learn of the strike from the newspaper headlines!

The General Motors strike was the most significant strike of the immediate post-war period. Strikes were called by most of the big CIO unions at the same time. In each case, the top officials solidified their position by organizing a fight for a wage increase and in many cases liquidated movements of internal revolt. In the UAW, the revolt of the rank and file had gone too far for R. J. Thomas. By leading the GM strike, Reuther was able to capture leadership of the militant section of the union; and on the basis of this new position, he deposed the old leader, Thomas. There has been much discussion of the "timing" of the GM strike. Should it have been called before Christmas or after? Should it have been called in 1945 or later in 1946? These questions are not to the point. The GM strike was accurately timed to coincide with the sentiments of the ranks, who were straining at the leash. They were waiting to express all the grievances and resentments that had accumulated during the war and this was the first opportunity to do so. The slogans and demands of the GM strike exceeded all others in scope: "Open the books"; "wage increases without price increases"; "increased wages out of the swollen profits of the monopolists." The workers were called upon to fight not merely for an increase in pay but for a new social program and to act as the guardians of the whole population against price gouging.

Reuther as Weathervane

Reuther caught up again with that movement which he had headed in 1943 but which had by-passed him in 1944. The "Rank and File" movement of 1944 dissolved into the Reuther caucus. Its elements, however, are still fighting against both the conservative section of the labor officialdom and the Stalinists. Now, they seek to achieve their aims through the victory of the Reuther faction.

The anti-Reuther bloc, composed of the supporters of Murray and the Stalinists, is made possible and inevitable because both sections of this bloc are threatened by the more radical tendency. In other CIO unions, supporters of Murray are in conflict with the Communist Party but these conflicts do not duplicate the situation in the UAW. The fight in the UAW is a continuation in a different form of a struggle that began during the war when the friendship between Murray and the Stalinists was unmarred by the contradictions of United States and Russian imperialism. The difficulties that

separate Murray and the CP date from the end of the war and coincide with the difficulties between the two rivals for world domination. Such a conflict takes place in the UAW inside the anti-Reuther bloc itself. The Wayne County Council of the CIO (Detroit), which the anti-Reuther bloc controls, is the scene of protracted maneuvers between the Stalinist and non-Stalinist elements of the bloc against one another. The extreme demands of the Stalinist-controlled Farm Equipment Workers Union for autonomy in its negotiations for unity with the UAW must be understood *not* primarily as a move to support the Addes bloc as a whole—for *that* it would have sufficed simply to join the UAW on ordinary terms—but as a move by the CP to strengthen its own forces and to secure guarantees from its own allies. The CP must prepare for a possible fight against the pro-Murray section of the anti-Reuther bloc. All these differences are, however, subordinated to the main, common task of defeating the pro-Reuther tendency.

A secondary division cuts across the main line. The anti-Stalinist wing of the pro-Murray camp is found inside the pro-Reuther caucus. This group (ACTU, Scholle) is basically in accord with the policies advocated by the non-Stalinist wing of the anti-Reuther camp. They diverge only in one respect: refusal to make a bloc with the Stalinists. They therefore join the pro-Reuther camp not because of its militant character but because of its anti-Stalinist character. But since the real attractive power of the pro-Reuther camp lies in its appeal to *militant* sentiments, the conservatism of this group is a source of weakness to the militant movement and it serves mainly to help deter the leftward evolution of the militants.

III

Reuther was elected president at the last convention of the UAW, but a majority of the International Executive Board remained and still remains in the hands of his opponents. How is the factional dispute which takes the form of repeated collisions between the highest officer of the union and its highest governing body to be decided?

The plans of the anti-Reuther bloc are simple. They aim by hook or by crook to overcome Reuther's convention majority, to remove him from office at the 1947 convention and by bureaucratic measures to solidify their position. Their latest move was to utilize their Board majority to force through a secretly concocted merger with the Farm Equipment Workers Union, a small CIO union under the tight control of the Stalinists, and in violation of the UAW constitution to give the FE some 500 convention votes which would be added to the anti-Reuther column. This maneuver was defeated by vote of a majority of the local unions. Other possible moves include an increase in the terms of office of the top leadership to two years and abolition or restriction of caucus rights which would make it easier to hide the inner workings of the union from the rank and file. A straw in the wind was the defeat of a motion by Reuther to make verbatim minutes of Board meetings available for the inspection of the rank and file.

From Reuther's standpoint, there are two alternative ways of "settling" the fight. He can attempt to "split" his opposition, form an alliance with the non-Stalinist, pro-Murray wing of his opposition and isolate the CP. The temptation to pursue this course will be great if the Addes camp, smarting from its big defeat in the FE referendum, makes overtures to Reuther for some kind of "harmony" pact.

Or, Reuther might attempt to unify the decisive majority of the union around a new, radical social program which consistently carries out the implications of the GM strike program of 1945-46. This would involve a clear-cut stand against both sectors of the anti-Reuther camp. Faced with this choice, he finds it impossible to take either course in a determined fashion.

On the one hand, the pro-Murray section of the anti-Reuther camp has been irreconcilable against the man who "betrayed" them by becoming a leader of radicals. Reuther could overcome this hostility only by becoming more loyal than the most loyal Murrayites, by making a series of organizational compromises and abjuring his radical anti-Stalinist talk. By such actions, he would risk alienating the very source of his real strength, the radical militants, and becoming a mere adjutant for Philip Murray. Reuther, however, has charted a far more ambitious course for himself than that. On the other hand, Reuther cannot rise above his own political nature; despite all his talents and imagination, he is not basically a class-conscious, militant working-class leader, but rather a pro-capitalist, opportunist labor official. He shifts his fight from one axis to another to make immediate gains. He makes public declarations for harmony while in private he advises his followers to continue the struggle.

Role of Walter Reuther

In recent speeches Reuther has been playing with a loud pedal on this theme: the irresponsible factionalism of my opposition makes it impossible to carry out a constructive program; and the union cannot make progress until its stranglehold on the Board is broken and I get a majority.

"Who gets a majority?" is not, however, the real question. The problem that is posed is: "How can we best unite the decisive majority of the membership around a progressive labor program?" If the union cannot go forward until the faction fight is settled, then the faction fight cannot be satisfactorily settled until the militants consciously adopt and fight for a new labor program that can inspire the whole membership. It is not the faction fight that holds the UAW back and prevents progress. That would be standing the matter on its head. The faction fight is one result of the inability of the union to make progress on the basis of the current policies of the CIO. No serious faction fight annoys the Steel Workers Union. What prevents it from making great progress? Unions with big faction fights, with little faction fights or with no faction fights are all in about the same position. To understand why this is the case, we have to examine the situation of the whole union movement and the nature of its political and economic policies.

Half of the nation's families have a direct stake in the union movement. Their breadwinners are union men. Their income depends immediately on the strength of the union and its policies. Fifteen million organized workers can and do determine whether the factories, mines and railroads shall or shall not operate. They are capable of the most inspiring solidarity and tenacity on the picket lines, as exemplified by the miners and auto workers. They fill the Cadillac Squares and Madison Square Gardens in all the industrial centers by the hundreds of thousands to demonstrate for their demands. They can count upon the support of allies: Negroes, veterans, tenants, foremen. This giant of a labor movement, strangely enough, is concerned with the task of holding its own, of defending itself. In many instances it is not successful. A railroad strike was broken by President Truman when he threat-

ened to draft all strikers. A mine strike was broken by a Supreme Court and Administration-inspired injunction. Post-war strikes in auto, steel and electrical equipment were sabotaged by the intervention of government fact-finding commissions. By overwhelming majorities in both houses, Congress passed the Taft-Hartley bill and little congressmen in the state legislatures copy the latest anti-labor fads.

Two Periods in Recent Labor History

In the early days of the CIO, the labor movement was far weaker, less unified. It was harassed by police violence, company unionism and vigilante attacks; but it was chalking up one inspiring gain after another. Old age pensions, unemployment insurance, wages and hours laws, anti-injunction acts, the right to organize—all these were won by a labor movement far weaker than today's. The more powerful labor movement of 1947 cannot maintain the social rights and the standard of living of its members.

In the 58-page pamphlet of economic analysis entitled: "Wages; Prices; Profits," the UAW proved in scrupulous detail, "The Automobile Worker's Case for a 23½ Cent Wage Increase." Scholarly graphs showed the rising line of prices and living costs. Itemized charts displayed the shrunken bar of purchasing power. Tables of copious statistics enumerated the heavy profits of the manufacturers. Wages could be raised. Prices could be lowered. Profits had to be slashed. The union, however, was armed only with brilliant statistical devices. Realization of these demands fell far short of what was necessary and possible. The paradoxical situation of the auto workers can be summarized in the changes in the real hourly wage rate after the necessary allowances for increases in living costs and taxes in two periods.

From 1936 to 1941, the period of the founding of the union, when it still had to prove its strength and conquer its main footholds, the real hourly wage rate of auto workers rose from 76 cents to about 96 cents an hour. From 1941 to 1946, after the power of the UAW and the whole CIO multiplied and every major industry was organized, real auto wages fell from 96 cents an hour to about 88 cents an hour.

A question arises: why does the graph of labor's rights and standards dip downward in the period when the line of union power curves upward? The facile answer that a faction fight is taking place is totally false. The real cause lies in the crippling policies doggedly defended by the top union officialdom, including Reuther. These policies date back to the days of the early New Deal in 1933 but their catastrophic results are becoming obvious only now.

The labor program of the New Deal administration of Franklin Delano Roosevelt was a frightened reaction to the powerful radical surge in the American working class as a result of five years of bitter economic crisis and the performance of the Hoover regime. This radical wave is illustrated partially in the vote of the Socialist Party in 1932 (nearly one million) and in the eruption of violent strikes. The number of strikes rose from 651 in 1930, involving a work loss of 3 million man-days, to 852 in 1932, with a loss of 10½ million man-days. Veterans marched to Washington for the bonus. Farmers dumped milk on the highways during a National Farm Holiday. Unemployed participated in "Hunger Marches" to the capital. All this before the advent of the Roosevelt administration.

Roosevelt sought to prevent this discontent from getting out of control. It was essential in his mind that pro-capitalist labor officials take the helm lest radicals and socialists take

over by default. To make this possible the New Deal, through Section 7A of the NRA, aimed to take the workers off the picket lines and send them through the red tape mill of the NLRB. So successful was this policy, for a time, that the NRA became known as the "National Run-Around."

This was a period when the capitalist class appeased the working class in order to ransom a tottering capitalist system. Part of the ransom price was the whole series of reforms sponsored by Roosevelt. The policy of the labor leadership, then as now, consisted in supporting the so-called friends of labor in the Democratic Party. The New Deal reforms were a necessary element in the perpetuation of this type of bourgeois, pro-capitalist politics. In a period of appeasement of labor, the union leaders traded off the support of the labor movement to those capitalist politicians who paid the highest price. This policy had a certain superficial plausibility. It seemed to work; it seemed to bring more gains for the labor movement. Actually, these gains were won not because labor supported liberal capitalist politicians like Roosevelt, but because the capitalist class feared that without them, the labor movement would withdraw its support and fall into "irresponsible" radical hands.

War Brings About a Turn

But the beginning of the war in Europe corresponded to a turn in the strategy of the capitalist class. The expense, first of war preparations and then of war itself, had to be paid by the masses. This turn occurred not under Truman but under Roosevelt. He himself underlined this turn when he said: we must speak not of Dr. New Deal but of Dr. Win-the-War. The policy of appeasing labor was gradually abandoned but a dazie of super-patriotism screened the turn in policy. As the capitalist class shifted from defense to attack, a new emphasis developed imperceptibly in the old policies of the labor leadership. Formerly it was, "support the men who gave us most." Now it became, "support the capitalist politicians who will take away least." Despite Roosevelt's attacks on wartime labor rights and standards, the labor officialdom continued to support him. This became New Dealism in reverse, going downward. Support Roosevelt because he will take away least. We witnessed a strange phenomenon. Each time labor would "win" a great victory at the polls, cries of "betrayal" would resound from the offices of the union leadership as the Congress, elected with their support, continued to chop away at the working class.

The Republican Congress and the Truman Administration continue this policy. The United States must finance the recovery of world capitalism; it contests with Russia for domination of the whole world. The costs of this conflict, like the costs of the war itself, must be borne by the workers. The period of appeasing of labor has not returned. The capitalist class is embarked on an anti-labor offensive.

The mechanics of an upside-down New Dealism compel the labor leadership to appease the capitalist class. If Truman breaks a railroad strike it does not matter; they support him lest an administration which will break even more strikes come into office. It is this policy of appeasement of the capitalist class which generates the steady retreat of labor and the decline in its living standards and political and social rights. The capitalist class presses forward. The labor leadership seeks to avoid any sharp collision. This is possible only by continued retreat.

Only a fine line distinguishes Truman from the Republican majority. Truman hopes that the labor leadership itself

will remain at the head of the parade and organize the workers in a disciplined march backward. He therefore prefers a "milder" policy. The Congress majority places more reliance upon the clubs and whips of governmental coercion to force the workers backward. They are for a "sterner" policy. But this is only a minor distinction in technique. The left-over New Dealers—the Wallaces and the Peppers—served as pay-off men who delivered the goods at the door of labor when the agenda called for the appeasement of labor. Today they merely clutter up the scene and stand in the way of a complete break by labor with capitalist politicians.

IV

Blow after blow will fall upon the labor movement with monotonous regularity until it understands that its arms are held by the "liberals" while the strokes are administered by the "reactionaries." This division of labor will continue until the working class ends its dependence upon the "liberals" and begins to rely exclusively upon its own independent class action. It is not a matter of inventing a somewhat better and more effective program but of substituting a *working class* program for the old *liberal capitalist* one. Labor must issue its declaration of independence. Such a declaration must be an all-sided program of political, economic and social class struggle with the following minimum essentials:

The Tasks Before Labor

(1) The immediate formation of an Independent Labor Party based upon the organized labor movement and all the mass organizations which fight for the people. For an uncompromising opposition to all the capitalist politicians and a complete break with the Republican and Democratic Parties.

(2) A plan of action against the Taft-Hartley Act which relies upon the coordinated, independent mass action of the workers in the form of strikes, demonstrations, mass rallies and picketing, etc. No reliance upon any capitalist politicians in this fight. Every legal and constitutional device to be employed without deluding the workers into giving exaggerated importance to them. No reliance upon judges and courts and lawyers.

(3) Labor, and not the liberal capitalists, to become the true champions of all sections of the population who suffer oppression and discrimination in any form. The organization by the union movement of a Labor Veterans Legion, mass tenants' associations, popular mass committees of Negro and white workers to fight against every form of race discrimination.

The active rank and file of the UAW has repeatedly demonstrated that it will greet such a program with enthusiasm. Wherever and whenever the leadership has issued a call for action the ranks have responded aggressively. During the war years, they carried on a working class policy in their own way without, and against, their own leadership. The militants in the UAW who have rallied to the Reuther camp because they are looking for a new policy must begin to press forward for such a program. The future of the UAW depends upon them.

The conservative Addes bloc aims to unseat Reuther at the convention precisely because it views him as the leader of a radical tendency. To support Reuther against this conservative-Stalinist coalition is the indicated course at the convention. At the same time, however, we must be under no illusions. Reuther, as in the past, does not now measure up to

the tasks ahead.

In 1945-46 a serious fight for the GM strike program meant a one-hundred and eighty degree turn in CIO policy. If the slogan: "Wage Increases Without Price Increases" was to be more than a well-meaning prayer, a network of union price control committees had to be established in the departments, in the shops, in the industry, and in related and subsidiary plants and industries supplying parts and raw materials. These committees, assuming the same importance as griev-

ance and bargaining committees would have to investigate, keep account of and control the intricate thread of production. For this it was necessary to "Open the Books," get a glimpse into the top secrets of big business and detect its financial and industrial manipulations. But any such "invasion" of the sacred rights of private property would meet with the determined resistance of the capitalist class and its government.

BEN HALL.

The Plunder of South Africa — II

Part II of a First-Hand Study of British Imperialism

The vital importance of the gold-mining industry to the whole economic structure of the Union and its relationship to imperialist domination has already been shown. What has to be described now are the conditions of existence of the 360,000 African mine workers on whose scarred backs the industry is built.

The irresistible pressure which drives the African reserve dweller from the reserves to toil in the mines has already been described. It is so great that it withstands all competition. It is not all, however, as the government lackeys describe it, solely economic, but is the essence of the whole art of government in South Africa.

Forced out of the starved, poverty-stricken reserves, the landless, denuded tribalist, unbearably burdened with unpayable debts and government taxes, is forced into the claws of his local trader-recruiter, who, for the sum of 24 shillings* per head for each recruit, paid by the Chamber of Mines, contracts him for a period of from nine to eighteen months to the Chamber of Mines. In addition to recruiting in the Union itself and in the High Commission Territories of Basutoland, Bechuanaland and Swaziland, a traffic in human beings is carried on between the Chamber of Mines and the Portuguese government. The latter agreed in 1940 to supply a maximum of 100,000 workers to the Rand Gold Mines. For this "a fee of 1 pound [sterling] 14 shillings six pence* per native per annum is paid by the mines and a fee of 10 shillings* per annum is paid by each native to the Mozambique government." (*Native Mine Workers Commission*, 1945, p. 4.)

It is on the basis of these calculated business transactions in human lives and the semi-slavery of the recruited and contracted African mine labor that the Chamber of Mines secures its labor quota. But it is not only in recruitment that the African workers are handled as semi-slaves. Recruiting is only one aspect of the whole policy of migratory labor. This policy is designed to prevent the formation of a stable peasantry in the reserves and also to prevent the crystallization of a permanent proletariat in the mines and in the towns, which, rooted in industry, could forcefully menace imperialist domination and its cheap labor policy. Migrant labor suspends the worker in perpetual thralldom between starvation in the reserves and slavery on the mines.

The cycle from the mines to the reserves and back again is endless for the African tribalist. Reaching the mines, the workers are all herded into tribal barracks and locked up and

guarded from external intercourse by compound managers and guards. His only method of exit is by a special pass from the compound manager. During the period of contract in the mines he is completely cut off from his family in the reserve, which is left defenseless, denuded of a labor force and destitute, thereby increasing the servitude of both to the Chamber of Mines. Tribal differences and fights are deliberately encouraged to direct the revolutionary energies of the workers away from the Chamber of Mines. Their starvation wages are supplemented by specially prepared monotonous "hygienic" starvation rations. For the dangerous, health-destroying labor in the hot furnaces thousands of feet under the earth's surface, they receive the magnificent sum of two shillings three pence per shift—one-tenth of what their European miner supervisors receive.

The Chamber of Mines has prohibited any trade union or political agitation among its workers. Its policy toward its African labor force is quite openly stated: "The basis of the attitude of the gold mining industry to its native labor force is the principle of European trusteeship—the declared basis of South Africa's national policy, as embodied in the Native Trust Acts. In accord with this principle, the industry, in the administration and organization of its huge native labor force, seeks to preserve all that is best in native tribal life. The organization of the compounds in which the natives live, has as its basis the pattern of tribal organization and discipline to which the natives are accustomed and from which they show little inclination to deviate."

Therefore they outlaw all trade union organization, because, as they state: "Conflict between the allegiance demanded by a trade union and that owed to the tribe would tend to disrupt tribal life: a result diametrically opposed to a basic principle of national policy." This statement puts quite baldly the incontrovertible policy of the Chamber of Mines, disclosing once more that the holy principle of trusteeship is the profane practice of barbaric exploitation and repression. Capitalism in its onset gained power by liberating the feudal serfs and dragged them out of their rural feudal sloth to become the modern working class. But in its palsied old age, capitalism, in the form of imperialism, can only hope to rule by perpetuating tribalism, i.e., basing its rule on the existence of the most primitive social organization belonging to the epoch of barbarism, which is in crying contradiction to the modern civilization.

Out of these harsh conditions of rule must spring sooner or later the harsh and exploding workers' revolt. Indications of

*This is approximately \$4.80 and \$6.80 respectively, measured by 20 shillings to the South African pound, now quoted at about \$4.03.

the grim nature of the struggle have already presented themselves. The most important and epoch-making of these was the five-day strike (August, 1946) of over 75,000 mine workers, who, organized in an illegal, persecuted and loose trade union, flared up in revolt against their unbearable conditions. This action called up immediately all the force of the state against them, but it was nevertheless the first and bloody beginning of the maturing class battles which will shake South Africa.

In this first encounter the miners were met by the full fury of the armed police detachments of the state, who clubbed, batoned, bayoneted and shot back the miners to their work. Many workers were killed, more than 1200 seriously injured by police action. Most of the officials of the union were arrested and over 200 workers summarily arrested, fined and imprisoned. These facts demonstrate more clearly than a hundred indictments the murderous nature of imperialist rule on the gold mines of the Rand.

Conditions in Urban Areas

Imperialism would be best suited if the system of migratory labor could permeate every branch of its economy. Only through a migratory labor system can they hope to escape the subversive dangers pregnant in the centers of civilization, the swift and sweeping transformations which take place in the cities. A permanent, urbanized labor force would inexorably come face to face with the inescapable need for the formation of permanent centers of labor resistance, for the organization of trade unions, strikes, the compulsion to extend from the economic to the political field of struggle and thereby fundamentally imperil imperialist rule. From a permanent labor force concentrated in industry would spring the essential attributes of solidarity, cohesion and the realization of the power of labor in society. Thus a sharpened self-confidence and a realization of themselves as a class force able to oppose the masters of industry in permanent class warfare would be brought about.

These are the nightmares of horror that daily afflict the statesmen lackeys of the mines, farms and industries. Their treatment of urban Africans is aimed to stave off the flood of permanent workers and to divert, restrict and control with the most brutally conceived methods the inevitable urbanization that must and does take place in response to each new call of industry and commerce. But in spite of the regimentation and control of labor through pass-laws, supervision, segregated locations, imprisonment of Africans for countless petty offenses, the flood of urbanization and the revolutionary consequences borne with it cannot be stopped. Capitalist civilization is engulfing more and more of the former tribalists, breaking down the old traditions, breeding new generations of workers whose only loyalties and memories are of the town; contact in industry and locations has torn away ancient isolations, is unifying separate languages and creating a solid core of African resistance which will not oppose imperialist guns with assegais but will defy the imperialist of South Africa with weapons forged in their own arsenals and as an integral part of the revolutionary leader of modern society—the modern world proletariat.

The locks that hold back the permanent urbanization of the African masses are built in the brutal pattern of a segregation system which clutches the masses who reach the towns in the iron claws of police control, unskilled, lowly paid jobs, regimentation and complete denial of any democratic or human rights. They are hoarded into wretched tin hovels, separated like pariahs from the main European areas, in locations

bound by iron fences—a cheap and plentiful labor reservoir for the European industrialists and their bloated families.

An African in the location is not allowed to own land or the dwelling in which he lives. His stay is regarded as coincidental with his job period in the factory. He is forced in his thousands to sub-tenancy, his housing needs deliberately ignored, as added discouragement to settling down in the town.

The ruling class consciously neglects the locations, in their attempts to force the African working class into a migratory existence. One-third of the urban population remains unhoused, to discourage settling down. But the only results of this death-dealing policy is misery, wretchedness and brutalized existence for the African urban population. The inevitable consequence of the policy is the increasing squatters' movement of the African people. Over 70,000 people are at present squatting in several Hessian built camps in Johannesburg alone.

The Native Urban Areas Act of 1923 was the complement of the Land Act of 1913, and applies the policy of segregation to the urban areas. "It is based on the principle that the urban area is a European area in which the native is permitted only in so far as he, speaking generally, serves the needs of the European and that as far as is practicable, separate areas must be set apart within the municipal boundaries for the residence of native people." (Report of the Department of Native Affairs: 1935-36, p. 12.)

This is a concise exposition of the real attitude of the ruling class to African urbanization. They allow Africans into their towns only when it serves the needs of the European population. As in the reserves, so in the towns, the Africans must bow down to the summary impositions of imperialism, in their living and working conditions. These impositions have given rise to certain outstanding features in urban African life.

1. *Grinding Poverty*, which is the keystone of African town life. "The committee has been impressed above all by the poverty of the native community. This poverty is a factor the ill-effects of which permeate the natives' entire social life."

The committee estimated seven pounds 10 shillings as the barest minimum on which an African family of five could live. But investigations into 35 industries showed that the adult male laborer earned on the average one pound three shillings nine pence per week, or five pounds two shillings eleven pence per month. Concretely, the poverty of the African people is expressed in an income which is far below the barest breadline level. However, when compared to the earnings of thirty pounds per month of the average European skilled worker, the average earning of the non-European more particularly, the African worker sinks into infinitesimal depths.

2. *Control and Regimentation* of African labor through pass laws. The pass system guards every movement of the African, watches over all his activities, limits and throttles his liberties and keeps eternal vigil on his numbers, whereabouts, place of work and reduces him thereby to a sub-human chattel at the mercy of the ruling class.

He is riddled with pass laws from the moment he enters the town. He needs a pass to stay in the town itself, to seek work, a monthly registered pass to show he is still working, an identification pass, a pass to enter a location, a curfew pass, a lodger's pass, an annual poll tax receipt, and for the intelligentsia, a pass to show they are exempt from bearing passes. Failure to produce any of his passes at any time of night or day is a criminal offense punishable with imprisonment. The

whole pass system has been described as a permanent system of martial law.

But the regimentation and martial law are not enough. Victims have to feel the sjambok of the police and to be continually reminded of white supremacy. Some 348,000 were arrested for contravention of the pass laws in the three years 1939-41, and in 318,858 of these cases convictions followed.

3. *Police Terror* is a daily phenomenon in the lives of the non-Europeans. One writer said: "The pass laws, the urban areas legislation, the liquor laws and the like—these alone constitute an immense range of possible offenses, a range so broad that no African can be sure at any time that he is not committing an offense. I make bold to say that the legal position today is such that the police can arrest any African walking down the main streets of Johannesburg at any time of the day or night and any competent prosecutor would have no difficulty whatever in finding some offense with which he could be charged."

Police raids for passes, tax, for the detection of illegal home brewing of liquor (particularly over week-ends), net over 2,000 people on the Rand alone. Periodic police drives take place such as those before the 1943 general election (European) when 10,000 Africans on the Rand were arrested in one week. According to the report of the director of prisons, in 1943, 207,096 persons were admitted into prison that year. There were 6,367 Europeans and 199,556 Africans and colored prisoners. The percentage of Europeans to European population was .28 per cent. The percentage of non-Europeans was 2.30 per cent. In the same year, convictions of Africans for all crimes and offenses was 544,397. Offenses against laws specially affecting Africans included:

Native Pass Laws	53,787
Illegal Liquor Possessors	100,093
Native Urban Areas Act	33,217
Native Taxation Act	21,435
Native Labor Regulation Act	20,546

A particularly vicious and criminal section of the Native Urban Areas Act (Section 29, formerly Section 17), lays down that "All Africans who are unemployed or who have no sufficient honest means of livelihood can be arrested without a warrant and can be convicted to removal from an urban area or detained for a period not exceeding two years in a work colony or farm colony." This section is the apex of the immeasurable brutality which tears like a hurricane at the lives of the urban African and which condemns him, in or out of prison, to slave labor. Under this section, frequent police raids in the locations ferret out those who have been forced into unemployment by imperialism, or those who, escaping from the bleak horror of the reserves, cannot find jobs in the towns. All are caught in this police net to supply cheap convict farm labor.

Imperialism can only maintain its brutal system by organized and large-scale brutality.

African Education

Imperialism dams up the development of the African masses by denying them the elementary essentials of education. It fears that the millions of Calibans whom it controls, on being taught language, would use the knowledge to curse their ruling class masters. The educated African would not only curse his tormentors, but would develop the political ideology to overthrow them. This the ruling class well knows, and therefrom flows its segregatory policy of mass illiteracy.

Segregation extends its padlocks to the young children, who are excluded by virtue of their color from attending European schools and who are begrudged the paltry allowances of 2 pounds 19 shillings 8 pence per educant given them. School attendance is compulsory for every European child up to the age of 16 years but the African children are left in the cruel arms of illiteracy. Seventy-two per cent of African children never attend school at all and of the 28 per cent who attend school, 75 per cent never go beyond primary grades.

The vast majority of adult Africans are completely illiterate. The net result is an ignorant and illiterate labor force, the essential prerequisite for their super-exploitation by imperialism.

Health

The onslaught of imperialist oppression on the physique of the African tribalist has reduced him to a malnourished and diseased being.

In the towns "A recent survey of Natal school children in Durban showed that 40 per cent were suffering from clinical signs of malnutrition." (Smit Report: "Conditions in Urban Areas," p. 72.) In Pretoria, 13 per cent of the boys and 60.69 per cent of the girls at school showed obvious signs of ill health and/or malnutrition. (Health Commission Report, 194, p. 97.)

Dr. G. W. Gale, venereal disease officer for the Union for 1939-42, stated in evidence before the Native Health Commission that the incidence among urban Africans is about 25-30 per cent of the population. Figures for tuberculosis, a disease associated with poverty and overcrowding, are unknown, but the most cautious report of the Commission for Public Health of 1943 states: "that in native areas tuberculosis is endemic and often runs a chronic course. With increased industrial development . . . it is inevitable that many will develop tuberculosis in an active form."

Regarding the infant mortality rate, "the consensus of opinion among medical officers of health and the evidence of several surveys is that the infant mortality rate is not less than 150 anywhere and in some areas is as high as 600 or 700." (National Health Service Report, p. 95.)

As a survey of the general health position of the non-European people, the following report of the superintendent of the Edward VIII Hospital for 1938-39 states: "Nearly all native patients quite apart from the disease or injury for which they were admitted were undernourished. One can safely say that about half of them were grossly undernourished. Symptoms of pellagra and similar diseases were quite frequent and in children, conditions such as nutritional edema were commonplace. A fair description for most of our patients admitted for any disease or injury would begin with the phrase 'an undernourished native infested with intestinal parasites.'"

The solitary cause for this heavy toll of ill-health is not the intestinal parasites which are allowed to prey on the African's life, but the imperialist parasite, which drains life and health from the African and non-European masses.

Colored, Indian and Poor White

In the conditions of existence of the African people are expressed the most extreme forms of imperialist rule. But the impact of this rule strikes only with minor variations on the Indian and colored* groups. A description of the conditions of existence of these groups will show this clearly.

*We believe the author distinguishes Africans from Chinese, etc., using the designation, colored, for the latter peoples.

As for the 900,000 colored people, although their contact and blood is part of European society, the nature of their segregation, oppression and brutal treatment is more and more becoming the same as that of the African masses.

Almost half the colored people live in rural areas, mainly in the Cape province. Here the notorious "tot" system prevails, which "for the wine farmers . . . is a means of disposing of part of their cheap surplus wine in the form of payment in kind . . ." (*Cape Colored Peoples Marais*) and the wretched and dulling conditions of labor are stunting and stupefying the colored rural population. The average wage of a farm laborer is 10 to 15 shillings per month. (Colored Commission Report, 1936.)

The urban colored worker is also thrust into the segregation jaws of the ruling class. He has special housing schemes in separate areas, etc. Poverty is the all-pervading and outstanding feature of his life.

In the towns the colored worker is slowly being stripped of his few privileges in industry. The white civilized labor policy has placed boulders in his way toward apprenticeship, has reduced the number of colored apprentices to insignificance. Only in the Cape, where they are concentrated, are the colored workers still permitted membership in white trade unions. Colored workers form over half the membership of the Cape Building Workers Union, the leather workers, furniture workers, wood workers and garment workers. All these unions have colored members on the Executive Councils.

But in the three other provinces, and gradually in the Cape too, the colored workers are no freer anywhere from the bonds of segregation than are the African masses.

Borderline literacy would perhaps best describe 70 per cent of the colored children at the Cape who attend schools. In any field, colored people are being swiftly degraded into the mire of complete segregation and hopelessness in which the African masses have been thrust.

Indian Conditions

The Indian population of the Union, now numbering some 250,000 people, came to South Africa in the 1860s as indentured laborers, to work on the sugar plantations of Natal. They came on the understanding that they would be allowed permanent residence and were guaranteed citizenship rights after their period of indenture had ended. But the imperialist ruling class forgot this guarantee soon enough. There are to date at least 65 different laws restricting the rights of Indians. These show conclusively the government policy of segregation and deprivation toward the Indian people. The Marketing and Unbeneficial Land Occupation Act, 1937, for example, gives the government extraordinary powers of land expropriation in rural areas; the Pegging Act of 1943 restricts their right of purchase; the Natal Housing Board Ordinance of 1945 consummates the program for residential segregation in that province.

The Indian population is not a homogeneous one. It consists of 195,000 people in Natal, mainly plantation laborers, 31,000 Indians in the Transvaal and 13,000 Indians in the Cape, all small hawkers, small traders and merchants. Indians are excluded from the Orange Free State.

The Indian merchant is feeling the blows of the predatory ruling class rained on his head, in their effort to exclude him from the sphere of business and land-ownership. The Indian worker has always been the exploited slave of the white ruling class. As the docile and cheap indentured immigrant from

India, his slave labor on the sugar plantations of Natal built up the super-profits of the sugar industrialists.

The Asiatic Land Tenure and Indian Representation Act of 1946 make it impossible for Indians to live in any other than segregated areas, locations where housing and health needs are cynically ignored and neglected by the ruling class. Already the bulk of the Indian homes in Natal are merely shacks, with a family in each room, with its terrible repercussions on sanitation, hygiene and health.

The inroads into the last remaining hopes of the Indian people are naked and ruthless. The policy of the imperialist ruling class is clear—deprivation of all remaining privileges and thrusting of the Indian masses into the merciless chains of the color bar, segregation and servitude.

Poor White

Although divided from the non-European toilers by the rigid color-bar laws, which all help to give him a privileged and aristocratic position, the European worker suffers too under imperialist rule. First he suffers as a wage slave, and secondly his progress is thwarted by the segregation system.

In the category of European worker can be classified the highly protected and privileged skilled workers (engineers, builders, woodworkers, miners, etc.), with their high wages of seven to ten pounds a week, to the lower grade of unskilled poor whites, kept alive only by government aid, and victims of the segregation system.

The poor whites, numbering from 300,000 to 500,000, are a group consisting of by-owners (tenants on farms cast off in the process of capitalist development in agriculture degenerated into paid servants of European landowners), farm laborers, manual laborers on the railways and public works and in the industrialized cities unskilled workers, are all condemned to pauperized existence.

The dominating feature prevailing among all sections of the white working class is their infection with the ruling class ideology of white supremacy. Out of this ideology has arisen the brand of poor-whitism—a slur on a poverty-stricken section of the working class which is unknown anywhere else in the world (except in the South of the U.S.A.).

Instead of the "poor whites" uniting with the broad masses of non-European poverty-stricken toilers, with whom their real interests lie, the poor whites, victims of white civilization and white supremacy, fall easy prey to all the forces of chauvinism and reaction and remain sunken as a depressed section.

Political Slavery: Trusteeship

Economic slavery is iron-bound by political slavery. The outstanding feature of South Africa is the political domination of the imperialist bourgeoisie and the landowners over the non-European masses. The complete and closed monopoly of democratic rights and state power in the hands of the ruling class proves to be a machine-gun nest for them from which they shoot an incessant and blazing barrage on the non-European people. They deny even the most elementary democratic and human rights to the masses under their iron police heel.

While the African landowners call for the most naked and ruthless oppression, by the sjambok, the imperialist bourgeoisie, under the cruel and grim leadership of General Smuts, labeled with the philanthropic and Christian garb of trusteeship, crucifies the non-European people. Under the plea of helping to uplift the backward people toward civilization, they beat down with mailed fists and police power the de-

mands and strivings of the non-European people for an end to their political serfdom.

Behind the bourgeois democratic parliamentary regime which exists for the 2½ million privileged Europeans is the brutal imperialist dictatorship rampant over a slave colony of non-European toilers. On the super-exploited labor of the slave colony rests the democracy of the European slave drivers. The giant locks permanently debarring the African, colored and Indian masses from democratic rights was officially written into the Constitution for the Union of South Africa in 1910. No non-European is allowed to sit in the Houses of Parliament. The Africans in the three Northern provinces are totally excluded from the voters' roll. The colored and Indian males of the Cape could vote for parliamentary representatives of the Europeans. These rights, however, were soon either taken away or heavily cut down.

In 1936 the Representation of Natives Act which was finally to settle all the political aspects of the "native problem" completely abolished the right of a common roll for Europeans and non-Europeans in the Cape. Instead those Africans who had possessed the franchise were grouped into three electoral circles, each entitled to elect one white member of the House of Assembly. Finally the crown of misrepresentation—the Native Representative Council, consisting of 12 electoral units, was instituted, a fraudulent body, purely advisory, never listened to and a permanent and ragged symbol of the political slavery of the African masses. Four senators were also granted to them, to be indirectly elected by a system of electoral colleges, consisting of chiefs, who cast their votes in block for the people under their control, and the native advisory councils in urban areas and the electoral colleges in rural areas.

Only in the Cape are colored people and Indians represented on municipal councils, with the right to elect members of their own race. Though the influence of these concessions is negligible, these tiny privileges are being battered down. In 1930 when European women were enfranchised, the colored vote was reduced to a countless fraction. The conquering trustees legislate, administrate and control the political destiny of the non-European people. Instead of giving them democracy they have given them the Native Affairs Department, the Colored Affairs Council and the Indian Representation Bill (the latter bill provides that Indians may elect three Europeans to represent them in Parliament).

The Native Administration Act of 1927 is the most vicious anti-democratic act of the whole statute book, which gives the governor-general practically unfettered powers of legislature, by proclamation in regard to purely "native matters." The Act gives explicit powers, under Section 28, and by executive action, to restrain the dissemination of "dangerous doctrine" among Africans, including the restriction of entry into African areas or removal from them. The governor-general may by proclamation imprison an African for three months without trial. Public meetings may be prohibited, restrictions exist at the discretion of the Minister in the freedom of the press. There is no habeus corpus for Africans. Wholesale arrests take place at any time without any writ from the magistrates.

That the African, particularly, and the non-European people as a whole, are considered as sub-human beasts, stripped of all human rights, is especially evident when the administration of justice is reviewed. There are two sets of laws in South Africa. One for Europeans and another, barbaric and brutal, for non-Europeans. The following occur-

rence is too frequent to bear much mention in South Africa. "In July a farmer was charged in the Caroline Magistrates Court with culpable homicide, having murdered an African employee. His sentence: 50 pounds fine or six months' hard labor, and in addition six months' hard labor suspended for three months."

In the rural areas the following is an almost daily occurrence: "In November, a native youth of 18 stole two fowls from a farmer and was sentenced by the assistant magistrate at Nylstroom to five months' hard labor, not suspended." In the Union of South Africa, the imperialist ruling class considers two fowls many times more valuable than the life of one non-European human being.

The Riotous Assemblies Act aims point-blank at any movement of the non-European masses for liberation, making it a criminal offense to agitate or struggle against the state by framing any such struggle as an "incitement to race hatred," which is prohibited explicitly by the act. However, the prerogative of incitement to race hatred and race oppression rests only with the Smuts government and the Nationalist opposition. This act was also instantly applied in the strike of 50,000 African miners on the Rand, and ferreted out and dealt with all "agitators" and striking workers.

Although over 100,000 African workers are organized into trade unions, their organizations are still not officially recognized by the government. And the right to strike is illegal, mass arrests following the outbreak of any strike.

Segregationist Economic Stranglehold

Imperialism has shackled the progressive development of South Africa by refusing to integrate the non-European people into the economic, political and social life of the country, and thereby chokes the economic forward thrust which would bring South Africa into the high road of industrial advance, and overcome its present abysmal economic poverty and backwardness and political slavery.

In place of an advanced capitalist development, carrying with it the mass of society as in America or Britain, the imperialist bourgeoisie has constructed a huge pyramid, at the apex of which is a highly developed capitalist structure modeled on the most advanced industrial techniques. But this high peak of capitalist industry rests on a broad base of cheap unskilled labor, hemmed in by a multitude of color-bar restrictions, the degradation of tribal idiocy in the reserves, the semi-serfdom and sjambok viciousness endured by agricultural laborers and the perpetuation of every form of racialistic filth, muck and reaction; all this in violent conflict with the highly developed imperialist peak.

A comparison of the productivity of labor and the national income of the advanced capitalist countries with the productivity of labor and the national income of South Africa will throw the backwardness and poverty of South Africa into sharp relief. For the period of 1925-34, Colin Clark (*Conditions of Economic Progress*) gives figures showing the following national incomes per head, expressed in international units: U. S. A. 1381, Canada 1337, New Zealand 1202, Great Britain 1069, Greece 397, Japan 353, Egypt 300-350, South Africa 276, India 200, China 120.

The Van Eck report estimated concretely that South African national income in 1942 was 370,000,000 pounds. This is approximately equal to 35 pounds per head of population. But the real figure is startling for, taking into consideration the tremendous cleavage in the way in which the national income is shared, the following is revealed:

Europeans receive 125 pounds per head per annum, or seven shillings per head per day.

Colored persons receive 25 pounds per head per annum, or 1 shilling 4 pence per head per day.

Africans receive 10 pounds per head per annum, or seven pence per head per day.

These dry statistics expose the massive poverty of the Union's masses. The backwardness of the productive forces of South Africa is expressed in the fact that although 64 per cent of the total population is engaged in farming, this majority group produces only 12 per cent of the national income. This poverty and low productivity infest the whole of economic life. Non-European agriculture in its abysmal hopelessness has already been outlined. But even European agriculture, although subsidized by the state to the extent of over 7,000,000 pounds a year, protected and nursed, yields far below the average world capitalist standard.

The basic cause for this poor productivity is the substitution of cheap African human power for mechanization. According to the Industrial and Agricultural Requirements Commission, 8.4 Africans are employed to one European. But the African laborer remains a menial laborer all his life, debarred from learning the skilled agricultural jobs and is treated like a sub-human beast of burden.

Secondary industry, the barometer of economic development, was introduced into South Africa, through the back door, primarily to serve the interests of the gold mines. The steel, engineering, power, food and clothing factories were built to feed the gold mining industry. Therefore the development of secondary industry in the Union follows closely behind the development of the gold mines, and although industrialists compete with the Chamber of Mines for the African labor supply and dream hopefully of an internal market among the African masses, in the Union and even in Pan Africa, secondary industry is completely tied up with and in most important cases directly owned by the huge mining houses. It is both unwilling and unable to pursue any opposition policy to the whole segregation structure of South Africa. A report of the Board of Trade and Industries clearly admits: "It is clear that gold mining has always been the dominant factor in the Union's industrial development."

Industry has, however, been given some leeway in its expansion. It had the task of feeding the imperialist war machine and, freed temporarily from the pressure of British and American competition, it spread itself freely in a war boom over the South African market. From 1924-25 to 1942-43 the percentage contribution of manufacturing industry to the national income increased from 12.4 per cent to 19.4 per cent, surpassing the gold mines as the biggest contributor to the national income. In 1942-43 secondary industry employed 154,790 Europeans and 296,386 non-European workers. But behind even the present and temporary war boom lies the cold reality of industrial backwardness, expressed in the figures of the following international comparison of manufacturing industry (1936-37):

Country	Gross Value of Production Per Employee	Net Output Per Employee	Value of Land, Buildings, Plant Per Employee
Canada	1038	446	1130
New Zealand	1099	352	720
Australia	862	339	470
South Africa	529	242	300

(Above figures indicate pounds sterling.)

Not only is South Africa industrially backward, but, as the table indicates, the low net output per worker and the low constant capital per worker invested in industry are apparent when compared with the other more advanced capitalist countries.

The reason for the inadequate and low mechanization of South African industry is the reduction of the non-European workers by law through the civilized labor policy to the position of permanently unskilled beasts of burden. Large-scale mechanization and modernization are not developed because there are cheap humans to supply their muscle power. The low productivity of non-European labor and its unskilled position in industry is the pre-condition for the continued domination of the secondary industrialists over the non-European people. But the main force impeding the industrial development of South Africa is the gold mining industry.

The Fruits of Imperialism

South Africa's catastrophic backwardness and poverty are the result of the inability of imperialism to develop the tremendous human and industrial resources of this country. The rich mineral resources, such as iron and steam coal especially and limestone, asbestos, chrome and manganese, "... place the Union in the ranks with the limited number of countries in which the essential minerals for heavy industry are present in large quantities." (Third Interim Report of Industrial and Agricultural Requirements Commission.)

The main driving force for revolutionary change is the irreconcilable conflict between imperialist property relations, political and social structure and the unpostponable human needs of the vast masses. The colossal need of the productive forces is to have the segregationist stranglehold broken. The grip must be smashed, the system revolutionized in all its forms.

The main task is to liberate the human resources now chained in the segregationist prison for an industrial advance which will put an end to the tremendous poverty in town and country and set the non-European masses on the road to a new historical existence. Only the complete industrialization of the country will solve the immense needs of the masses for education, for acquiring technical skill and training for civilized amenities to advance toward and contribute to the rich cultural heritage of mankind. The non-European people of South Africa will redeem thereby their crushed personalities and thrust themselves in a forward march to full social emancipation.

But this industrial advance is impossible under imperialism. Revolutionary change for South Africa requires the destruction of the present system of land-holding, the release of the implacable pressure of imperialism on the reserves. It demands a redivision of the land in favor of the non-European toilers. It demands the creation of a stable peasantry, burst out of the shackles of the reserves, on land adequate to their needs, using modern industrial and scientific techniques to produce sufficient and more to feed the nation. It demands the creation of a free proletariat integrated as equals with the European working class in the task of developing the industrial productive forces, which alone can draw the masses into civilization. It demands the absolute throwing off of the political and economic ball and chain of imperialism. It demands a most resolute struggle for the complete annihilation of the segregationist system and the obsolete economic structure which it protects and maintains.

ROBERT STONE.

The Jewish Problem After Hitler

"What is obvious is not always known,
And what is known is not always present."

—SAMUEL JOHNSON.

The reaction of the official Fourth Internationalist organizations to the Jewish question and the problem of Palestine in the new situation produced by Hitlerism and the war is a measure of their incapacity to free themselves from outlived theories and political positions. This results in a dreary reaffirmation of old ideas and programs accompanied by the repetitious explanation that "there is no reason to change our position" since "there is nothing new in the situation." Thus it is the same with the Russian question, the national question and the Jewish question. For the most part, these organizations, most notably the Socialist Workers Party in the United States, have remained virtually silent on the Jewish question. The silence is not wholly accidental; it is a reflection of policy. *Real* and *concrete* new problems of the day are approached with extreme caution and conservatism.

I

In relation to the current world Jewish question, the leading spokesmen of the official Fourth International rely upon theoretical and political reasoning which has its *roots* in the by-gone eras of 1905 and 1917-23.

Aside from a short statement or two dealing with the concrete problem of Jewish immigration, and a rather long and abstract article on Palestine by T. Cliff, the *Fourth International* and *The Militant* in this country, as well as the press of other Trotskyist organizations, have refrained from comment on the Jewish question on the ground that there is really nothing different to say about this complicated international problem from what has already been said for dozens of years. That is, until the *Fourth International* reprinted an essay by Ernest Germain entitled "The Jewish Question Since World War II." This essay first appeared as the concluding chapter of the late A. Leon's book, *The Materialist Conception of the Jewish Question*.

Germain is the new theoretical luminary of the official Fourth International; his writings read like a lawbook; he is regarded as the outstanding interpreter of the theories of Trotskyism, especially on the Russian question, wherein he "brilliantly reaffirmed" (according to James P. Cannon) the outlived theory of the "degenerated workers' state."

The First Attempt at an Answer

Germain's essay, which marks one of the first efforts of the official Fourth International to speak somewhat concretely on the Jewish question, is distinguished by its utterly detached and abstract approach to the problem, but which is characteristic for its unquestionably correct interpretations of parts of an old Marxist position which has little to do with life today. Where Germain is on his own, i.e., where he is compelled to concern himself with the concrete problems of the day, he is thrown into one quandary after another. But they are of no consequence, for thereafter he sweeps away the whole

Palestine and the Fourth International

problem with lofty disdain born of the supra-historical approach.

We had occasion to direct attention to this type of theorizing in an earlier article in the *NI* in which we referred to T. Cliff's competent analytical work on Palestine, and here, too, we observed a fine study of the economic growth and problems of the Middle East and the place of Palestine in that situation. Yet the whole work was outstanding for its studied evasion of the political questions of the class and national struggle taking place there. He even failed to mention the slogan of an all-Palestinian constituent assembly in the struggle for independence and against imperialism. Since that time, it is true, Cliff has dealt with the problems of Jewish immigration, bi-national state, constituent assembly, etc., but these have not been made public and we cannot therefore comment on them.

Germain's essay, however, is a public document. Not written as a reply to the position advocated by the Workers Party, *THE NEW INTERNATIONAL* and *Labor Action*, it nevertheless has been published by the SWP (*Fourth International*, April, 1947) as a polemical gesture, for in their minds the Germain essay is an answer to what they call our "right-wing" position on the Jewish question.

Some of our readers may be aware that one of the main differences between us and the official Fourth International and the SWP is on the question of the right of the Jews to free immigration to Palestine. In advocating the right of free immigration to all countries, and in the first place to the United States, we advocate, at the same time, that democratic right for Palestine. The Fourth International and its adherents, however, are in favor of free immigration of Jews to all countries, the United States, Great Britain, France, Australia, etc., but . . . not to Palestine—the one country to which they want to go! Germain's article seeks to give the theoretical and historical justification for this obviously contradictory position.

This article can be summarized briefly: The Jews of Europe have undergone almost inhuman suffering; this is due to the nature of capitalism. But the Jews are not alone in this suffering. Other peoples, other national minorities are faced with the same or similar prospects of extermination or near-extermination. This is a symbol of the decay of capitalism. There is no hope for these people except in the victory of socialism. It is true, the Jews may be entirely exterminated between now and the future, but . . . oops, sorry . . . that can't be helped, you know. That's capitalism for you. The Jews, despite this grim prospect, must not allow themselves to be emotionally worked up by the fact that six, seven or eight millions of them have been wiped out in Europe!

II

The first part of the article summarizes the bestial nature of a society which destroyed five out of six million European Jews. Why and how did this happen? "Reason refuses to admit," says Germain, "that material interests could have coldly dictated the extermination of these countless defenseless be-

ings." What then did? Capitalism, he answers! As though capitalism did not embrace material interests and factors. This general answer is undoubtedly correct, but it is much too simple. One has to go further and examine the concrete conditions under which this extermination took place at the hands of a specific German fascism. Germain's failure to go beyond his generalization produces, in turn, a faulty approach to the problem of the "guilt" of German fascism, its hierarchy and its bourgeois sponsors.

If one approaches the question of "material interests" from the narrowest of premises, then it would be difficult to say: yes, this factor or this person alone was responsible. Material interests did play an important contributing role to the actual unfolding of events in Germany. But if one understands the general social conditions which produced the fascist movement, the class warfare and the capitulation of Stalinism and social democracy, which insured the victory of Hitler, and understands at the same time the fact that the fascist movement embraces the "social scum" of society, it is not difficult then to grasp the multiplicity of factors which produced this situation, the great historical factors, as well as the mean ones, the big bourgeoisie which enriches itself on the basis of state policy and the fascist agent who enriches himself from the disfranchised and murdered Jews. For this one must understand the molecular process induced by the specific features of German decay after the First World War, and the plane to which violence is raised as a method of solving the social crisis in declining bourgeois society. Violence has universal traits in bourgeois society, but it also has some specific national characteristics and forms which the Marxist cannot overlook.

Germain characterizes the experiences of the Jews as a symbol of the fate of humanity in general and as the product of a sick society. And he adds: "The tragedy of the Jews is only the herald to other peoples of their coming fate." The correctness of this generalization has a strange ring: the expression of sympathy for the Jews seems constantly to be apologized for and qualified by the observations that their sufferings are socially and historically conditioned, as if that in some way mitigates the condition of this people.

Thus, after describing the unrelieved horrors of the Jews, Germain is under compulsion to write: "Alongside of five million murdered Jews are sixty million victims of imperialist war. The barbaric treatment of the Jews by Hitlerite imperialism is only an extreme expression of the barbarism of the general methods of imperialism in our period. As against the Jewish deportations we now find the deportation of millions of Germans from Poland and Czechoslovakia."

The Purpose of Comparison

What is the point of these comparisons? To show the Jews that there is nothing unique in their position in European society today? But that is silly, for the conditions which the Jewish people face *are* unique. While it is true that Germans have been deported from Poland and Czechoslovakia, undergoing severe suffering in the process, the comparison ends at that point. For these Germans return to their own nation, however divided it may be under conditions of military occupation. They may return to friends and relatives. They do not remain in concentration camps where their families and friends had been exterminated by the hundreds of thousands and millions. They do not return to a hostile country which hates them.

Chancing the charge that I do not have real feeling for

the sixty million victims of the imperialist slaughter, I still say that the comparison made by Germain is false. The Jews were not merely victims of an imperialist war; they were the victims of a social and political program of German fascism serving its big business masters, and would have faced the same extermination whether there was a war or not.

But is there not some special point to Germain's observation? Yes, there is. It is to affirm by commission and omission that there is really nothing unique in the position of European Jewry, no special problems created by their homelessness and landlessness. We shall soon see exactly how this penetrating method settles the problem of a displaced people who face, by his own admission, total extermination.

The "historical" fixation, the extreme impartiality of Germain in assessing the responsibility for the extermination of the Jews in Europe produces some curious reasoning. For, if the position of the Jews in Europe today is a product of a sick and dying capitalism—and this is undeniable—how can you blame Germany alone? No, it is quite obvious that all the imperialists are equally responsible. All? Yes, all... except the "Soviet Union," the "degenerated workers' state," a land without soviets and where the workers do not rule, have no rights and are at the mercy of a ruthless bureaucratic ruling class. As Germain writes: "The very fate of the Jews in Europe was determined as much by the calculations of American imperialists as by the direct massacres of Hitler... If Hitler constructed the trap for the Jews, it was the Anglo-Americans who sprang it. The blood of the innocent falls upon their heads as well as upon the Nazis."

A Warped Analysis

As a historical generalization describing the imperialist world, this is true, but as Germain applies it to the concrete situation involving the Jews, it is only half true, for the logic of the point he pursues is to blur the differences between the imperialists and to make it impossible to distinguish the elements of conflict in state policy of the various powers. Having made this generalization, how does it alter what happened in Germany and Europe during the years 1933 to 1945? One can say, correctly, that Great Britain and the United States did not do anything because they did not help the Jews to emigrate from Germany. But that is not the same thing as saying they are responsible for Hitler's internal policies. Hitler was prepared to carry out his extermination program no matter how many protests were made. The extermination of the Jews was part of his national program. Not even the threat of war would have deterred him, if it is conceivable that Great Britain or the United States would have gone to war on behalf of the Jews.

In attacking British and American policy as equally responsible for the plight of the Jews in Germany, Germain very gingerly by-passes critical comment about Stalinist Russia and its role in the slaughter of Europe's Jews. The only reference made to Russia is the quoted charge of the Polish resistance movement that it was betrayed by the British, Polish and Russian governments. But again Germain even twists this with his own comments directing attention only toward the capitalist imperialists, because, as everyone knows by now, he not only does not believe that there is such a thing as Russian imperialism, but continues to find something magically progressive in that slave society. Beyond that reference there is not another word about Stalinist policy!

This conception of the responsibility of German fascist barbarism for the Jewish slaughter produced some bizarre

reactions in the SWP. Working from the same analytical premises adopted by Germain, *The Militant* denounced the first reports and pictures of the massacres in Buchenwald, Belsen and elsewhere as fakes, "war horror" and "atrocious stories" that could not possibly be true. Certainly *The Militant* understood that the publication of these reports and pictures had the purpose of inciting greater support of the masses for the war, but it was not necessary to deny their authenticity in order to recognize the purposes of the Allied governments in publishing them. *The Militant's* reaction, however, revealed a "touchiness" on the Jewish question that is reflected again in the Germain opus.

All sense of proportion is lost in the methodology of Germain. He still has to explain: why did this happen in Germany and not in the United States? Why was not this vicious anti-Semitism an integral part of Italian fascist policy as it was of the German? What is responsible for the terrible legacy of virulent anti-Semitism on the whole continent today; and in Russia, too, where it has never really been stamped out by the Kremlin but, on the contrary, is slyly fostered by it?

Germain passes these questions by. Given his Russian position, he is congenitally unable to introduce into this discussion of responsibility or guilt for the extermination of the Jews the role of Stalinist Russia. If Great Britain and the United States sprang Hitler's trap, what did the Stalin-Hitler pact of 1939 contribute to the well-being of the Jews? Did the pact relieve the sufferings of the Jews or intensify them? Did the closed borders of Stalinist Russia assist the Jews or help seal their doom in Europe?

No, Germain has no time for such trifles. He has a theory and he is on his way. Do you want proof that Great Britain and the United States are co-responsible with Hitler for the extermination of the Jews? Well, here it is: Allied war prisoners in Germany and German war prisoners in Allied countries were treated "tolerably" well, but not so the Russian prisoners. This is supposed to prove by some method or other that the Russians could in no way be held co-responsible for the fate of the Jews. Nay, if the Germans treated Russian soldiers worst of all, then it is proof that Russia must have been trying to do something to relieve the sufferings of these people. Absurd, you think? Then how else follow Germain's logic?

But, as a matter of fact, the whole point Germain tries to make is absurd. The treatment of U. S. and British prisoners in Germany and vice versa was a product of the war, of military policy and not of good will. If the Germans treated the Russian prisoners worst of all, you can be sure that Stalin did not turn the other cheek. The methods of the Third Reich and the "degenerated workers' state" were strangely similar. How does the fact fit into Germain's schema that tens and hundreds of thousands of German prisoners in Russia were also treated "tolerably" well? The reasons for this were entirely political and the fruits of the policy can be observed now in Stalinist policy in Germany. And again, if one is to measure the Jewish question by the yardstick employed by Germain, what is one to say about the extermination of the Poles, civilian and military, by both Germany and Russia?

III

The lofty historical point of view taken by Germain has led him into devious roads. At one point he shows the condition of the European Jewry by calling attention once more to the fact that there are less than a million of them left on the whole Continent. "The war," he writes, "has brutally cut

all the roots that nourished them in their social environment. If they cannot develop new roots elsewhere, these people are condemned to perish." Yes, yes, yes. How true! And that isn't all. "More than 100,000 Jewish fugitives in Germany... one year after their 'liberation,' continue to live under the infamous conditions of concentration camps, and are subjected to a thousand and one frauds on the part of the military authorities." (Emphasis in the original—A.G.)

Yes, Germain proves beyond peradventure of doubt that the Jews cannot remain in Europe unless they accept their total extermination. Therefore, since the capitalists themselves will not succor the Jews, it is up to the workers' movement, especially of the more advanced and better situated countries, to advance this demand of elementary humanity: *Open the doors of the United States, of Canada, of Australia, of the five continents to the victims of Nazi persecution!*" (Emphasis in the original—A.G.)

Germain argues that the countries named could easily absorb these few hundred thousand Jews. No doubt. But, the nub of the problem is the ugly fact that none of these countries will take them in and that a great deal of opposition exists to their immigration among wide layers of people. Let us leave this for the moment and go on.

Germain adds: "The development of anti-Semitism, the result of definite social and historic causes [this obviously places it on another plane entirely!] is producing the spread of Zionist nationalism among the despairing and declassed petty bourgeois Jewish masses. The brutal equalization of Jews of all strata in the extermination camps sharpened nationalism even among Jewish workers, in the degree that international solidarity remained too weak on the part of the workers of other nations." So what is to be done? The workers in "a favored position as compared with the Jewish workers take the leadership now and bring about freedom of immigration into their countries for the survivors." To save them from extinction? Undoubtedly! But, in addition, because those in "a favored position" may "win the Jewish workers from the Zionist utopia."

This, you see, is the gravest of all problems. The fact is, however, that the Jews have not turned to Palestine because they have become Zionists. That they have become nationalist, have developed an increased consciousness of their existence as Jews, goes without saying. To expect anything else, after their experiences of the past decade or more, their absence of any place to live and *in a situation where the world revolutionary socialist movement is for all practical purposes almost non-existent, is to expect a miracle.*

The World Is Closed to Them

Germain contradicts himself in the very next paragraph of his essay when he adds: "If thousands of Jews in Europe are now demanding the right to migrate to Palestine, the primary reason for this is that the doors of the rest of the world are closed to them. It is also the product of the incredible persecutions of the past years and the relative passivity of the world proletariat." I could not put it better myself. Unwittingly, Germain stumbled on what is crucial. The Jewish question is a part of the broader national question today, in its altered forms resulting from the successive defeats of the revolution, the Hitler experience and the rise of Stalinism. For the rise of the national question in its varied forms is dependent in large measure on the size, influence and integrity of the revolutionary socialist movement. Given the absence of such a viable movement, the problems of today neces-

sarily assume new forms and seek different solutions.

Where does this bring us? To Germain's blind alley: the Jews cannot live in Europe. They must leave. However, there is no place for them to go. The brutality of the conditions they experience daily and their homelessness has resulted in their universal desire to go to Palestine. Therefore we are for opening the doors of the whole world—five continents, no less, Africa included—but . . . not Palestine! Why not Palestine? According to Germain:

1. From an economic point of view, Palestine and the whole Middle East will suffer terrible devastation in the coming world economic crisis. That means no future for the Jews there.

2. From the "socio-economic" point of view, "the forces opposing this immigration have a crushing superiority over the Palestinian Jews and over world Zionism."

But from an economic point of view, the whole world will suffer just as severely from the coming world economic crisis, and from the "socio-economic" point of view, the populations of other countries are just as opposed to the migration of the Jews as the Arab nationalists. No matter. This does not deter Germain and his co-thinkers from demanding the right of the Jews to enter *those* countries. And so we find that the slogans for the right of free immigration for Jews to all countries and to the five continents did not, in Germain's mind, mean complete *free* immigration, and not to *all* countries.

Are the Arabs right in opposing Jewish immigration? If the demand for free immigration is a correct democratic, socialist slogan, shouldn't revolutionary socialists issue it despite the opposition of the Arabs and try to convince, not to oppose it? Is there any special merit in criticising only the reactionary positions of the official Jewish organizations and to say not a word about the reactionary feudalistic concepts of the Arab chieftains? On our part, we have made our severest criticisms of official Jewish policy, but we have not lost sight of the false attitude of the Arab rulers whose opposition to immigration has a strong reactionary base and coincides in part with British imperialist policy. For the truth is that the British use both Jews and Arabs with varying success.

And yet the fate of the Jews is sealed. The continued existence of bourgeois society will mean not merely the extermination of the Jews in Europe, but over the whole world, and especially in the United States. Can anything be done about it? No, not really, for "the only way out which still remains open to humanity is at the same time the solution of the Jewish question." Worse than that, "the peculiarities of Jewish history have only determined a special subordination of the future of this people to the outcome of the unfolding social struggles." Only the Jews? And other peoples? Apparently not. In *this* case, the Jews *are* unique, says Germain. For them there really is no hope unless socialism comes and quickly, too. Even if we are to agree that the prospects of Jewish survival are slim indeed, must revolutionary socialist policy rest upon this prospect of extermination? Is it not likely that the extermination of the Jews of the world will be accompanied by a descent of all society into barbarism? Even so, revolutionary socialists do not therefore treat the daily problems of the class struggle (of which the national and Jewish questions are a part) with historical aloofness and a fatalism which springs from the conviction of inevitable doom. They try to do everything in their power to prevent the doom of society. This would seem to dictate the formulation of a policy, a realistic one too, that would offer some prospects of reversing the dom-

inant social tendency and to reverse it in the direction of socialism.

Germain Holds Out a Hope

Does not Germain, who on so many other questions holds ultra-leftist positions, offer up some hope to the Jews? Yes, he does in the following paragraph:

"As the most sorely wounded, the Jews have especially allowed themselves to be carried away by the psychosis of despair and demoralization [!], which has been further sharpened by the specific social structure of this people [?]. But in a few years, the immediate effects of the nightmare will disappear. . . . Since we have no reason to doubt the fate of humanity, let us also not doubt that the Jewish working masses, after passing through a series of disappointing experiences, will recognize their future is indissolubly linked with that of the proletariat and the revolutionary movement, and that they will again, as in the past, take an important place in this movement, and will owe their final emancipation to a devoted struggle for the cause of socialism." Fine words, these. But in the meantime? Suppose the previous forecast of Germain is realized and the Jews are exterminated? What then? Well, that's just too bad. The fault will be capitalism's, not ours.

IV

Only dogmatic and schematic thinking could produce such abstractions on the current Jewish question. The fundamental error of Germain's approach is that its thinking is rooted in the "assimilationist" era of the movement at a time when the Jewish question seemed close to solution. At the same time he suffers myopia produced by his inability to understand the Jewish question today as part of the national question, i.e., national question of 1939-47 and not of 1917-23. As will be clear to any reader of Germain's essay, he rejects the thought that the Jewish question in Europe today is a part of the national question; moreover, he does not grasp the full meaning of the consequences of the new position of the Jews on the continent. To appraise this new position, one need only recall the position of the Jews in the pre-Hitler period.

For decades the conditions of the Jews in Europe had steadily improved. Centuries of oppression, persecution, discrimination and ghetto life seemed to disappear in the advance of capitalism and the expansion of its modern industrial system. While the position of the Jews had improved everywhere, it reached its height in the advanced capitalist countries. In those nations, assimilation of Jews went on uninterruptedly. So deep-going was this process that many Jews came to believe that the days of great trial for their people had ended. Only in the most backward nation, Czarist Russia, did the Jews still face the problems of another age. There the putrescent nobility and its camarilla still employed the "pogrom" as an instrument of state policy for the purpose of preserving their rule. But even the capitalist world was aghast at the treatment of the Jews in Russia.

For the most part, the Marxist movement regarded the occurrences in Czarist Russia as an "aberration" not characteristic of world capitalism. And on the scale of world history, the persecution of 10,000,000 scattered people, residing in small numbers in dozens of countries, would have been a truly grotesque and senseless practice. Persecution of the Jews had, in any case, ceased to be an international practice, or, if it had not ceased entirely, at least the tendency was unmistakably

toward an end of such persecution and for assimilation of large and ever-increasing numbers of Jews in the general national patterns of the countries in which they lived.

Aspects of the New Situation

Given this general objective situation, one could understand the validity of the old Marxist position, most forcefully expressed in the old Russian and Polish revolutionary parties, the Bolsheviks as well as the Mensheviks, in favor of "assimilation" and against the revival or survival of Jewish nationalism, which sought to reverse the process of history. In the eastern European movement, the Jewish Bund remained the strongest force which fought for the maintenance of "Jewish integrity," a Jewish national life, and a Jewish national culture. Lenin, for example, opposed this part of the program of the Bund as reactionary, as an attempt to move backward on the Jewish question, at a time when everything pointed toward a progressive solution of the problem, particularly in view of the rise of the revolutionary socialist movement, the imminence of the revolution in Russia and the prospect of a not-too-distant world socialist victory.

The Jewish problem today is so different qualitatively from the past, that it is almost entirely a new one demanding new solutions. This much was already indicated by Trotsky shortly before his death when he forecast the extermination of the Jews during the war. Trotsky's prediction was nearly realized in the tragic extermination of from five to six million Jews in Europe.

As a measure of the difference of the modern Jewish problem, consider the tremendous revulsion of the whole world to the Czarist pogroms in the 1905 period and the relative indifference of a world accustomed to mass destruction of wealth and peoples to the scientific mass murder of the Jews in the Hitler era. Then the world was horror-stricken; yes, even the bourgeois world was aghast at the cruel slaughter and persecution of the Russian Jews. Cruel slaughter and persecution! Lenin recorded the depth of these pogroms when he wrote: "It is calculated that in 100 cities at that time 4,000 were killed and 10,000 were mutilated."

But the Jews could flee Russia to havens of safety. There was the United States with free immigration and its vast areas of land. There was western Europe—the center of modern capitalist civilization. As a result, there was no mass movement to Palestine in those days and no amount of Zionist agitation could create one. The Jews as a whole did not seek "national survival," a "Jewish state," a "homeland." They were content to be permitted to reside in the countries of their choice and to become full citizens of those lands on a free and equal basis with other inhabitants.

Is that era comparable to the present? All one has to do is to examine the real world of today to see how clearly different it is, how completely insecure is the position of the Jews now. Is it an exaggeration to say, after more than ten years of Hitlerism in a decaying world characteristic for its social degeneration, that the existence of the Jews is as perilous in 1947 as it was in 1940? The virus of anti-Semitism has spread to all borders and has infected nations and peoples whose relative tolerance was conspicuous in former years. The truth is that the Jews have no place in Europe to live. They cannot return to their old homes and resume their former occupations. They are for the most part, the few hundred thousand European Jews who are left, inhabitants of former concentration camps in an atmosphere polluted with the stink of crematories, dungeons and fresh-dug graves. A person would

have to be thick-skinned indeed not to feel the depths of despair which have seized hold of the Jewish population of the world, especially those who remain in Europe today.

Some of the New Problems

Out of the cemetery in which the remnants of European Jews now temporarily reside has come a mass desire for emigration to Palestine, a desire which took almost spontaneous form. Why Palestine? Why not the United States, Australia, South America, England or France? The principal reason, as Germain himself admits, is that none of these countries will permit the entry of Jews or other displaced persons. In these circumstances, the Jews have, in fact, only one place to turn to that offers them some realistic prospect of salvation, namely, Palestine. Without going into a discussion now as to all the reasons why emigration to Palestine is justifiable, let me cite an important reason for it. More than one-third of the population of Palestine, who are Jews, want their fellow nationals to come there. The weight of persecution has created a deep bond of solidarity between the European and Palestinian Jews. Palestine can absorb these several hundred thousand European Jews and offer them a haven in a world whose doors are closed to them. In a way it is an answer to the disgusting, hypocritical sympathies expressed for the Jews by the United States, Great Britain, Russia and the leading powers of the UN who are using the Jewish question as a political football in the new imperialist struggle for world domination.

To recognize the validity of these national aspirations for survival among Europe's Jews is not a violation of Marxist principles. On the contrary, to deny them would reveal not only an obstinate misunderstanding of everything that Lenin wrote on the national question, but a failure to understand what has happened in Europe in the past twenty-five years.

There are many other aspects of this problem, Arab-Jewish relations, policies of the official Jewish organizations, binational state, partition and some broader aspects of the national question which we must leave for another article.

But we cannot leave off at this point without reminding Germain and his co-thinkers that, no matter how successful they may be in evading concrete answers to new problems by the dogmatic assertions of old theory, they must still answer the living questions of the day—and answer them correctly. For, whatever Germain may think, events in the Middle East rush on swiftly.

ALBERT GATES.

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Russia: What Is This Monstrosity?

A Discussion on the Nature of the Stalinist State

The consequences of the victory of the Stalinist army have been so devastating to the socialist revolution that one would expect the entire Fourth International to give up the slogan of defense without extended discussion. But so great is the power of a formula created by a master, even when the master himself paid little attention to formulae, that it becomes next to impossible to tear the blind followers away from it.

To defend Stalinist Russia means not only to offer an explanation of what we are defending but also, wherever possible, to help the Stalinist army gain victory. This course was perhaps justified when we did not know the actual results that would follow from such a victory. After these results stare us in the face, to help the Stalinist army gain victory means, regardless of our intentions, to share in the responsibility for the crimes of Stalinism, resulting from that victory. It is, to say the least, criminally reckless, to wish and work for the victory of an army which is nothing but the instrument of a group desiring to increase the number of people under its oppressive rule.

It is unnecessary to elaborate on the consequences of the Stalinist victory. The most important single factor in preventing the socialist revolution in eastern Europe was the Russian army. Because of that victory the strength of the Stalinist parties in western Europe has been greatly enhanced and the failure of the socialist revolution to develop in France and other western European countries can be attributed to the fact that the workers followed the Stalinist parties. The victory of the Stalinist army meant the plundering and looting of eastern Europe and Manchuria; it meant forced labor and death for millions of German, Polish, Balkan, Baltic and Japanese workers and peasants.

Expressing their regrets at the consequences of the victory of the Stalinist army, the official theoreticians of the Fourth International cling to the formula of Trotsky about nationalized property and base themselves entirely on that formula. Comrade Germain writes about the "brilliant" results achieved by the Stalinists in rebuilding the devastated portions of Russia and barely mentions the millions of slaves who make these "brilliant" results possible. These are people who have not advanced one step since Trotsky wrote *The Revolution Betrayed*. They continue with the pattern created by him and differ only in their figures on production and consumption.

Perhaps these theoreticians would learn if they had the opportunity to present the theories and their figures to the miserable slaves in the Stalinist concentration camps. Or will it require the occupation of Belgium and France by Stalin's "liberating army" before they get some practical lessons on Russian economy and production relations? Let us hope they will not have to go through this bitter experience.

Nationalized Property and Defense

Basically we based our defense of Stalinist Russia primarily on the fact that nationalized property achieved by the prole-

tarian revolution still existed. We accepted without argument the proposition that nationalized property is, in and of itself, progressive as against capitalist property. To a certain extent therefore our defense of nationalized property was implicitly based on the proposition that the consequences of that form of property are necessarily progressive.

Reality showed us that the results of the victory of the army which defended nationalized property in Russia and the interests of the bureaucracy were anything but progressive, viewing those results from the standpoint of the interests of the socialist revolution. The implicit assumption that the consequences of a "victory of nationalized property" would be progressive was proved false by events. They are not Marxists who fail to regard the actual course of events and cling to a theory that has been proved false.

When we consider the events that have occurred since 1939 we should be able to realize that Trotsky was mistaken when he formulated the proposition that we must defend Stalinist Russia so long as nationalized property exists. It is true that in his discussions and arguments he implied that the defense of nationalized property would be followed by progressive consequences. But the formula itself did not include that thought. It is within the spirit and method of Trotsky and all other great Marxists who insisted on analyzing events and not clinging to a theory that we must now proceed to correct the error made by Trotsky and accepted by us.

Our defense of the Soviet Union should not have been based solely on the fact that nationalized property was still in existence but also on all of the conditions under which nationalized property was functioning. When we defended the Soviet Union in the days when Lenin and Trotsky were guiding its destinies we did not do so because property was nationalized. (For a short period it was not nationalized.) It is far more correct to say that we defended the Soviet Union at that time because the program and policies of the Bolshevik party were leading the country in a socialist direction.

With the defeat of the Left Opposition representing the program of October it became necessary at every stage to indicate the factors, in addition to the existence of nationalized property, which made it obligatory for us to defend the Soviet Union. The existence of the traditions of October in the consciousness of the masses and the possibility, therefore, of their taking advantage of a war to overthrow the Stalinist bureaucracy was an important factor in favor of defense. So also was the expectation that a victory of the Russian army would set the European Revolution into action.

It must be admitted that to regard the existence of nationalized property as the basic and sole criterion for defense simplifies the problem enormously. It is a criterion that is more objective than any other and is more easily measurable. Introducing other factors such as the existence of workers' control and the traditions of October in the consciousness of the masses complicates the problem of defending or not defending

Russia. But simplifying the problem does not make for a correct solution.

Had Trotsky emphasized that nationalized property functions under certain conditions and that some of these conditions must be taken into consideration in determining our attitude on defense he would have been far more correct.

Let justice be done though the heavens fall. This is the rule followed by those who cling to the formula: Because there is still nationalized property Russia must be defended, regardless of the consequences. The rule of the Stalinist bureaucracy has of course nothing to do with justice.

Possible Theories for Defense

What theory can possibly justify defense of a state when the victory of its army leads to such dire consequences to the masses of the defeated countries? If the victory of an army leads to robbery and pillage, to the execution of the best representatives of the socialist movement, to the forced labor of millions of people, what possible theory is there to justify wishing and working for such a victory?

One can claim that the consequences resulting from the victory of the Stalinist army are temporary in nature; that somehow or other nationalized property under Stalinism will ultimately increase the productivity of labor and due to that the masses will gain democracy and thus place Russia and the Russian satellite states in the path of socialism.

That Trotsky never had that theory goes without saying. He stated definitely that without the European Revolution Russia will return to capitalism. The correctness of that theory may be questioned but what cannot be questioned is that Trotsky never had a theory claiming that Russia would return to the path of socialism by virtue of the existence of nationalized property. (I am given to understand that lately some French comrades have accepted some such theory. If that is true they will in all probability capitulate to Stalinism completely.)

We based ourselves on the theory that only a socialist revolution in Europe would give the Russian masses a chance for victory against the Stalinist bureaucracy. Now it has been shown to those who have eyes to see that a victory of the Stalinist army prevents a socialist revolution in Europe. *A successful revolution must be predicated upon the defeat of the Stalinist army.*

That the bureaucracy constitutes a burden upon the development of the productive forces in Russia has been one of our chief tenets. Strictly speaking there may not be sufficient evidence to conclude that nationalized property under Stalinism cannot exceed the productivity of labor reached by capitalism. All indications, however, point to the truth of that conclusion. Certainly we are justified in making the *a priori* statement that slave and semi-slave labor cannot, in the long-run, be the basis of an increase in the productivity of labor.

Another theory justifying defense is that the victory of a capitalist army would lead to even worse consequences. It is indeed difficult to envision worse consequences than those resulting from the victory of the Stalinist army. Even the Jews had little to choose between a victory of the Stalinist or of the Nazi armies. It is true that the Jews do not generally suffer under the Stalinist régime because they are Jews, but it is very little consolation to be given the choice between death in the gas chamber and "life" in the Siberian concentration camps together with non-Jews.

Certainly as between a victory for the Russian armies and one for the democratic capitalist armies the choice, for the

immediate future, is all in favor of the latter. To those who present us with the argument that a victory of the Nazis would have destroyed completely the possibilities of the socialist revolution for generations (and this is absolutely true) the answer is that it is not the victory of the Stalinists that gave the European workers a breathing spell but the victory of the British and American imperialists. (It is not, I hope, necessary to state that this does not mean that we should have supported the democratic imperialists.) One must indeed be blind not to recognize that whatever independent working class movement there exists at present in western Europe is due largely to the victory of the democratic imperialists over Hitler.

Great emphasis has been and is being laid by those who follow the old line of defense, on the argument that the victory of the Stalinist army prevents the expansion of capitalist imperialism into the territory now controlled by Stalinism. This argument was based on the proposition that somehow or other nationalized property under any conditions is to be preferred over capitalism under the most democratic conditions. This argument had validity on the supposition that the victory of the army defending nationalized property would lead to progressive consequences from the point of view of advancing the interests of the socialist revolution.

The consequences of the victory of Stalinism blasted that argument to pieces and one must now change the theory to conform to the facts. And the facts show that there are greater possibilities for the socialist revolution in a democratic capitalist state than under a Stalinist totalitarian régime. So long as democratic capitalism lasts, so long have the workers some chance to organize and struggle for the socialist revolution.

It is highly improbable that in case of a victory of democratic capitalism over the Stalinist armies, capitalist property relations would be re-established. But if they were and the Russian masses would once more get a breathing spell the net result would be a gain and not a loss for them. In the light of the probability of a war between Russia and the United States and of the possibility of a victory for the former the question must be posed: would the masses under Stalinism be better off than they are under democratic capitalism. Only those who see some mystical power in nationalized property, which must ultimately lead to socialism regardless of the totalitarian régime, can answer that question in the affirmative. For those who do not believe in religion the answer must be that there is as much chance for socialism emanating from the Stalinist régimes as from a fascist régime.

Lenin, quoting Goethe, remarked that theories are gray but green is the living reality. To cling to theories which are contrary to the facts of life is not in line with Marxist tradition.

The Nature of Russian Economy and State

What is this monstrosity which is the result of the degeneration of what was once a workers' state?

The development of a social order, totally different from anything we expected has necessarily given rise to sharp differences of opinion as to its nature. People who base themselves on the same general principles of Marx disagree in defining the nature of a social order which has the characteristics of everything bad that has ever afflicted mankind.

We are somewhat in the position of scientists confronted with the birth of a strange and unexpected specimen. Some conclude that it is a totally new species and proceed to give it a new name; some insist that it is very similar to something with which we are familiar and insist that we have at least the name of the familiar species as part of the name for the new

arrival; the more cautious ones say that it is necessary to wait and see what developments will take place in the monster, before coming to a definite decision. Meanwhile let us call it a degeneration of the species from which it sprang.

For those who have given up the idea of defending Russia the question of what it is and what to call it is not of very great importance. No matter what one calls it, it is bad for the human race. An explanation of its origin is important and most of us, regardless of the differences we have on the nature of the Russian state, accept Trotsky's explanation for its origin. We look at the monstrosity and in the main agree that it has certain aspects and functions in a certain way. Above all, we agree that the bureaucracy or class in power should be overthrown and the political and economic life of the country be placed under the control of the workers. Nevertheless the theory that we accept as to the nature of the Russian state has some importance, as I shall try to show.

It must first of all be recognized that only two theories of its nature settle the question of whether or not to defend Russia without any further examination. The Stalinists have no problem of defense because they consider Russia a workers' state. Those who consider that capitalism as described by Marx prevails in Russia, except that the state has replaced the capitalists, also have no problem of defense.

But if one accepts the theory that Russia is a bureaucratic collectivist society or that it is a new social order that should be designated as "state capitalism," or that it is a degenerated workers' state the question of defense is not automatically solved. What should determine our decision as to whether or not to defend it is not the label or the theory but whether or not we consider the economy and the conditions under which it functions as progressive.

Bureaucratic Collectivism

The fundamental proposition of the theory of bureaucratic collectivism is that the Russian bureaucracy, constituting a new class, owns the industries of that country, exploits the masses of Russia and has launched upon an imperialist course to dominate and exploit the masses of other countries.

The minority of 1940 in the Socialist Workers Party (the main advocates at present of the bureaucratic collectivist theory) had what then appeared to be an absolutely incorrect position, but which, in the light of events, has proven to be the correct approach. The comrades of that minority held that regardless of the fact that one considered Russia a degenerated workers' state it should not be defended. This position was not elaborated and made clear but essentially, as a method of approach, it was more correct than the method of the majority which held to the theory that so long as Russia was a degenerated workers' state it must be defended.

It seems plausible to conclude that not the least important factor which led the comrades of the minority of 1940 to adopt the theory and label first suggested by the Italian Comrade Bruno R. was the sharp criticism of Trotsky to the effect that they failed to take into consideration the nature of the Soviet Union in arriving at their position against defense.

As stated above, to consider Russia as a bureaucratic collectivist state does not thereby solve the problem as to whether it should be defended. As a matter of fact the theory of bureaucratic collectivism, just as the theory of the degenerated workers' state, speaks for defense rather than against it. For if Russian society is some form of collectivism it should be defended as against capitalism. It can be readily seen that the question of defense cannot be settled by calling Russia a bureaucratic

collectivist state but by an analysis of its economy, the conditions under which the economy functions and the consequences that would probably follow from a victory of its army.

A minor objection to the term "bureaucratic collectivism"—an outlandish term at best—is that it distorts somewhat the picture of the actual situation in Russia. Actually the state property is not owned by all of the bureaucrats collectively; it is owned by the state and the state is "owned" not by all of the bureaucrats but by those on the very highest rung of the ladder of bureaucracy.

One must also remember that the term "collectivism" was used in the socialist movement as a synonym for socialism. If one were to propose to label that which exists in Russia "bureaucratic socialism" many would object on the following grounds: (1) there is no socialism whatever in Russia; (2) the phrase is a contradiction in terms, for if there is socialism it cannot be bureaucratic, and (3) why defile the term "socialism"? The very same objections are applicable to the term "bureaucratic collectivism."

The most serious objection to the theory of bureaucratic collectivism is that it tends to raise theoretical difficulties in the path of the struggle for socialism. Thus far we have based ourselves on the theory of Marx that the class struggle under capitalism will result in the victory of the working class and the establishment of socialism. Bureaucratic collectivism revises that theory and indicates that a system other than socialism, that is, bureaucratic collectivism, is just as likely to follow capitalism. At first it seemed as if the proponents of the bureaucratic collectivist theory confined the new social order to Russia but with the spread of Russian domination in eastern Europe it appears as if bureaucratic collectivism is a serious rival to socialism as the system of society that will replace capitalism the world over.

This implication in the theory of bureaucratic collectivism is strengthened by the fact that those who hold that theory contend that the bureaucracy in Russia is a class. If it is, then, for those who accept the Marxist concept of a class, it should serve a progressive task in the development of the productive forces and should be expected to retain its rule for a comparatively long period.

And what would follow the social order of bureaucratic collectivism? It is indeed difficult to imagine socialism emerging from the womb of bureaucratic collectivism. The very reason for the existence of this new social order the world over would be the inability of the working class to take and retain power. If it cannot do so under capitalism which permits a certain degree of freedom for the education and organization of the proletariat how can it reach a high level of education and organization under a system which practically enslaves the masses?

One can visualize great conflicts resulting from the national and social oppression of the masses in a totalitarian society but it is highly improbable that an educated socialist proletariat should develop in a police state. And such a proletariat is essential for the establishment of a socialist society. The perspective which the theory of bureaucratic collectivism gives us is a bleak one indeed.

To revise Marx when events demand it is not only justified but absolutely essential. Otherwise one is not a Marxist. The comrades who insist that the theory of bureaucratic collectivism best explains the conditions in Russia can surely claim that they are applying the method of Marx, although rejecting a basic conclusion of the founder of socialism. Com-

rade Shachtman has adequately answered the theoreticians of the Socialist Workers Party on that score. (See Max Shachtman's article in *THE NEW INTERNATIONAL* of April, 1947.)

It is not because the theory of bureaucratic collectivism revises a basic conclusion of Marx that it should be rejected; it is because, by its revision, it raises possible theoretical difficulties in the struggle for socialism that it should be rejected.

It may be argued that the theoretical difficulties are not the fault of the theory but of reality. But if another theory explains the facts just as well and does not raise the theoretical difficulties that are implied in the theory of bureaucratic collectivism, then such a theory is to be preferred. We can look at the Stalinist bureaucracy and agree that what it does and how it acts make of it the greatest enemy to socialism. We can call it by any name we please and it will still act in the same manner. But if calling it a "class" raises theoretical difficulties in the struggle for socialism and calling it a bureaucracy avoids those difficulties that is a good reason for calling it a bureaucracy. The theory of socialism has for its purpose to achieve freedom for mankind and unless there are compelling facts to revise it we should reject every theory that revises it to the detriment of the struggle for socialism.

State Capitalism

Most of those who accept the theory that state capitalism prevails in Russia do so on the alleged ground that the economic system in that country is essentially the same as in the United States or England. According to them in Russia private capitalism has been displaced by state capitalism—but all the laws of capitalism as analyzed and explained by Marx continue to operate.

It is undoubtedly true that sections of the Marxist theory of the functioning of capitalism can be made to apply to the Russian system of exploitation. But we must view the theory of Marx as a whole and we must view the Russian economic system as a whole. If we do that it becomes clear that the Russian system of economy differs radically from the system of capitalism analyzed by Marx. The Russian system is in effect a new system of economy.

Many who claim that there is state capitalism in Russia and insist that it essentially follows the same laws that operate in the "classical" capitalist system use somewhat the following logic: In Russia the law of value functions; there is accumulation of wealth; misery prevails for the masses and a high standard of living for the few, etc. The same conditions exist under capitalism. Therefore Russia is capitalist.

In general it can be said that all of the aspects of Russian economy which the theoreticians of state capitalism point to as evidence existed in modified form in the early days of the Soviet Union. The fact is that the ultra-lefts have used the same arguments to prove that state capitalism existed under Lenin and Trotsky.

Stalin did not introduce the law of value into Russian economy; it certainly operated in Soviet economy during the days of the New Economic Policy. One of the reasons for the retreat of the leaders of Bolshevism from war communism to the New Economic Policy was precisely because they saw that they were wrong in their attempt to do away with the law of value. During the period of transition between capitalism and complete socialism the law of value will operate to a certain extent even under the best of circumstances.

The difference between a Stalinist régime determined to defend the interests of the bureaucracy and a Lenin-Trotsky

régime striving to achieve socialism lies partly in this: whereas under Lenin and Trotsky there was an interference with the law of value for the benefit of the workers, the Stalinists interfere with it to the injury of the workers and in favor of the bureaucracy. It is most probable that if the bureaucracy permitted the law of value to operate freely the workers would benefit thereby.

To designate the economy of Russia as state capitalist on the basis that it is practically the same as the capitalist economies analyzed by Marx is to fly in the face of the facts and that is one thing Marxists must never do. The ownership by the state of the means of production and the abolition of competition on the free market means the abolition of capitalism.

State Capitalism—A New Order

It may be possible, however, to contend that the Russian economy represents a new social order for which the best name is "state capitalism." Those who hold this theory do not attempt to prove that state capitalism exists in Russia by pointing to some laws of Marxian economics which prevail also in Russia. They face the fact that Russian economy is totally different from American or English economy and simply assert that state capitalism is the best label for the Russian economic system.

Between the proponents of this theory of state capitalism and the advocates of the theory of bureaucratic collectivism there is a difference only in label. They both agree that a new class rules in Russia and a new social order—neither socialism nor capitalism—exists in that country. There can be only a terminological conflict between these two theories with the advantages all in favor of the label "state capitalism."

That the industries are owned by the state and that the state is "owned" by the top layer of the bureaucracy are facts which speak persuasively in favor of calling the Russian system state capitalism. Also at present there is some indication that in Russia there is developing a group living off the interest obtained by virtue of the ownership of bonds. The members of this group can now pass their wealth on to their heirs. A state which owns the industries and which has as its primary purpose the exploitation of the masses for the benefit of those who "own" the state and of bondholders can very well be designated as a capitalist state and the system which it defends as "state capitalism."

Trotsky's objection to the term "state capitalism" was that it was used in a different sense in the Marxist movement. It referred to the ownership of certain industries by the capitalist state under the prevailing régime of private property. That is not a serious objection; the reply can be made that what is necessary now is to find the best possible term to designate a new phenomenon. It is true that we must invest the term "state capitalism" with a new meaning in order to apply it to the Russian system of economy but that should not constitute an insurmountable obstacle.

While I am opposed to the concept that state capitalism prevails in Russia on the same general grounds that I oppose the theory of bureaucratic collectivism, I am all in favor of using the term "state capitalism" as against "bureaucratic collectivism." Should we be compelled by the course of events to revise Marx and recognize that a social system which is not socialism is destined to follow capitalism, then we should call it state capitalism rather than bureaucratic collectivism. I strongly urge those who believe in the theory that there is a new class which rules a new social order in Russia to drop the term

"bureaucratic collectivism" in favor of the term "state capitalism." From the propaganda point of view it is the best term available because it is familiar to the advanced workers and to some extent it creates a connection between the struggle against the capitalist state as it exists in capitalist countries and the struggle against the Russian state.

Degenerated Workers' State

I hold that for the present the theory which best describes the economic and social conditions prevailing in Russia is still "degenerated workers' state." There is one very serious objection to the term and that is that the word "workers" can be easily misunderstood and misinterpreted. It seems to be almost impossible to use the term without having the objection raised that the workers have no control whatever in Russia and that they are oppressed and enslaved—all of which is perfectly true—and that therefore it cannot possibly be even a degenerated workers' state. From the propaganda point of view the term "state capitalist" is much better than the term "degenerated workers' state." But the theory that Russia is a degenerated workers' state avoids the theoretical difficulties of the theories of bureaucratic collectivism and of state capitalism. These theoretical difficulties are far more serious than the propaganda difficulties connected with the use of the term "degenerated workers' state."

When used at present the term "degenerated workers' state" should mean only that Russia was once a workers' state and has by this time degenerated to a point where it has nothing whatever to do with socialism and should under no circumstances be defended. The term "degenerated," because of its vagueness, always demanded an explanation. Stalinist Russia was degenerated when Trotsky advocated a peaceful elimination of the bureaucracy; it was degenerated when he changed his mind and said that a violent overthrow of the ruling clique was necessary.

In *The Revolution Betrayed*, Trotsky contended that the nationalization of the land, the means of industrial production, together with the monopoly of foreign trade make of the Soviet Union a proletarian state. This general principle must be revised. We must say that what made the Soviet Union a workers' state was not only the property relations but the program and policies which directed the state in the path of achieving socialism. With the victory of the Stalinist bureaucracy there was a turn away from the socialist path and now the road leads in the opposite direction from that of socialism.

Where will it lead to? Almost up to the last months of his life Trotsky held to his theory that it can lead either to a restoration of capitalism or to the overthrow of the Stalinist bureaucracy and a march back to socialism. In his last articles in 1939-40, during the factional fight with the minority of the SWP, he presented the possibility of a third alternative, the alternative of a degenerated society such as exists in Russia under Stalinism, if the workers do not take power. Trotsky went to the extent of saying that the workers must take power during or immediately after the war in order to prevent this "declining society of the totalitarian epoch" from replacing capitalist society. I think we can say that in this instance Trotsky was too pessimistic.

More than two years after the war we can still say that history has not yet made a definitive decision. There are still great possibilities for the victory of socialism, especially in the most powerful country in the world, the United States. As fighters for the freedom of mankind through socialism we have

no right to give up the struggle until the decision comes in this country. It is unnecessary of course to drown out one's doubts by shouting about the "coming American Revolution," as if it is around the corner (leaving a way out of course by saying that the "coming revolution" does not mean that it will come tomorrow). We can say truthfully that we do not know when the decision will come but that we must do our utmost to assure victory for socialism.

Victory for socialism in this country means the certain defeat of Stalinism and fascism the world over. Defeat for socialism in this country means the ushering in of the "declining society of the totalitarian epoch" which may last for decades or centuries. And, as Trotsky indicated, such a development will mean the necessity of a thorough revision of Marxism.

The superiority of the concept of "degenerated workers' state" over all other theories lies in the fact that it recognizes that history has not yet said the last word and that whether or not a new order other than socialism will replace capitalism will be decided by the struggle that is still going on in Europe and especially by the struggle in the United States.

What class rules in Russia? This is the insurmountable obstacle for those who look upon Marxism as a series of quotations. Surely the workers do not rule; they are semi-slaves at best. Surely the capitalists as we know them in this country do not rule; they have been eliminated in Russia and are being eliminated everywhere that Russia gains control. The bureaucrats rule and the direction is toward their development as a new class. If doctrinaires reject such a concept because according to Marx either the capitalists or the workers must rule, then our only answer is that they do not understand the real method of Marx who insisted upon looking at phenomena in process of development.

Weighing the merits and demerits of the various theories advanced as to the nature of Stalinist Russia I conclude that, for the present at least, we should retain the theory of degenerated workers' state because it explains the existing facts as well as any other theory and it does not raise any theoretical barrier to the continuation of the struggle for socialism.

ALBERT GOLDMAN.

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A Latin American Manifesto

The Path of the Colonial Revolution

The following article, written by our Latin American correspondent, analyzes the Manifesto of the Peruvian Section of the Fourth International. This Manifesto is one of the first important studies of the nature of socialist revolution in semi-colonial Latin America. It appeared in English in the April issue of the Fourth International and for that reason we do not reprint it here. The article of Velasco while indicating the false position of the Manifesto on Russia and Stalinism nevertheless indicates its importance as a noteworthy Trotskyist document.—Editors.

The development of the workers' movement in America is daily acquiring more and more importance. Faced with Europe in its death throes, both North and South America are becoming the continents of the future for socialism. The phenomenal development of North American capitalism and imperialism constitutes the prime event of our time. The formidable growth of the American workers' movement, still trade unionist in its first stage, follows it like a shadow.

But North American trade unions, which have more than 20 million members, (USA, Canada and Mexico) are something without precedent in the history of the international working class movement. Even in the backward and semi-colonial Latin American countries, the workers' movement is acquiring day by day more importance and historic weight. The development of industry in Brazil and Argentina is awakening the consciousness of the Latin American continent, pushing forward "the slow nag of history." *The Latin American working class, which until now was almost nil as an independent factor, appears in the arena as a young and aggressive force, sometimes emerging under the yoke of Stalinism, but in many countries with the real banner of revolutionary Marxism.*

While in Europe the old-time formations, anachronistic social democratic reformers and Stalinists, still dominate and the regenerating currents grouped around the Fourth International are reduced to an insignificant minority, in Latin America, the new internationalist Left, followed by sympathizing trends inside the Brazilian and Argentine Social Democracy, are becoming an inde-

pendent and sometimes important political factor. It is characteristic that precisely in the most backward countries of the Pacific coast, Chile, Bolivia and Peru, the movement led by the Fourth International is growing relatively faster and acquiring better theoretical preparation than in the advanced countries on the Atlantic seaboard, Argentina and Brazil. The weak and rickety native bourgeoisie on the Pacific coast is not capable of exerting so much influence or ideological pressure on the proletariat as is the dynamic and vigorous bourgeoisie of Brazil and Argentina. The social and political weight of the working classes in the Pacific countries is relatively much greater than in Brazil or Argentina. For this reason the two capitalistic republics produce the totalitarian dictatorships of Vargas and Peron, which confront the tempestuous awakening of the working masses, absorbing and channelizing it, sometimes with a policy of social reforms and fascist demagogy.

In the Pacific countries, the Chilean, Peruvian, Bolivian or Paraguayan bourgeoisie is not capable of forming such "solid" régimes and has to alternately allow democratic, petty bourgeois government and short-lived military and Bonapartist dictatorships, with blood-thirsty methods, such as the régime of Villaroel in Bolivia, Morinigo in Paraguay and the *Apra* in Peru. Chile, occupying an intermediate position in this mosaic, has managed to form a coalition "leftist" government with the support of the Stalinists. *The pattern of Latin American régimes is the boiling lava of the economic and social transformations of our continent and at the same time it is the proof of the semi-colonial and semi-feudal character of Latin America. The rapid and almost daily changes in these régimes characterize the impotence and weakness of the native bourgeoisie faced with social transformations and the emancipation movements of the working masses.*

Peruvians Show the Way

It is therefore of prime importance when the Marxist doctrine, raising its sonorous voice in this noisy and living whirlwind of history, tries to give historic direction to this burning and as

yet formless lava. It is a voice, a living expression of the rhythmic march of the South American industrial proletariat which is trying, still instinctively, and sometimes unconsciously, to give organized forms to this spontaneous historic process. This honorable and important role is undoubtedly being filled by the manifesto of the Peruvian Trotskyists, published in the *Fourth International* (April, 1947).

In our former articles we have frequently analyzed the problem of the democratic revolution in Bolivia, Peru and the Argentine. The Marxist theory in South America is seeking its historic path, like the working masses, through the chaotic jungle of history. Some sectors of the Argentine Trotskyists feel overwhelmed and defenseless, faced with the phenomenon of industrial development in Argentina and the swashbuckling despotism of Peron. These sectors bow to the pressure of Peronism, proclaiming it the realization of the democratic bourgeois revolution, not only in Argentina, but in the whole of Latin America.

The Bolivian miners, in their congress at Pulacayo, proclaimed a formidable revolutionary thesis in which they showed the democratic bourgeois revolution as the proletariat's immediate task. Both the miners' congress and the thesis were under the auspices of the Revolutionary Workers Party (POR), a section of the Fourth International. To do them justice, one should explain that the contents of the democratic bourgeois revolution of the Bolivian POR is fundamentally different from the Stalinist contents of the same, and considers that the revolution can only be carried out under the dictatorship of the proletariat, through the alliance of the proletariat with the peasants, whereas the Stalinists propose alliance between the "progressist" liberal bourgeoisie and the proletariat. *But the POR's thesis does not underline the international character of this revolution, but treats it as an isolated phenomenon, thus slipping toward the concept of revolution and socialism in just one country.* For this reason the voice of our Peruvian comrades is of fundamental importance in clearing up

and solving this central problem of Marxism in South America.

How the Problem Is Posed

How do the Peruvian comrades pose this problem?

"The Latin American revolution will be a stage, a phase of the world revolution, and nothing else. It will be purely and simply the socialist revolution" (Mariategui) This classic thesis of the quoted master is the central idea, the axis of the manifesto. Like all great things, Mariategui's thesis has the simplicity of genius and leaves no room for any doubts. "The international character of modern economy permits no country to escape from the process of transformation which originates in the present-day conditions of production. . . . Imperialism bars the economic program of nationalization and industrialization in every semi-colonial country which it exploits as a market for its capital and commodities, and as a source of raw materials."

"We cannot solve democratic revolution within the national or international framework of bourgeois society. . . . We are a semi-colony of Yankee imperialism. . . . The Peruvian bourgeoisie is closely bound to North American imperialism. . . . The fate of our weak-jointed national bourgeoisie is intimately bound up with the fate of the entire world capitalist system. . . . The real big bourgeoisie is not in Peru but in Wall Street, this fierce enemy of democratic and national revolution" (Manifesto). We have not much to add to these lapidary phrases. In the Pacific coast countries the exploitation of *guano* and *salitre* in Chile and Peru, of tin in Bolivia, has been the work of European imperialist capitalism and has replaced the colonial feudal formation of Spanish economy. *The age of gold and silver has been replaced by the age of guano, salitre, tin, copper and lead!* This was the stage of liberal capitalism when Great Britain penetrated the countries of Latin America. In the imperialist stage of capitalism between the First and Second World Wars, British capitalism was displaced by North American expansion and forced to take second place. *The whole of Latin America, especially the small countries, has reached a state of being semi-colonies of the USA.* North American capital today occupies all the key economic positions. The slight mining bourgeoisie of Peru, Bolivia or Chile is bound up with North American capital. The middle bourgeoisie depends

partly on mining interests and partly on the semi-feudal economy of the land, where the big *haciendas* are still run on a feudal-slave system. "Peruvian plutocracy is really subordinate to Wall Street finance capital." Therefore, all the Peruvian bourgeoisie belongs in the counter-revolutionary camp.

Petty Bourgeois Nationalism

The petty bourgeoisie which, around 1920, raised the anti-imperialist banner, passed over with its most representative party, the *Apra*, and its leader, Haya de la Torre, by an evolution toward frank reaction. *Apra*, which was demanding Indo-American unity, the internationalization of the Panama Canal, nationalization of big industries and feudal haciendas, and was fighting against imperialism, forgot its own program on taking power and capitulated both before Yankee imperialism and native plutocracy. "The petty bourgeois anti-imperialists of the 20's have been transformed into the bourgeois pro-imperialists of the 40's." (Manifesto.)

"The democratic revolution is the task of the proletarian revolution" is the title of the corresponding chapter in the Manifesto. "The country's economic emancipation can be achieved only through the action of the proletarian masses in solidarity with the world anti-imperialist struggle." (Mariategui.) In view of the close ties between native feudo-bourgeoisie and imperialism, and the capitulation of the petty bourgeoisie, only the proletariat, allied with the peasants, can carry out a social revolution in Peru, *the fundamental contents of which would be socialist and proletarian*, although in its first stages it would accomplish the tasks of the democratic revolution, such as the economic and national emancipation of Peru and the agricultural revolution in the country. The Peruvian comrades pose the problem of the democratic revolution in a completely opposite form from certain sectors of Argentine Trotskyism, which consider the reactionary policy of Peron as the realization of the belated democratic revolution in Latin America. The Peruvians, like Mariategui, lay out the perspective of the internationalist socialist revolution, which will solve the backward democratic problems on its way. The motor force of this revolution is the Latin American proletariat and not the bourgeoisie or the petty bourgeoisie. This viewpoint is also different from the Bolivian POR's formulation and from that

of the miners' congress in Pulacayo, which considered as their immediate stage the realization of the democratic bourgeois revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat, forgetting the international and permanent character of the revolution. The Peruvians, disciples of the great Mariategui, declare plainly that "in the course of its development the democratic revolution passes into the socialist revolution and thus constitutes itself the permanent revolution." (Trotsky.) They also declare that "the socialist revolution is international, or else is not socialist at all." *Therefore the national and economic emancipation of Latin America can only be carried out along the path of the international socialist revolution, beginning with the defeat of North American imperialism, which today is the fortress of world capitalism.*

Role of the Manifesto

The Peruvian Trotskyist Manifesto means, to our way of thinking, an event in the life of the Latin American proletariat, being a chain in the social and political process of our continent. Under the pressure of the masses, Vargas' régime falls in Brazil, a "leftist" government is set up in Chile, Benavides' military dictatorship falls in Peru, and the *Apra* comes to power, Villaroel's régime falls in Bolivia, Morinigo's dictatorship becomes shaky in Paraguay.

The fall of Villaroel's régime in the popular revolution produces a revolutionary upsurge of the working masses, led by the Fourth International. Of course, this movement is fairly complex, it has many weaknesses and lacks theoretical quality. The decadence of *Apra's* dictatorship in Peru produces the birth of the GOM (Marxist Workers' Group) in the face of Stalinist treachery. If this group lacks influence over the masses, it nevertheless represents the outstanding school of Marxist theory in South America, led by Mariategui. It stands at the head of the Trotskyist movement in matters of theory and makes plain the tasks of the revolution, which have been wrongly posed in Argentina and have become foggy in the section of the Fourth International in Bolivia. The Fourth International movements in Peru and Bolivia complement each other reciprocally, being links of the same revolutionary chain which sets its seal on the tortuous historical process.

In Brazil, the powerful and dynamic bourgeoisie transmitted its pressure upon the proletariat by means of the Stalin-

ists, who in the wartime interests of Moscow hailed Vargas as the source of the democratic revolution. This same pattern repeats itself today in Argentina where the Stalinists support Peron as an anti-imperialist. In the Cordillera countries, which centuries ago were the center of the collectivist empire of the Incas, the petty bourgeoisie embraces a Nazi ideology, like the NMR in Bolivia, or a nationalist one like the *Apra* in Peru, demagogically hailing the "national revolution" and the "anti-imperialist program." But on arriving in power,

these movements failed since they capitulated before the native feudo-bourgeoisie and American imperialism. The Bolivian NMR lasted only a few years. The Peruvian *Apra* struggled for nearly a quarter of a century to take power. *But neither of these two movements was able to expropriate the bourgeoisie, carry out agricultural reform or maintain the struggle against imperialism.* The failure, the Canossa of the native petty bourgeoisie faced with imperialism, constitutes the best proof against the Stalinist "theory" of the bourgeois revolution as

a stage in itself and against the reflections of this theory in the Marxist camp, the Fourth International. The proof of the pudding is in the eating. The social revolution in Latin America must be one, it must be continental and international, a socialist revolution which carries out the democratic tasks as part of the chain of revolution in both Americas. The Peruvian Trotskyists, in making this clear, did an important theoretical labor.

LUIS VELASCO.

Stalinism and the Colonies

Dispute Between Lanka Sama Samaj and the Workers Party

(We are publishing, in full, an article contained in the March 29, 1947, issue of *Samasamajist*, organ of the Lanka Sama Samaj Party, Ceylon Unit of the Bolshevik-Leninist Party of India, a section of the Fourth International, together with a brief reply to the article by Henry Judd. The pages of THE NEW INTERNATIONAL, in contradistinction to the incredible action of the Bolshevik-Leninist Party of India which, we are reliably informed, has banned the sale, circulation and distribution of our magazine among its members because of its views (*sic!*), are open to any and all controversial issues under dispute in the Marxist movement. Even the objectionable and polemically exaggerated tone of the *Samasamajist* article, unfortunate as it is, will not deter us from our persistence in democratic discussion methods. We hope the publication of the Ceylon Trotskyists will agree with our practice to the extent of their printing Henry Judd's reply in their publication.—Editor)

A Reply to Comrade Henry Judd

In the November, 1946, number of the "New International," theoretical organ of the Workers' Party (of America), Comrade Henry Judd in his review of the Lanka Sama Samaj Party—Ceylon unit of the Bolshevik-Leninist Party of India, Section of the Fourth International, accuses the LSSP of having "gone far along the road leading to capitulation to Stalinism." He states further that the LSSP "claims to be a Trotskyist and Fourth International Party."

In support of his charge of capitulation to Stalinism Comrade Judd quotes the Editorial Note we wrote on Persia in the July 24... 1946 Number of "Samasamajist." But the quotation is so torn out of its context that the reader is likely to believe what Comrade Judd states, despite the fact most revolutionaries never take seriously the articles and pamphlets of Comrade Judd; because Comrade Judd has a capacity for allowing his imagination to run riot when he

has gathered a few unverified facts on the problems of the colonial and semi-colonial revolutionary movement. Recently he has indulged in this customary past-time of his in his articles on the European Revolution.

We wish to reproduce the relevant portions of our Editorial Notes on Persia, to enable the reader to judge whether we have "gone far along the road leading to capitulation to Stalinism."

"The struggle between the forces of democracy and semi-feudal reaction in Persia is sweeping the entire country. It is no longer confined to the Northern Provinces of Persia. Ispahan is no longer the centre of activities of the Tudeh Party. Teheran the capital of Persia and the seat of the Central Government has become the hub from which radiate the activities of the forces of democracy and the working-class movement at present under the patronage of the Tudeh Party and the Soviet Union. The drive for influence in Persia between the Soviet Union and Anglo-American finance-capital is today a phase of the development of democratic and working-class forces which are struggling to liberate themselves from authoritarian religious mullahs and obscurantist semi-feudal landlords. Britain is on the side of reaction and conservatism, whilst the Soviet Union is encouraging the democratic and working-class forces to organize themselves to overthrow feudal reaction and end British imperialist domination of the land of Iran.

* * *

"The Soviet Union is adopting the pattern that she experimented with in Eastern and South-Eastern Europe. An independent working-class organization is *not encouraged*; working-class organizations are made subordinate to capitalist parties. The safety of the Soviet Union and Soviet influence in the lands of the Near East are the guiding motives of Soviet foreign policy in these lands. Incidentally the democratic and working-class forces receive support in their struggle against feudal reaction and British imperialist domination. The Near East and

the countries of the Middle East are likely to witness an intense conflict between the Soviet Union and British imperialism in the near future." ("Samasamajist," July 24, 1946.)

We like to ask Comrade Judd what is wrong with this analysis. The LSSP has never travelled on the road to capitulation to Stalinism. It has been true to the principles and programme of Trotskyism. It has a greater right not merely to claim but to proclaim that it is more a Trotskyist and Fourth International Party than the Workers Party (of America). The LSSP accepts fully Comrade Leon Trotsky's characterization of the Soviet Union as a "degenerated workers' state." It has refused to accept the pseudo-Marxism of the theoretical leaders of the Minority. The LSSP is capable of drawing a distinction between the policy of expansionism of the Soviet Union and the policy of imperialism of Anglo-American finance-capital. In the above note we have attempted to draw that distinction whilst indicating the limitations and the dangers to the proletariat in that policy of expansionism of the Soviet Union. *The essential conflict of this post-war epoch, the conflict between the degenerated workers' state—the Soviet Union—and the world of capitalism, of Anglo-American finance-capital, must be kept in view. Comrade Judd and some of his colleagues see no difference between the "totalitarianism" of fascism and that of Stalinism.* We cannot subscribe to that school of thought. The LSSP sees no reason to reject Trotsky's characterization of the Soviet Union. *The LSSP is not convinced that capitalism has been restored in the Soviet Union.*

The LSSP is painfully conscious of the harm done to Trotskyism and the Fourth International movement by the highly colored and exaggerated articles and brochures of Comrade Judd on the Trotskyist movement in the colonies. Comrade Judd has an infinite capacity for mixing facts with fiction. Today no serious minded colonial revolutionary pays any attention to Comrade Judd's scribblings in the "New

International." As a matter of fact we are amazed at the ignorance of the problems of the colonial revolution displayed by American and European Trotskyists. Our appeal to Comrade Judd and his colleagues in the Workers' Party is that they should take every possible precaution to prevent the Trotskyist movement degenerating in the manner the Communist International degenerated in the twenties.

Rejoinder by Henry Judd

The strong emotional reaction of the Ceylon comrades to my *political* charge that their organization "...has gone far along the road leading to capitulation to Stalinism" is easy to understand. In part, it is due to a spontaneous and healthy reaction and recoil before such an unpleasant possibility; in part it is due probably to a failure to understand my statement as signifying, in no sense of the word, any *organizational* concessions to Stalinism, but rather a serious *political* tendency to (a) build up the "progressive" role of Russia in the colonial movement; (b) create the illusion that Russia and its parties and organizations play a progressive, revolutionary role in the world. My charge was and remains a *political* charge and must be understood (and answered) as such. Unfortunately, the heated reply of the Ceylon comrades is not only hardly to be considered as an answer, but it only lends weight, as we shall try to show, to the original charge!

Of course the Ceylon comrades are, subjectively speaking, from the viewpoint of their aims and desires, not Stalinists. However, as they well know, political trends, results and directions cannot be judged in such terms. I maintained, on the basis of several quotations from the *Samasamajist*, the English organ of the Ceylon Unit, that the Party had a dangerous position, as revealed in its description of the events in Iran (Persia), last year, where the Soviet Union was painted up as a supporter of the democratic masses of that country. The independent aims of Russia (call them imperialist or what you will) with respect to Iran simply did not exist for the Ceylon author! One would have thought he was dealing with the Russia of Lenin's day. The quotations in my notes, taken from his article, were, I believe, clear and unambiguous—too much so.

In subsequent issues of the *Samasamajist* that I have seen, the same *uncritical* attitude toward Russia and its relation to the colonial movement is entirely patent. The activities and role of Stalinist organizations as such (*e.g.*, the Communist Party in Ceylon) have, it is true, been dealt with in a most effective and critical fashion, but the activities and maneuverings of the "degenerated workers' state" on the international scene are either ignored or glossed over. I have yet to see, in the press of the Ceylon comrades, a critical estimate of Russia's role in China (surely of great importance for colonial revolutionists); or of Ho Chi Minh and the Indo-Chinese Stalinists; or of Stalinism's general strategy with respect to the colonial movement.

But let us grant that my charge against these comrades was unfair. A mere reading of their reply to me indicates how seriously off the track they are, how completely they fail to grasp Russia's role in the world in general and the colonial world in particular. The puppet Tudeh Party, deliberately contrived by Stalin, becomes a mass democratic movement in their eyes. (It has now faded into oblivion until Stalin will conveniently revive it for another crack at Iran.) The Iranian forces of democracy are under the "patronage" (kindly? wise? helpful? friendly?) of this Party and the Soviet Union. And whose side is Russia on? "...the democratic and working class forces (fighting) to organize themselves to overthrow feudal reaction and end British imperialist domination of the land of Iran." Everyone can read this for himself and then ask himself whether my analysis that these comrades have gone far along the road to *political* capitulation to Stalinism is an exaggeration. If this is what Russia is doing in the colonial world then, by every ounce of revolutionary common sense, our movement must give it full and unqualified support. But even the most orthodox "Workers' Staters" have hardly gone this far.

Outworn Formulas

Even the Ceylon comrades know better, as is indicated by the glaring contradiction contained in their article. The very next paragraph after that which describes the progressive role of Russia (encouraging the democratic and working class forces) contains the remarkable statement that, "An independent working-class organization is not encouraged; working-class organizations are made subordinate to capitalist parties." Now, aside from the debatable statement about Stalinism in the colonies subordinating itself to capitalist parties (as in China, for example?), is not the contradiction all too glaring? Surely the Ceylonese comrades are terribly confused and disoriented in their approach to the Stalinist movement. Their confusion lies in their failure to understand precisely how, in what sense and for what purposes Russia attempts to make use of the democratic, nationalist and proletarian forces in the colonies. The publications of the Workers Party, in their concrete analysis of events in China, Indo-China, India and the colonial world in general have tried to answer this question—namely, that Russian imperialism, an aggressive and expanding order, in fundamental conflict with American imperialism, seeks to use, traduce, take possession of, manipulate, control and, above all, *subordinate to itself*, the legitimate, progressive movements of struggle in the colonies. The comrades in Ceylon, hypnotized by outworn formulas, are blind to these newly revealed characteristics of the Russian system. It is this blindness that makes it impossible for them to see, let alone face, the realities of Russian imperialism, and to conceal all events behind the rationalization of "the safety of the Soviet Union." The manipulations and actions of the Indian Communist Party and even the minute Ceylon Stalinist movement are related to Russia, not merely the opportunist desires of local Stalinist spokesmen. But the viewpoint of the Workers Party on Russia has often been ex-

pressed and we need only refer to it. This is the overall analysis that must be answered.

Misconceptions on WP

The comrades in Ceylon suffer from many serious misconceptions regarding the Workers Party and THE NEW INTERNATIONAL. "The LSSP is not convinced that capitalism has been restored in the Soviet Union," the article declares. Well, neither are we and we have argued long and loudly against this conception. Nor do we hold that "the Totalitarianism of Fascism and that of Stalinism" have no differences, as the article declares. Is it not clear that the Ceylon party, no doubt for excellent reasons, is simply unfamiliar with the Workers Party viewpoint? To be in a position to attack an opponent, it is elementary to know what your opponent maintains. This job must still be fulfilled by the LSSP and it will be, we trust, in the near future. Material presenting our views is widely and easily available since the end of the war.

Finally, a brief word on the more personal aspects of the article in reference. Regrettable and unpleasant as it may be, the Ceylon LSSP leadership is entitled to its opinion of Henry Judd. I have certainly never claimed to be any "specialist" on the colonial revolutionary movement, nor have I written the many "articles and brochures" on this subject that I apparently am given credit for. The Ceylon and Indian parties did see fit to order and circulate several hundred copies of my one brochure "India in Revolt," however. More important is the fact that the numerous accusations against me—riotous imagination, unverified facts, highly colored and exaggerated articles, etc.—are matters that must be proved. Nobody in the movement any longer accepts at face value these denunciatory statements and worthless polemics. Proof and examples are needed, comrades of the LSSP. Name-calling seems to be an unfortunate penchant of yours, as witness the denunciation of those comrades within your own ranks with whom you have split. No objective foreign comrade, seeking to discover the political and organizational basis for this recent split, can find it in your resolutions or articles! We may learn, perhaps, that your opponents are "Parlour Bolsheviks, Bohemians, etc., etc.," but little else. This sort of thing is absolutely no good for our movement.

So, regardless of their personal estimate of me, I must conclude by reiterating my long-standing respect and admiration for the success and mass work accredited to the Ceylon comrades. They have accomplished things, and shown us how to do things that no other Trotskyist organization can boast of. The problem before them is a political one—that is, will they gain that essential political understanding and clarification without which all their efforts and successes will lead to nothing? It is far from present today, and articles such as the above hardly will be of help. We hope it represents the last expression of its type, and that in the future the pages of our respective publications will be open to an objective, scientific, socialist discussion of our common problems.

HENRY JUDD.

The Concentrationary Universe

THE OTHER KINGDOM, by David Rousset.
Reynal and Hitchcock. \$2.75.

Before the war David Rousset was a French intellectual who adhered to the Trotskyist movement. He weighed 209 pounds. These two statements may involve a rather odd juxtaposition, but in a moment you will see the connection.

When the Nazis overran France, Rousset worked in the underground. He edited bulletins giving news reports to the underground workers who had no other source of reliable information. He engaged in the most dangerous and from the Nazi point of view the most unforgivable activity of all: he helped the revolutionary socialists who were making contact with anti-Nazi groups in the German army. When the Gestapo caught him, Rousset was sent to Buchenwald where he remained for 16 months until the end of the war.

When Rousset was released he weighed 114 pounds—and he had gone through the modern Inferno, that ultimate terror which modern society has ended in, that terror which is its consummate expression. *Concentration camp*—the Nazis named it well; for it is the concentration of all the barbaric and retrogressive tendencies of modern society.

The Other Kingdom is a brief, fragmentary record of Rousset's experiences and also a beginning toward a sociological comprehension of the concentration camp. It is an utterly terrifying and horrible book, even though it does not recount nearly as many horrors as other reminiscences of former camp inmates. It is rather uniquely terrifying and horrible because it *explains*, because it does not merely see the camps as irrational outbursts of evil nature. When the Nazi atrocities are seen as part of a calculated policy of German imperialism, they become the ultimate in terror. For then we see them as part of *this* world, as a logical and necessary development from the disintegration of capitalist society.

Without hesitation I want to say that Rousset's book is by all odds the very best that has been written on the subject; it not merely shocks, it informs. Without equivocation Rousset places the concentration camps within the framework of capitalist society. He writes:

"The existence of the camps is a warning. German society, both because of the strength of its structure and the violence of the crisis that demolished it, underwent a decomposition that is exceptional even in the present state of world affairs. But it would be easy to show that the most characteristic traits of both the SS mentality and the social conditions which gave rise to the Third Reich are to be found in many other sectors of world society—less pronounced, it is true, and not developed on any such scale as in the Reich.... It would be blind-

ness—and criminal blindness, at that—to believe that, by reason of any difference of national temperament, it would be impossible for any other country to try a similar experiment. Germany interpreted, with an originality in keeping with her history, the crisis that led her to the concentrationary universe. But the existence and the mechanism of that crisis were inherent in the economic and social foundations of capitalism and imperialism. Under a new guise, similar effects may reappear tomorrow. There remains therefore a very specific war to be waged.... And the German anti-Fascists, interned for more than ten years, should be our valuable comrades in arms in such a fight."

Concentration Camp Bureaucrats

The most revealing fact adduced by Rousset is that it was not the SS alone which inflicted the brutality on the prisoners. It was the SS which of course represented the actual police power in the prison. But the acts of brutality—the beatings, the torture, the *routine* misery—were often left by the SS to their agents among the prisoners. Within the concentrationees' ranks there was established a bureaucracy which, though totally subservient to the SS on top, still had a great deal of power over the prisoners below. These bureaucrats gained special privileges: they had more food, they did not have to work and they had the delicious privilege of beating the wretches who were their fellow prisoners. Even among the damned there arose distinctions of rank and privilege!

The SS knew what it was doing. It understood that where hunger and misery were prevalent, it could secure for itself the loyalty of a section of those subjected to this hunger and misery by slightly alleviating its plight. The SS was following the age-old policy of ruling classes: divide and rule; but it was following it in a particularly terrible and inhuman situation.

The prisoners themselves were prevented from establishing genuine solidarity. How could men who worked like beasts from dawn to dusk, who were perpetually concerned above all else with dreaming of more bread and avoiding the lash and the fist—how could men reduced to this condition effectively develop a sense of solidarity? Distinctions of nationality, of camp rank, of politics were all exploited by the SS to get groups of prisoners off against each other like raging beasts.

But the main distinction within the ranks of the prisoners was between the greens and the reds: The greens were the vast majority of prisoners, the criminal and flotsam and jetsam the Nazis had picked up, while the reds were of course the politicals. (By the time Rousset arrived in Buchenwald most of the German anti-Nazi prisoners had been killed off.) Between the greens

and the reds a deadly struggle broke out for control of the camp administration. The Nazis tended to favor the greens because they were more "trustworthy" and less scrupulous, but the reds had one decisive advantage: they were better organized and more efficient. And in many camps there were labor projects to be organized and work quotas to be reached; as a result the politicals gained control of some camp administrations toward the end of the war.

Intercamp Morality

It should not be imagined that the politicals in any way resisted the Nazis when they came to "power" in the camp administration. Had they indicated the slightest attempt in that direction, they would have been immediately murdered off. Such a move would have simply been a gesture of suicide. For the politicals to take over camp administration meant to follow the basic orders of the Nazis—work quotas, over-all discipline, etc.—but allowed them to circumvent the Nazis on other matters. They could treat their fellow prisoners somewhat more humanely than did the brutal greens; they could try to save an occasional prisoner whom the Nazis had picked out for destruction. It was a bitter choice with which the politicals were confronted: to cooperate, in a sense, with the Nazis in order to ease the lot of the prisoners and save some of their skins or to adopt the gestures of absolute morality and commit suicide en masse.

In an excerpt from a forthcoming book by Rousset which continues his fascinating discussion of the concentration camps in greater detail (printed in the latest issue of *Politics*) he discusses this problem. At one point a camp administration of politicals faced the problem of trying to save a group of 37 men whom the Nazis had brought to the camp with the evident intention of murdering them. The politicals decided that at most they could save three of the 37: a bitter choice but under the circumstances unavoidable! To talk of morality or moral choice under such conditions seems nonsense; there was a certain very narrow choice but it lacked the basis in freedom without which morality becomes meaningless. The truth is that the conditions of life in the camp *forced* the prisoners to choose between wretched and miserable evils; the only way to avoid this was death. And if one believed, as did the politicals, that they represented an important cadre for the post-Hitler period, then death was a *luxury*—I mean that literally—which they could not afford.

This is one of the questions which Rousset discusses in his book. There are others, equally fascinating: why didn't the Nazis kill the concentrationees off immediately? Why did they kill them off gradually and slowly? But I shall stop here. I think enough has been said in this review to indicate to

readers, the absolute indispensibility of this little book to anyone who is in any way concerned with the problems of our time.

For Rousset's book I have only the greatest admiration. For his talents as a writer, for the portrait of himself as a human being which emerges from the book I also have admiration. It might therefore seem best to end this review by expressing the humility which we in America must feel toward those European comrades who have suffered as has Rousset.

Yet I should be avoiding a very important responsibility if I were to do that. The unfortunate and sad truth is—how terribly painful it is to say this!—that Rousset's book leaves one wondering about one essential question: Stalinism. Were it merely mere difference of opinion on some tactical question, it would be best in reviewing *this* book to remain silent. But on Stalinism one cannot.

Rousset praises the heroism of the German Stalinist prisoners. That is understandable; no doubt they were heroic. But there is nowhere in his book, which discusses the Stalinists if only in passing, the slightest suggestion of a fundamental and critical opposition to the Stalinist movement. He writes of them as if they were "the Communists" rather than as a movement in the service of a totalitarian state as vile as that of the Nazis and one which maintains to this day concentration camps as terrible as those of the Nazis. What makes this silence even more disturbing is the reports which have come from France about theories developed by the group of intellectuals to which Rousset adheres—theories about Stalinism representing the revolution, even if the "bureaucratically" consummated revolution. Such theories, we say categorically, can only result in the death of whatever hope there is for the reconstitution of a genuine socialist movement.

I do not wish to make any accusations. I do not know. But the conjunction of this strange ambiguity in Rousset's book and the reports about his group make for a highly disturbing situation. For a man like Rousset, with his background, his talents and his sense of humanity, to express in the slightest degree any deviation from his previous anti-Stalinism would be nothing short of tragic.

I hope my uneasiness on this matter is unwarranted. But I think this uneasiness cannot be dissipated until Rousset speaks out plainly and frankly.

IRVING HOWE.

BEND SINISTER, by Vladimir Nabokov. Henry Holt and Company. \$2.75.

Vladimir Nabokov's *The Real Life of Sebastian Knight* was one of the finest novels of the decade. *Bend Sinister*, while a lesser creative achievement, has a wider social interest. It is perhaps the most brilliant literary attack on totalitarianism in our time. The satire becomes occasionally heavy, and frequently it is obscured by endless and wearisome polysyllabic word formations.

The sentences are strung together, like beads on a chain, and the individual words tumble out in a rather discordant music. But that is the almost inevitable stylistic defect of one working with a strange tongue and Nabokov should not be too heavily censured for it. The book is a brilliant achievement despite its stylistic shortcomings.

The plot of the novel is simple. Adam Krug, an eminent philosopher, refuses to pledge his loyalty to the fascist regime. He is taken to a concentration camp, where he is prepared to capitulate in return for the safety of his son. When he learns that the child has been destroyed, he repudiates the regime. His grief unminds him, and he is killed. Within this very simple narrative are brilliant satiric sketches. An exposition of Hamlet, an ingenious exegesis in distortion for crude political purposes, effectively ridicules the scholarship that is practiced under any totalitarian system. No less sharp is the grim satire on the super-scientific madness of the ultra-modern Nazi extermination chambers. Children are used as "release-instruments" for criminals with records of murder, rape and wanton destruction.

The theory was "that if once a week the really difficult patients could enjoy the possibility of venting in full their repressed yearnings (the exaggerated urge to hurt, destroy, etc.) upon some little human creature of no value to the community, then, by degrees, the evil in them would be allowed to escape, would be, so to say, 'effundated,' and eventually they would become good citizens." One must go back to Swift for irony so strong and so effective.

One section on the freedom of the press

seems very much like Alexander P. Morozov's statement to the Social Committee of the United Nations Economic and Social Council that Russia enjoys genuine freedom of the press. Nabokov's formulation is so much more skillful, however, that I commend it to Mr. Morozov the next time he presents the unique virtues of *Pravda* and *Izvestia*.

This attack on totalitarianism is equally applicable to fascism and Stalinism. It has the same effect and broad scope as Rex Warner's *The Aerodrome*, an attack on fascism that earned a sour reception from the Stalinist fraternity. A novel that attacks fascism or totalitarianism becomes, whatever the intention of the author, an attack on Stalinism. Nowhere is the methodological similarity between fascism and Stalinism more clearly revealed than in imaginative literature. The novel does not, or should not, concern itself with economic or political theories on an ideologic level. It deals rather with the behavior of individual personalities in concrete circumstances. The circumstances in which the individual finds himself who opposes fascism or Stalinism are so very much the same that his behavior or reaction to those circumstances is also the same. Subtle dialectical differentiations between the Gestapo and the NKVD somehow do not apply to pain and terror, which recognize no ideologic distinctions or geographic boundaries. It is this common denominator of pain and terror that a novel against totalitarianism emphasizes, and that is why Stalinists must now find anti-fascist novels uncomfortable and disconcerting.

RICHARD STOKER.

CORRESPONDENCE

Politics and the Artist

To the Editors:

A considerable amount of space has already been given the writings of Arthur Koestler in the pages of the *NEW INTERNATIONAL*. Nevertheless, the relatively simple issues involved have been so obfuscated by Irving Howe that a few final summary remarks can be seen as of some point. The charge implicitly made by Howe of Stalinist literary assault is itself dangerous and serious. If Howe sincerely feels that Loumos, Gates and I stand guilty of heel-clicking Marxism, and if there are others who feel that way, then in fairness to all concerned another attempt should be made at clarification; clarification not merely of Koestler's writing, but of a few fundamentals on the subject of politics and literature, fundamentals already described far more fully and expertly than can be done here. We need not let this stop us, however. If brevity and simplicity are a limitation, then perhaps Irving Howe can profit from it, as apparently he has not profited from the original Marxist writings on the subject.

Tendencies within a culture are first and last the prisoners of that culture. When culture is seen as entirely heterogenous, wild, scattered or accidental, then it is impossible to admit even the existence of tendencies, much less identify and characterize them. To whatever extent human social behavior can be understood, it must be understood by assuming and attempting to demonstrate cultural homogeneities. When this is done superficially one arrives merely at insipid, flat amalgams which are polemical in essence, based often on the logic of contraries. Short of full analysis the pertinence of observations must be exposed itself to rhetorical charges. It is suggested thoughtful readers will always test the pertinence of observations, however. With the limits of space in mind one asks that the reader develop the lines here that will be briefly suggested.

An editor of a well-known literary magazine was recently asked a naive question. A woman of some experience in the radical

movement asked him why the magazine was not printed by union labor. He made this sophisticated reply: "You talk like this was the year 1937—to hell with that *stuff*." The same man was asked on another occasion to speak on some literary subject before a small leftist group. He inquired: "How much do they pay?"

Needless to remark, this gentleman ten years ago would have fainted from humiliation, real or affected, to witness his present-day cynicism. But now he can make the penetrating statement that ten years have passed since ten years ago. But what does he mean? The answer is simple. On the floor of Davison-Paxon's department store in Atlanta a southern belle is reputed once to have indignantly screamed: "Ah was promised mah fuh coat this evenin' and Ah'm the kind of person that can't stand disappointment!" The gentleman's revolution was promised him (sic)—and he's the kind of person that can't stand disappointment. But he is more disappointed than the lady, because a revolution is more important than a fur coat, there being little comparison between them. On a cool day without a fur coat you can wear a wool coat, or stay in the apartment. But there are no substitutes for a high-grade revolution. This gentleman, and others like him, long ago decided they'd been *stood up* by history for the last time. They're through with her; she seemed attractive, but has proven to be a bitch. No respectable girl would turn down clean, handsome Marxists who love her for herself, then go to bed with triflers like Stalin, Roosevelt and Churchill, who only want her body. The logic of the clean, handsome Marxists of the 1930s demands that they renounce such a promiscuous slut, and search for a good virgin; however, since there is no such thing, they are having trouble.

The Case of Partisan Review

The heart's blood of a tendency can be seen in the new persons it wins. The tendency of the magazine, *Partisan Review*, a tendency of anti-historical literary obfuscation, is significant today as a dividend of whining, demoralized loss. This tendency, and the magazine with it, will be gone tomorrow. *Partisan Review*, particularly in the course of the past five years, has attracted certain congealed artists and a group of younger persons who succeed in carrying the tendency to the limit of a manic extreme. The review has been germinal of sophomore erudition and supralush phrase-making; those qualities, as if by natural law, are being exaggerated, and the exaggeration is itself being exaggerated, like the mannerisms of a coquette turning to fat and wrinkles. Present reviews and essays read like burlesques of those a few years back; and the readership ominously changes, sifts. The living reader watches the instrument of language become a device used for the purpose of confounding with snobbish awe the writer himself as well as his audience. The labored syntax, forced obscurity, obstreperous complexity—here are today's Lilliputians jumping for royalty. They strain all their cleverness to bewilder themselves. And in the final accounting, they bewilder Henry C. Luce. The pathetic joke is that when Luce speaks of

"intellectual gibberish" he doesn't really mean it—he's talking down to the nervous brokers and Yale freshmen who read his paper. Luce is smart; he knows that the *Partisan Review* stuff is really brilliant.

The basic deception is of course concerned with the question of history. All the tedious verbalizing, so meaningless in itself, has the purpose of concealing the possibility of there existing a historical methodology in social or literary criticism. At times this verbalizing, which is not limited to *Partisan Review* writers, uses the clichés of an historical methodology such as Marxism in an attempt to ignore history itself.

Irving Howe, in his comments concerning Koestler, speaks heavily of the Real Marxism and the Real History. Unfortunately, his approach to Koestler is totally anti-historical. This is revealed in Howe's remarks concerning the freedom of choice of the novelist; his juxtaposition of such fictional liberties upon the work of a man whose approaches to fiction are wholly outside the framework of art upon which the freedom of choice of the novelist was originally constructed. This is a typical example of the formularizing of truth, the freezing of literary tenets of criticism that Howe himself so vigorously pretends to oppose. It must be suggested that Howe has succumbed in general to both the techniques and the conclusions of the tendency of which *Partisan Review* is a segment. The outright *quackery* of Howe's reply to Gates, which we cannot at this time consider in its gross details, offers additional evidence. One paragraph, however:

Irving Howe writes: "Literature is above all the expression of one human faculty: *the imagination*. A novel is a *created structure of the imagination*; . . ." (italics in original—C. W.) But what, Irving Howe, have you told us? What is a structure? And what is a *created* structure? And what is *the imagination*? Assuming a book can be a *structure*, could it possibly be an uncreated structure? An uncreated structure would not exist—correct? Have we here made critical progress? Or have we made nothing but a disguise of emptiness?

Politics and the Artist

The increasing agitation of political tensions has forced new problems for artists; more and more the artist feels himself delimited in what he should say, what he *can* say that will be real to himself and his audience. This delimitation has acted to *sharpen or blunt absolutely* the artist's conception of social force. It remains a truism to state that writing, like criticism, has no choice but to be political, political from the standpoint of what can be described as emotional encompassment. But this truism is now especially shied from by a few artists or critics of the left. Why?

There are two reasons; one real, one pretended. It is pretended that the stupidity and viciousness of the Stalinists has corrupted forever the truth that writing must be seen as political! But the statement is shied from on account of the fact, really, that it is not believed. In other words, the Marxists, among others, were wrong; man isn't actually a social (or political) animal, but an animal each unto himself. When at this point the distracting fogs are removed,

it is simple: history has been dismissed. Aside from tortured language, there is here only one major distracting element: the awful example of the Stalinists. A smart chap can generate a little distracting fog by suggesting an amalgam. But the hopelessness of such a trick need not be played upon; emptiness is always the reward of those who argue by contraries. If the Stalinists say a certain thing, implement it rigidly, idiotically, and for the purposes of human destruction, then it does *not* follow contrarily that the person who does not say that thing will avoid rigidity, idiocy, and human destruction. Nor would such consequences follow the person who *would* say that certain thing that the Stalinists happened to seize upon to pervert.

Indeed, the statement that literature has to be political is only a diving board; it is only a means to get into the pool and doesn't determine whether you sink or swim. It is necessary to indicate in what manner literature must be political, what is meant or included in the term. Here in passing it might be advisable to be obvious and mention that if literature is blind politically, there will be no Stalinist question of liquidating the offender; rather, such literature will be outside, it will practically always lack moral impetus and won't score.

The purpose of the critic is to reveal not merely the manner in which the artist works, but the political or social essence of that upon which he works, the latter largely precluding and conditioning the former anyhow. In this statement there exists no suggestion that the critic should be stupid and insensitive; indeed, we will explicitly add that the critic should *not* be stupid and insensitive.

The issues are very clear in the case of Arthur Koestler. There is no question of particular subtlety. Koestler's work is based upon malformations of the entry of politics into art. In this sense his writing is "political" literature—with quotes. As I said recently in these pages, Koestler embraces the aesthetic of the worst proletarian art, which is a vulgarization, not a solution, of the problem of the artist. This is shown above all in Koestler's manipulation of character. Such a patent derivative of proletarian art simply cannot be judged as one would judge a novel, of the year 1875, at which time the artist was simply not aware, nor was his audience aware, of certain modern "fictional" tricks.

The problems existed then, but they were not so acute as they are now. The screen of editorializing through which Koestler's writing is filtered differs tremendously from the agitation in the work of such a man as Leo Tolstoy. It can be said definitely that the pressures upon Tolstoy and the general circumstances of Tolstoy's time were never such as to cause him to play the novel cheap; to lapse into simplistic propaganda. There was a majesty in the convictions of Tolstoy that bears no relation to the dry, lifeless, over-simple faiths and fears of Arthur Koestler and the tradition from which Koestler grew. Koestler is indeed called by admirers such as Howe "a novelist-journalist." Could anything be clearer than that Koestler's work cannot be criticized apart from its political meanings? It is reactionary (and impossible), both from

the viewpoint of literature and politics, to read Koestler for purely aesthetic heightening of consciousness, et cetera. In no novelist's writings can such an aerial thrill be obtained—and on the face of it a “novelist-

journalist” puts a terrible strain upon those who distill art as if it were alcohol. This strain is visible in Irving Howe's wrangling “defense” of Koestler.
CALDER WILLINGHAM.

Liston M. Oak Objects

In THE NEW INTERNATIONAL for August, A. Rudzienski exposed me as a “social democratic innocent.” The error that he thinks I made was to write that some aspects of the situation in Poland reminded me of the NEP period in Russia and other phases are similar to the Kerensky period between February and October, 1917. I predicted that in Poland the Stalinists will not stage an October coup d'etat and destroy the “bourgeois” state structure, but will take over the existing governmental apparatus, which serves their purpose and the purposes of Soviet imperialism.

This echoes the Stalinist concept of the “bourgeois democratic revolution,” Rudzienski asserts, falsely accusing me of characterizing the present puppet regime as a “popular democracy.” He thinks the democratic revolution was exhausted in Poland between 1918 and 1926.

Historical analogies are always dangerous and inexact and misleading—mine as well as the Trotskyist analogy between the French and Russian Revolutions, the Thermidor reaction and Bonapartism. History never repeats itself exactly; the differences are usually greater than the similarities. My casual comparison between the Poland

of 1945-1947 and the Russia of Kerensky and Lenin was not a brilliant one. But Rudzienski's distortion of my whole meaning is a typical piece of Bolshevik polemical hypocrisy.

My entire article was devoted to proving that the regime in Poland is not democratic, has little mass support, and is a Russian-dominated dictatorship headed toward totalitarianism. I did not write that a democratic revolution—bourgeois or proletarian—is taking place in Poland, but that the democratic socialist revolution had been suppressed, drowned in blood, by the Red Army and the NKVD and Polish Communist quislings—as it was in Russia by the Bolsheviks under Lenin, Trotsky and Stalin.

Rudzienski's error is in thinking that the democratic revolution—“bourgeois” or otherwise—is ever exhausted. It is as continuous a process as man's eternal struggle for freedom. The Polish people are still faced with the task of achieving democracy—and they certainly cannot win liberty by establishing dictatorship, whatever its label. Certainly pre-war capitalism cannot be successfully re-established in post-war Poland; but neither Trotskyism nor Stalinism is the way to socialist democracy.

LISTON M. OAK.

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