

WORKERS OF THE WORLD
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the new International

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Etc., Etc.

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A MONTHLY ORGAN OF REVOLUTIONARY MARXISM

THE NEW INTERNATIONAL

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Inside Front Cover: For the Right of Asylum for Leon Trotsky.

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For the Right of Asylum for Leon Trotsky

LEON Trotsky is in danger! Unfounded press dispatches report him to be in several different countries at the same time. Meanwhile, he remains in France under the strictest surveillance of the French police agents, driven from place to place and guarded from contacts or communication with the outer world.

All the reactionary forces of France (the Stalinists included) would like to see no more of him. What further fate his numerous enemies are preparing for him, it is impossible to foretell. In any case, at this very moment he stands in imminent peril of assassination, imprisonment, or enforced exile to some remote French penal colony.

Trotsky must be rescued from the French police! The hands of his enemies must be stayed! A place of asylum must be found for him!

One country after another has refused this supposed "counter-revolutionist" a visa. They fear to harbor him within their borders, although he asks for nothing more than a quiet and comfortable place in which to pursue his literary work. Once again, he becomes "a man on the planet without a visa".

The right of asylum for political refugees is one of the oldest of democratic

rights. Since the flight of the Pilgrims, the New World has been a place of asylum for the refugees of the Old. Remember Carl Schurz, Garibaldi, Kossuth, and today Einstein and the other refugees from Hitler's Germany. No constitutional barriers stand in the way of Trotsky's entrance.

The doors of the United States should be opened to Trotsky. He can—and he will—be given permission to settle here. Let us bend all our energies to make the supposedly Democratic administration at Washington grant him a visa as soon as possible.

We are informed that "The Committee for Asylum for Trotsky" is now being organized to work for Trotsky's admission to this country. A number of noted liberals and intellectuals have already consented to serve on that committee and to sign a petition now being drawn up to request the necessary visa from the State Department at Washington. Quincy Howe, editor of *The Living Age*, is Provisional Chairman of the Committee. Its address is 22 East 17 Street, N. Y. C.

In its statement, the committee calls upon every democratically-minded person to give his personal, moral, and financial aid to its work. It particularly appeals

to American scholars, historians, journalists, artists and writers to come to the aid of a world-famous colleague whose attainments in each of these fields is universally acknowledged to be of the first water.

Every worker is urged to join this campaign for the granting of a visa to one of the greatest of their international leaders. Every supporter and sympathizer with working class activities should come to the aid of this champion of the proletariat. Every friend and reader of THE NEW INTERNATIONAL is asked to give his support to the work of this committee.

A united effort to obtain the right of asylum for Trotsky should soon succeed. Let us all begin today to help the committee get a visa for him.

"The democratic right of asylum," Trotsky once wrote, "obviously does not consist in a government's showing hospitality to people who hold similar views to its own—even Abdul Hamid did that. Nor does it consist in a democracy's admitting exiles only with the permission of the government that exiled them. The right of asylum consists (on paper) in a government's giving refuge even to its opponents, provided they undertake to observe the country's laws."

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Prospects for a New Party in America

IN contradistinction to the year 1848, wrote Karl Kautsky in 1902, "not only have the Slavs entered the ranks of the revolutionary peoples, but the center of gravity of revolutionary thought and revolutionary action is moving farther and farther to the Slavs. The revolutionary center is moving from the West to the East. In the first half of the nineteenth century this center was in France, and sometimes in England. In 1848 Germany entered the ranks of revolutionary nations. The new century is being ushered in by such events as to induce us to think that we are confronted by a further removal of the revolutionary center, namely, to Russia. Russia, which has imbibed so much revolutionary initiative from the West, is now perhaps itself ready to serve as a source of revolutionary energy. The Russian revolutionary movement, which is now bursting into flame, will, perhaps, become the strongest means for the extermination of the senile philistinism and sedate politics which is beginning to spread in our ranks, and will again rekindle the militant spirit and the passionate devotion to our great ideals".

Later than was expected, but with essential accuracy nevertheless, this daring prediction was brilliantly confirmed in every particular by the Russian revolution of 1917. The torch of Marxism, all but extinguished by the waves of war chauvinism which the Second International helped to whip up to a deafening fury, was relighted by the Russian revolutionists so that it gleamed with a brighter and harder flame than ever before. It served both to burn the congesting dross out of the working class movement and as a beacon towards which a demoralized and disoriented proletariat might confidently reassemble. Conforming with its epoch, the Communist International, created by the Russian revolution, put the emancipation of the oppressed on the order of the day and rallied an imposing host to challenge the oppressor.

Fifteen years after its birth, the Third International is a political corpse (like the Second, which it superseded), crushed by the bourgeois counter-revolution because it was itself prostrated by the raging cancer of Stalinism eating out its vitals. The headquarters of the Third International have dried up; what trickles through to the western world has been polluted at the source by the poison of national socialism. Fortunate are those who drew their strength from these streams when they were clear and pure, for upon them falls the task of building the *Fourth International* in every country. Unlike the Third, it must be built—not out of choice, but necessity—from a new center.

"The extremely difficult conditions under which the Russian Bolshevik-Leninists work," wrote Leon Trotsky a year ago, "exclude them from the possibility of playing the leading rôle on the international scale. More than this: the Left Opposition group in the U.S.S.R. can develop into a new party only as a result of the successful formation and growth of the new International. The revolutionary center of gravity has shifted definitely to the West, where the immediate possibilities of building parties are immeasurably greater."

The two spots in the West where, each in its own way, the greatest prospects obtain for the new movement emerging out of the débris of the old, are France and the United States.

In France, the proletarian movement is maturing at a tempestuous, if inconsistent, pace. It is pointed out elsewhere in these pages by one of our collaborators, that conditions beyond their control and considerations of a revolutionary order are impelling the numerically small group of Bolshevik-Leninists in France to enter the Socialist party as a faction. A confluence of extraordinary circumstances has created a situation there which offers the Marxists the possibility of winning tens of thousands of forward-surg-ing workers to the ideas and the banner of the Fourth International. If the framework within which this gain can be made is, for the

moment, a Centrist party, it should be borne in mind that the field of action of the consistent Marxists, like their isolation heretofore, has been imposed upon them by conditions not of their own making.

The appointees of *decaying* Centrism, most of whom rallied to the Third International only after it had been diluted beyond recognition by Stalinism, are of course shrieking their imprecations at the "capitulating Trotskyists". One immortal has even pointed out that the "vanguard of the counter-revolution" has "finally" "leaped" to the "tail end of the social democracy". But all this will not make people forget that these same Stalinists loyally served under, that is, completely abandoned their principles for those of Chiang Kai-Shek, Purcell, Raditch, Pilsudski, Fan Noli, LaFollette and now, the petty bourgeois pacifists. Entering the Socialist party, the Bolshevik faction does not retract its principles; it does not repent or haul down its banner. It goes in not in order to serve reformism or Centrism, but in order to win the masses to revolutionary struggle. As in the formative period of the Third International, so also with the Fourth: the road to it is not always a simple and direct one.

At all events, a radically different situation confronts the revolutionary Marxian forces in the United States. The road followed in France need not be ours. The Socialist and Stalinist parties here do not, as in France, enjoy the monopoly of working class support; and while the latter party is identical enough with its French replica, the differences between the two socialist parties is obvious. Furthermore, the class relationships here have not yet reached the state of acute antagonism and imminency of the life-and-death battle that they have across the sea. These factors among others give the Marxists here more time in which to develop as an organizationally independent party, and to challenge all other parties for leadership of the proletariat.

We have before us a proletariat unique in world labor history. Peculiar historical circumstances have combined to keep the political development of the workers as a class at an inordinate distance from the economic development of the country. The sharp contrast between the economic ripeness of American capitalism for socialism, and the political immaturity of the working class, does not support the idea that the latter will first have to go through a prolonged "natural" evolution, passing through every single stage experienced by the German or the English proletariat, before it reaches the level, so to say, of America's economic development. Rather does it sustain the view that once started on the road of radicalization, the American workers will move with seven league boots and more likely than not, tend to skip over stages in which the workers in other countries lingered for lengthy periods. As soon as the retarding burden of its petty bourgeois past is shaken off, it will shoot to the top with phenomenal speed, just as a deep-sea diver, divesting himself of artificial lead weights, would surge to the surface with all the greater speed the deeper and denser the level at which he was working.

It is not so much a spirit of militancy that the working class of this country must be imbued with. There are few that can compare with it in this sphere. Rarely do strikes anywhere in the world last as long as in the United States; rarely are they fought with such spontaneous vigor and even violence. Especially in recent times, few are the strikes of any importance in which the workers are not instantly confronted with the armed forces of the capitalist state, emphasizing with clubs, bayonets and tear gas bombs that the benevolent impartiality of the government is a myth. The American workers are not accustomed to the miserable standard of living to which they must be forced if the ruling class is to prosper. The American workers are not exhausted, demoralized or sunk in pessimism by a series of major defeats such as the European pro-

letariat has suffered in the last decade. Nor have they been inoculated with the ideology of social reformism which is, ordinarily, harder to throw off than the more outright ideology of the bourgeoisie. The working class which, in the last year alone, has fought tremendous battles in groups of tens of thousands and even hundreds of thousands at a time, which followed the first local general strike in fifteen years with a textile strike which outnumbered any in American history, needs only to have its militancy informed with class consciousness in order to accomplish miracles of progress that would bring the United States well towards the top in the list of revolutionary succession. This is precisely the task which devolves upon a revolutionary party. One does not yet exist. It must be formed. We have, in this country, "more time" at our disposal than in others; but this is an account that can easily be overdrawn.

Soon after the German catastrophe, the International Communists proclaimed that new revolutionary parties had to be formed throughout the world and a new International established. The conduct of the Stalinern in the German situation proved beyond a doubt that it no longer offered the possibility of reformation; it had to be replaced. By this proclamation, the International Communists ceased to consider themselves a faction of the Third International. They did not, however, believe that by this reorientation they had automatically constituted themselves as the new International, and, in each country, as the new party. A group of revolutionists does not become a party at the very instant that it ceases to be a faction, any more than a child becomes a father the minute its umbilical cord is severed. The Internationalists approached those groups, moving to the Left, which indicated their readiness to proceed to the formation of the new International by breaking with reformism, Stalinism and all other Centrist currents.

In the United States, the Communist League of America addressed itself, with the same objective in view, to the American Workers party. At its Pittsburgh convention late last year, this organization, which previously existed as the Conference for Progressive Labor Action, had declared itself in favor of forming a new revolutionary party in this country. The position of the American Workers party at that time was marked by a lack of clarity in the basic questions of program. At the same time, its origin and consequently its line of evolution were radically different from that of the League. Nonetheless, the latter felt firm in its belief that the *direction of this evolution*, converging as it did with its own, made a unification of the two groups possible, and this being the case, the interests of the hour made it necessary.

The Communist League had its origin in the Communist party and brought with it the best traditions of the latter, reinforced by the experiences of the last decade of struggle in the communist movement. The very nature of its fight as an independent current determined its rigorous attachment to those basic and hard-won theories and principles which lie at its foundation and invest it with its homogeneity and strength. The American Workers party had its origin in a more or less all-embracing organization of progressive trade unionists, including a whole variety of political tendencies. Its members could support the Socialist, the Socialist Labor or the Communist party, as they saw fit. The vitality of the movement which it represented is sufficiently revealed by the fact that it developed, slowly but fairly consistently, *to the Left* of the three parties which it had formerly tolerated, *to a break* with these parties, to a break with its existence as a trade union current and the inauguration of its own existence as an independent political current. Indeed, any other evolution could only have been retrogressive, leading inevitably to its degeneration.

That these two groups, coming from different directions and bringing with them different traditions, now declare in formal statements that a merger for the purpose of launching the new revolutionary party in the United States is both possible and necessary—more than that: is a matter of a comparatively short time—only reflects the fact that a satisfactory and sufficient programmatic basis exists upon which the fusion can take place. This basis was not arrived at by ignoring the differences of opinion existing between the two organizations, but by a candid acknowledgment of them and a cordial discussion which finally produced those changes in position that make unification desirable and possible and eliminate from it any taint of unprincipledness. Such

a fusion would enable the new revolutionary party to be launched forthwith.

It may be thought that the different spheres in which the two organizations developed independently, would prove an ever-present source of friction which would hamper the cementing of a *single* party by a division into two antagonistic camps. We are not of this view. Unlike the sterile sectarian, the revolutionary Marxist considers his preoccupation with questions of theory and principle the necessary preparation for and constant guide in the daily struggles of his class. Approaching the problem from another angle, the members of the A.W.P., whose origin determined their preoccupation with the daily struggles, nevertheless moved, and had to move, steadily towards a revolutionary consideration of those fundamental problems which underlie all proletarian action.

No greater injury could be done to the new party formed out of a merger of the two groups than to establish a pernicious "division of labor" by which one section of the party would be assigned to "theory" and another to "practical" work. He would be a fine Marxist indeed who considered it his rôle in the revolutionary party to behave like a Mandarin condescending to lecture the benighted mass on the wisdom he learned in a book. He would be doing himself and his party no less of a disservice than the comrade who, out of an equally erroneous conception of his rôle in the party, thought that his practical daily work among the masses could be conducted without maintaining the closest flesh and blood ties with the party, without participating actively in its internal work, in the elaboration of its theories and policies. Far from regarding the respective qualities, which each of the two groups has emphasized in the course of its development, as mutually exclusive or productive of friction, we would consider them as supplementing and inter-penetrating each other and thereby endowing the party *as a whole* with a striking power in the class struggle that springs from an unassailable firmness in principle.

A fusion consummated on such a basis and in this spirit could not but have fruitful results. The forces represented by the new party would instantly be a factor of no small significance in the class struggle. If it is axiomatic that it must draw its recruits and support from the great, unorganized mass of the American workers, the elements that are being drawn into the new party have already furnished sufficient assurance in action that they will meet the test. Minneapolis and Toledo show the capacities contained in these elements, and the formation of the new party would speedily draw to its banner forces now outside any organization who would only strengthen and enhance its effectiveness. Many are the working class militants who are now becoming increasingly conscious of the need of a revolutionary Marxian party. They are repelled by the criminal policies of the Stalinist party, by the nightmare of its bureaucratism, and by the conservatism, equivocation and passivity of the Socialist party. To them, the appeal of the new party would be direct and immediate. Their adherence will be its first triumph.

The new party will not, of course, be a full-fledged, mature and powerful organization on the day of its birth. Nor could it be. Revolutionary parties do not spring into existence full-panopied, like Minerva from the brow of Jove. Its complete and definitive program will not be adopted the moment it is launched, and in our opinion, it would be an error to make the attempt immediately. Even the Communist International did not adopt its final program for several years after it was founded (it might be added that it would have been better off if it had not adopted any program rather than the one finally jammed down its throat by Stalin and Bukharin!). The program of a revolutionary Marxian party can finally be elaborated only after a period of experience in the class struggle, after common internal discussion—this is especially true in the present instance, in the case of a unification of such two groups as those involved—and above all in our epoch, after *an international discussion*. The new party can, in our opinion, be launched with the adoption of a brief programmatic statement which states concisely those Marxian principles upon which every genuine revolutionary internationalist can unite.

The formal launching of the new party is a step of the greatest and most solemn importance. But it is, after all, only the first big step. To found a *new* party is equivalent to announcing its intention to challenge all the existing parties for the leadership of the

proletariat in every sphere and phase of its activity. Specifically, it is a challenge to the Socialist and Stalinist parties. Its challenge will not—this is assured!—take the form of trying to be more “respectable” than the one or more abusive than the other. It will pit its activities and its policies in the class struggle against those of its rivals, and remain confident of the outcome. Be it in direct collision with the others, or in a genuine united front with them for the attainment of a specific immediate aim, the new party will not need to fear being confronted by opposing parties and policies, and discussing them objectively before the working class as a whole.

But from this it does not follow that the three parties will be hermetically sealed entities, occasionally touching at the circumference. The new party cannot close its eyes to the existence of thousands of revolutionary militants in the ranks of the two existing organizations. The ghastly unanimity in the Stalinist party is iron-clad only in appearance. The first serious clash with an important problem will reveal the yawning abyss between the ranks and the leadership which a bureaucratic cloak now conceals. It was right after its greatest demonstration of hidebound solidity that the French Stalinist party was ripped open in a conflict between the apparatus and the powerful St.-Denis organization which ended in a split. There will be other Dorlots in the American Stalinist party, and what is of far greater importance and value, other St.-Denis organizations. Good prospects exist for attracting these potential rebels against the Stalinist régime, and, providing it pursues a realistic and comradely course, the new party will appear in the eyes of these militants as the rallying ground for revolutionary unity.

Of even more immediate significance are the developments in the Socialist party. Only the purblind can fail to see the big

change that has taken place in its ranks. The Socialist party is growing in the United States, and, especially among the younger elements, Left wing sentiment is meeting with a cordial response. The present leadership of wishy-washy would-be Centrists cannot endure for long. It is being pressed from the Right by the Bourbon wing of the party which demands an end to all this nonsense about revolution and mass action. It is being pressed from the other extreme by the Left wing movement which is gaining in clarity and consistency—not so much in the shape of the Revolutionary Policy Committee, which has succeeded to a large extent in discrediting itself by its own vacillation and uncertainty, and by its Lovestonian complexion, as in the form of a movement further to the Left by the more vigorous elements in the ranks of the Militants group itself. Whichever of the two forces should prove superior, one thing is certain: a genuine Left wing is in the process of crystallization in the Socialist party.

Only sectarian folly could dictate to the new party a policy of ignoring this development. Elements who are ready to lay charges against Jasper McLevy for conducting the office of Mayor in a manner unbecoming a socialist, against Louis Waldman for his treacherous behavior, against Oscar Ameringer for his support to Upton Sinclair, and to vote for the exclusion of the unregenerate Right wing, are the comrades-in-arms of the new revolutionary party. We believe that it will be the task of the latter to accelerate the Leftward development of these forces, establish contact with them, and, whatever forms their unpredictable future evolution may take, to make possible a unification with them that will swell the ranks of the new movement and assure the maximum possible unity of the genuinely Marxian currents in the United States.

A new day is ahead for the proletarian movement in this country. The future belongs to the new party and the Fourth International!

The Strike Wave and the Left Wing

THE wide shift of the American working class to the Left, prepared by the ravages of the five year crisis, found its expression primarily in the two strike waves which swept the country since the inception of the N.R.A. This shift has been more or less steadily gaining in scope and tempo. All signs point to a deepening of the process of radicalization and stormier manifestations of it in the near future. The fighting energy of the insurgent workers has not been spent, nor have their immediate minimum demands been satisfied. They have not been defeated in a test of strength, but rather tricked and manoeuvred out of their first objectives. The net result is that the dissatisfaction and resentment of the workers is multiplied, the antagonism between them and the leaders who thwarted them is sharpened, and their faith in the Roosevelt administration is more violently shaken.

All this speaks for the assumption that a still mightier strike movement is in the offing and that it will clash more directly with the main agencies which have balked the great majority of the strikes: the Government and the A. F. of L. bureaucracy. Roosevelt's “truce”—to be arranged by conferences “with small groups of those truly representative of large employers of labor and large groups of organized labor”—will have far less prospect of success than the Hoover truce of 1929. The workers were passive then; they are moving now.

The second strike wave under the N.R.A., climaxed by the general strike of the textile workers, went far beyond the wave of 1933, involved many more workers and reflected a more earnest mood. State intervention with armed force, supplementing the mediation machinery of the N.R.A., became the rule rather than the exception. Violent conflicts occurred; many were killed and injured, more arrested. The cold brutality of these police and military attacks, and the courage with which they were resisted, cannot have failed to leave a deep mark in the working class mind. The experiences of these recent months have been important pre-conditions for a great political awakening.

The open resistance to the conservative labor bureaucracy at Minneapolis and San Francisco, and the disillusionment ensuing from the systematic treacheries in the other situations—in averting strikes that were due and in wrecking those which could not be

prevented—presage a widespread revolt against the reactionary officialdom.

A remarkable feature of the 1934 strike wave has been the popular support of the strikes, manifested by the workers not directly involved, as well as by the “little fellows” of the lower middle class who have been squeezed, first by the crisis and again by the monopoly-aiding features of the N.R.A. cure-all for the crisis. At Toledo and Milwaukee this ardent and demonstrative support of the masses played a decisive rôle. In Minneapolis, also, public sympathy and the solidarity of the trade unionists proved to be a tremendous reservoir of support for the famous strikes of Local 574.

Public sympathy in nearly every instance has taken an active form. The strike sympathizers picketed, paraded, fought with the scabs, police and militia. This phenomenon undoubtedly has a deep significance. It indicates a deep-seated mass dissatisfaction with things as they are and as they have been in recent times. The spontaneous movement of the masses to the side of striking workers argues for the idea that the workers can find ready allies in the lower middle class when they strike out against capital and lead the way. Fascism begins to make real headway with the aggrieved petty bourgeoisie only when they lose faith in the determination and ability of the workers to lead.

Public sympathy, including the sympathy of other workers, for strikers gave the main impetus to the sentiment for local general strike action in support of the Toledo strike, the May strike in Minneapolis, and the Milwaukee strike. The general strike became a popular slogan. It was looked upon as the certain way to victory. Finally, for the first time in fifteen years, the general strike was realized in San Francisco in sympathy with the marine workers. The disastrous outcome of this action put the damper on general strike agitation, for the time being at least, and impelled the advanced workers to a more sober and critical examination of the possibilities and limitations of general sympathetic strike action. Far from discrediting the idea of the general strike, the 'Frisco struggle revealed that such a radical weapon requires a sure hand to wield it if it is to bite deeply and effectively.

The 'Frisco experience demonstrated with cruel emphasis that

the general strike by itself is no magic formula. There, it was a two-edged sword that cut more sharply against the embattled marine workers. The leadership came into the hands of the reactionary officialdom. They transformed it into a weapon against the marine workers and against the "Reds". Having shifted the center of gravity and control from the marine unions to the general strike committee which they dominated, the reactionaries then deliberately broke the general strike and pulled the marine strike down with it. A wave of reactionary persecution followed as a matter of course. The Stalinists, who advocated the general strike as a panacea and were among the first victims of its tragic result, have not understood to this day what happened and why.

The 'Frisco débâcle does not in the least prove the contention of president Green that the general strike, being a challenge to government, is bound to lose. (These dyed-in-the-wool lackeys of capital never even dream of the workers being victorious in a contest with the capitalist government.) From this example, however, it is necessary to conclude that the general strike is not to be played with carelessly or fired into the air to see what will happen. It must be well organized and prepared. Its limitations must be understood and it must aim at definite, limited objectives. Or, if the aim is really to challenge the government, the general strike cannot be confined to one locality and there must be the conscious aim to supplement the strike with an armed struggle.

The slogan of all the labor traitors, first proclaimed by John L. Lewis in calling off the mine strike in 1919—"You can't fight the Government!"—is correct only in one sense: You can't fight the Government with folded arms. In any case, serious agitation for a general strike should presuppose the possibility of removing the reactionary leadership or, at least, of being able to deprive it of a free hand by means of a well-organized Left wing. That was lacking in San Francisco. The general strike revealed in a glaring light the wide disparity between the readiness of the workers for radical and militant action and the organization of the Left wing.

The same contradiction was to be seen in the general strike of textile workers which marked the peak of the strike wave and ended too abruptly and ingloriously. This was the greatest strike in American labor history in point of numbers, and the equal of any in militancy. Called into being by the pressure of the rank and file at the convention against the resistance of the leadership, it was frankly aimed at the N.R.A. and the whole devilish circle of governmental machination, trickery and fraud. The workers, the majority of them new to the trade union movement, fought like lions only to see the fruits of their struggle snatched from their hands, leaving them bewildered, demoralized and defeated—they knew not how.

But, for all the tragedy of the outcome, the general textile strike was distinguished by an extraordinary vitality, and some distinct features that are fraught with bright promise for the future of the textile workers and the whole working class of the country. Within the framework of one of the most decrepit and reactionary unions, hundreds of thousands of textile workers waged a memorable battle. The "new" proletariat of the South, steeped in age-long backwardness and superstition, came awake, prayed to God and then went out to fight the scabs, the gunmen and the militia. From North to South the battle line extended. The mills were shut down. The big push of the bosses to reopen the mills a few days before the strike was called off came to nothing except a demonstration of the strikers' dominance of the situation.

With their ranks unbroken, with the universal sympathy of the workers throughout the country, with victory in their grasp—the textile strikers saw the strike called off by their own officers without a single concession from the bosses, and without having a chance to express their own wishes in the matter. And most significant of all—the key to the fatal weakness of the trade union movement today—this monstrous betrayal could be perpetrated without a sign of organized resistance. *There was no force in the textile workers' ranks to organize such resistance.*

That is the general story of the second strike wave under the N.R.A., as of its precursor last year. The workers, awakening from a long apathy and ready for the militant struggle to regain their lost standards, have not yet found a leadership of the same temper. Minneapolis is the one magnificent exception. There a

group of determined militants, armed with the most advanced political conceptions, organized the workers in the trucking industry, led them through three strikes within six months and remain today at the head of the union. It was this fusion of the native militancy of the American workers, common to practically all of the strikes of this year, with a leadership equal to its task that made the strikes of a few thousand workers of a single local union events of national, and even international, prominence; a shining example for the whole labor movement. The resources of the workers, restricted and constrained in the other strikes, were freely released and deliberately stimulated by the leadership in Minneapolis. One example, of many: the textile workers, half a million strong, had to depend on the capitalist press for information—Local 574 of Minneapolis published a *daily paper of its own!* What miracles will the workers in the great industries be capable of when they forge a leadership of the Minneapolis caliber!

The year, approaching its last quarter, has been rich in experience which can and will be transformed into capital for the future. The lessons, once assimilated, will ensure that the future struggles will take place on higher ground and with brighter prospects. The striking workers, and great masses seething with strike sentiment but restrained and out-manœuvred by the leaders and the politicians of the Roosevelt Administration, have for the most part failed to gain their objectives. But they have not been really defeated; they have not been overwhelmed. The struggles, despite their severity, were only tentative. The real tests are yet to come, and the workers will face them stronger as the result of the experiences of the first nine months of 1934.

Five years of crisis have done their work. The workers, half-starved on the job, are no longer afraid of risking the job in a strike. It has been demonstrated on a nation-wide scale that the unemployed will not scab if the trade unions establish a proper connection with them. On the contrary, the unemployed can be organized as a powerful ally of the strikers. At Toledo this was first demonstrated effectively by the initiative of the American Workers Party in organizing the unemployed for mass picketing. Taking a leaf from this experience, the Communist League members, the dynamic force in the leadership of the Minneapolis strike, adopted the same policy in regard to the unemployed, with no less telling effect. The members of the M.C.C.W. (the Minneapolis organization of the unemployed) played a big part on the heroic picket line of the strike of Local 574. One of them, John Belor, paid for it with his life. The necessity of a close union of the employed and unemployed is one of the big lessons in strike strategy to be derived from the experiences of the recent months.

The political parties and groups have been tested. The advanced, thinking workers can appraise them more accurately now on the basis of their performances in the strike wave. The balance sheet of the Stalinists is zero, symbolized by the abject capitulation of their bankrupt "Red" textile union to the U.T.W. on the eve of the general strike. They wrought a great work of destruction; they strangled the Left wing that had been under their leadership for a decade and left the reactionaries a free field to strangle the strikes. The socialist Militants displayed a considerable activity in the strike movement, offset by a complete silence in the face of the greatest treacheries of the labor bureaucracy. They have not even begun to criticize the labor traitors, to say nothing of organizing a determined struggle against them.

The Communist League and the American Workers party, despite the limited forces at their disposal, took advantage of such opportunities as they had and demonstrated in practise, notably in Minneapolis and Toledo, that they are the bearers of the trade union policies and methods around which the Left wing of tomorrow will crystallize. The fatal weakness in the labor movement today is precisely the lack of a genuine Left wing. This Left wing can come to life only on a new basis, with a new policy that is free from every taint of reformist cowardice and degenerate Stalinism.

The mainspring of the new Left wing can only be a revolutionary Marxian party. Its creation is our foremost task.

James P. CANNON

Bolshevik-Leninists and the S.F.I.O.

THE crisis of the democratic state of the bourgeoisie necessarily also signifies a crisis of the social democratic party. This interdependence must be pondered and thoroughly analyzed. The passage of the bourgeoisie from the parliamentary to the Bonapartist régime does not yet finally exclude the social democracy from the legal combination of forces upon which the government of capital reposes. As is known, Schleicher, in his time, sought the support of the trade unions. Through the medium of his Marquet, Doumerge naturally negotiates with Jouhaux and Co. Langeron, white baton in hand, indicates the road to both Fascists and socialists. To the extent that the socialist party is aware of the dependence of the Bonapartist equilibrium upon its own existence, it too still relies, so far as its leadership goes, upon this equilibrium, it pronounces itself against revolutionary fighting methods, it stigmatizes Marxism with the sobriquet of "Blanquism", it preaches the almost Tolstoian doctrine of "Resist not evil with violence". Only, this policy is just as unstable as the Bonapartist régime itself, with whose aid the bourgeoisie seeks to ward off more radical solutions.

The essence of the democratic state consists, as is known, in that everybody has the right to say and to write what he will, but that in all important questions the final word rests with the big property owners. This result is attained by means of a complex system of partial concessions ("reforms"), illusions, corruption, deceit and intimidation. When the economic possibility of partial concessions ("reforms") has been exhausted, the social democracy ceases to be the "main political support of the bourgeoisie". This means: capital can then no longer rest upon a domesticated "public opinion"; it requires a (Bonapartist) state apparatus independent of the masses.

Paralleling this shift in the state system, important shifts take place within the social democracy. With the decline of the epoch of reformism (especially during the post-war decade), the internal régime of the social democracy is a reproduction of the régime of bourgeois democracy: every party member can say and think what he will; but the decisions are made by the summits of the apparatus closely bound up with the state. To the extent that the bourgeoisie loses the possibility of ruling with the support of the public opinion of the exploited, the social democratic leaders lose the possibility of directing the public opinion of their own party. But the reformist leaders, unlike the leaders of the bourgeoisie, have no coercive apparatus at their disposal. To the extent therefore that parliamentary democracy is exhausted, the internal democracy of the socialist party, contrariwise, becomes more and more of a reality.

The crisis of the democratic state and the crisis of the social democratic party develop in parallel, but opposite directions. Whereas the state marches towards Fascism across the Bonapartist stage, the socialist party approaches a life and death struggle with Fascism across a "loyal", quasi-parliamentary opposition to the Bonapartist state. An understanding of this dialectic of the reciprocal relations between bourgeois state and social democracy is an indisputable prerequisite for the correct revolutionary policy: this is just the question on which the Stalinists broke their necks.

In the Bonapartist stage through which France is at present passing, the leaders of the social democratic party are endeavoring with all their might to remain within the limits of (Bonapartist!) legality. They do not give up the hope that an improvement of the economic conjuncture and other favorable circumstances will lead to the restoration of the parliamentary state. Just the same, the experience of Italy, Germany and Austria compels them to count upon the other, less alluring perspective against which they would like to insure themselves. They are afraid of detaching themselves from the masses who demand a fight against Fascism and await guidance. Thus the socialist apparatus gets caught in the vise of a violent contradiction. On the one hand, it proceeds in its struggle against the radicalization of the masses to the downright preaching of Tolstoianism: "Violence only begets violence; against brass knuckles and revolvers we must oppose . . . wisdom and prudence." On the other hand, it talks about dicta-

torship of the proletariat, general strike, etc., and betakes itself to the road of the united front policy. In the apparatus itself a stratification takes place at the same time. The "Left wingers" acquire an ever greater popularity. The official leaders are compelled to rest their Right arm on Doumergue ("legality" at all costs!) and their Left on Marceau Pivert, Just, etc. But the objective situation is not likely to preserve such an equilibrium. Let us repeat: *the present condition of the socialist party is still more unstable than the preventive-Bonapartist state régime.*

There can be no more devastating mistake in politics than to operate with ready-made conceptions which relate to the yesterday and to yesterday's relationship of forces. When, for example, the leadership of the socialist party reduces its task to the demand for parliamentary elections, it is transferring politics from the realm of reality to the realm of shadows. "Parliament", "government", "elections" today no longer have any of the content they possessed before the capitulation of the parliamentary régime on February 6. Elections by themselves cannot produce a shift in the center of gravity of power; for this is required a Leftward shift of the masses, capable of completely abrogating and effacing the results of the Rightward shift of February 6.

But a mistake of exactly the same kind is made by those comrades who, in appraising the socialist party, themselves operate with the ready-made formulæ of yesterday: "reformism", "Second International", "political support of the bourgeoisie". Are these definitions correct? Yes and no. More no than yes. The old definition of the social democracy corresponds still less to the facts than the definition of the present state as a "parliamentary democratic republic". It would be false to contend that there is "nothing" left of parliamentarism in France. Under certain conditions even a temporary relapse into parliamentarism is possible (just as a man in death agony usually still retains a glimmer of consciousness). However, the general evolution as a whole is already proceeding *away from* parliamentarism. Were we to give a definition of the present French state that more closely approximates reality, we should have to say: "a preventive-Bonapartist régime, garbed in the desolated form of the parliamentary state, and veering between the not yet strong enough camp of the Fascist régime and the insufficiently conscious camp of the proletarian state." Only such a *dialectical* definition can offer the basis for a correct policy.

But the same laws of dialectical thinking hold also for the socialist party which, as has already been said, shares the fate of the democratic state, only in the reverse direction. To which should be added, that to a substantial degree, thanks to the experience of Germany and Austria, the evolution of the socialist party even outstrips the evolution of the state to a certain extent: thus the split with the Neos preceded the *coup d'état* of February 6 by several months. Naturally it would be a crude mistake to assert that "nothing" has remained of reformism and patriotism in the party since this split. But it is no less a mistake to talk about it as about the *social democracy* in the old sense of the word. The impossibility of employing henceforward a simple, customary, fixed definition, is precisely the flawless expression of the fact that what we have here is a *Centrist* party, which, by virtue of a long protracted evolution of the country, still unites extreme polar contradictions. One must be a hopeless scholastic not to discern what is going on in reality under the label: Second International. Only a dialectical definition of the socialist party, that is, primarily, the concrete evaluation of its internal dynamics, can permit the Bolshevik-Leninists to outline the correct perspective and to adopt an active and not a waiting position.

Without the revolutionary impulsion of the masses, which could shift the political center of gravity sharply to the Left—or better yet: *before* such an impulsion—the state power must identify itself more openly and brutally with the military and police apparatus, Fascism must become stronger and more insolent. Parallel to this, the antagonisms within the socialist party must come to the fore, that is, the incompatibility of the Tolstoian preaching of "Resist not evil with violence" with the revolutionary tasks dictated by the

class foe. Simultaneous with the Bonapartization of the state and the approach of the Fascist danger, the party majority must inevitably become radicalized, the internal segregation, which is far from being completed, must enter a new phase.

The Bolshevik-Leninists are duty-bound to say all this openly. They have always rejected the theory of "social-Fascism" and hooligan methods in polemic, in which theoretical impotence unites with lie and calumny. They have no cause to stand themselves on their heads and to call black white. We advocated the united front at a time when it was rejected both by the socialists and the Stalinists. That is just why we remain, even today, with a critical realistic attitude towards the abstraction of "unity". In the history of the labor movement, demarcation is often the premise of unity. In order to take the first step towards the united front, the socialist party was compelled first to split away from the Neos. This ought not to be forgotten for an instant. The socialist party can take a leading part in a genuine mass and fighting united front only in the event that it sets out its tasks clearly and purges its ranks of the Right wing and masked opponents of revolutionary struggle. It is not a question here of any abstract "principle", but of an iron necessity resulting from the logic of the struggle. The problem is not one that can be solved by any diplomatic turn of the phrase, as Zyromski believes who endeavors to find the formula that will reconcile social patriotism with internationalism. The march of the class struggle, in its present stage, will pitilessly explode and tear down all tergiversation, deception and dissimulation. The workers in general and the socialists in particular need the truth, the naked truth, and nothing but the truth.

The Bolshevik-Leninists correctly formulated what is and what is to be. But they have not been able—it must be openly avowed—to fulfill the task which they set themselves a year ago: *more deeply to penetrate the ranks of the socialist workers*, not in order to "lecture" down to them from above as learned specialists in strategy, but in order to learn together with the advanced workers, shoulder to shoulder, on the basis of actual mass experience, which will inevitably lead the French proletariat on the road of revolutionary struggle.

In order the better to illuminate the tasks lying before us on this field, one must, however, dwell upon the evolution of the so-called "communist" party.

* * * *

The socialist party in France, we have written, is developing in a direction opposite to that of the state: whereas for parliamentarism has been substituted Bonapartism, which represents an unstable stage on the road to Fascism, the social democracy, on the contrary, has been moving towards a mortal conflict with Fascism. However, can one invest this view, which at present has an enormous importance for French politics, with an absolute, and consequently an international significance?

No, the truth is always concrete. When we speak of the divergent paths of development of the social democracy and the bourgeois state under the conditions of the present social crisis, we have in mind only the general tendency of development and not a uniform and automatic process. For us, the solution of the political problem depends upon the degree of effective realization of the tendency itself. The contrary theorem can also be advanced, which, let it be hoped, will not encounter any objections among us, namely: the destiny of the proletariat depends, in large measure, in our epoch, upon the resolute manner with which the social democracy will succeed in the brief interval which is vouchsafed it by the march of development, in breaking with the bourgeois state, in transforming itself and in preparing itself for the decisive struggle against Fascism. The very fact that the destiny of the proletariat can thus depend upon the destiny of the social democracy is the consequence of the bankruptcy of the Communist International as the leading party of the international proletariat and also of the unusual acuteness of the class struggle.

The tendency of Centrism to set back reformism, as well as the tendency of the radicalization of Centrism, cannot avoid an international character correlative to the world crisis of capitalism and the democratic state. But what is of decisive importance for practical and above all for organizational deductions, is the question of knowing *how* this tendency is refracted—at the *given* stage of development—in the social democratic party of a *given* country.

The general line of development defined by us should only guide our analysis, but it should by no means presage our deductions from it.

In pre-Fascist Germany, the approach of the break between the bourgeois state and reformism found its expression in the constitution of the Left wing within the social democracy. But the power of the bureaucratic apparatus, given the complete disorientation of the masses, proved sufficient to cut off in advance the still feeble Left wing (Socialist Workers Party) and to keep the party on the rails of a conservative and expectant policy. At the same time, the German Communist party, under the spell of the drugs of the "third period" and "social-Fascism", substituted "Amsterdamian" parades for the revolutionary mobilization of the masses, unrealizable under the actual relationship of forces without the policy of the united front. As a result, the powerful German proletariat proved incapable of offering the slightest resistance to the Fascist *coup d'état*. The Stalinists declared: it is the fault of the social democracy! But by that alone, they recognized that all their pretensions of being the leaders of the German proletariat were nothing but empty braggadocio. This tremendous political lesson shows us above all that, even in the country where the communist party was the most imposing—in the absolute as well as in the relative sense—it was incapable, at the decisive moment, of lifting even its little finger while the social democracy retained the possibility of barring the road by virtue of its conservative resistance. Let us bear that firmly in mind!

The same fundamental historical tendency has been refracted in France in an essentially different manner. Under the influence of specific national conditions as well as of international lessons, the internal crisis of the French social democracy has experienced a much deeper evolution than that of the German social democracy in the corresponding period. The socialist bureaucracy found itself forced to deliver a blow *at the Right*. Instead of seeing a weak Left wing expelled, as was the case in Germany, we have witnessed the break with the consistent *Right* wing (in its quality as an agency of the bourgeoisie), the Neos. The essential difference existing between the evolution of the German and the French social democracies could not better be underscored than by the symmetry of these two splits, in spite of the presence in both parties of common historical tendencies: the crisis of capitalism and of democracy, the crumbling of reformism and the break between the bourgeois state and social democracy.

What ought to be done is to gauge, from the indicated angle, the internal situation in the socialist parties of all the capitalist countries passing through the various stages of the crisis. But this task goes beyond the framework of this article. Let us mention only Belgium, where the social democratic party, swathed throughout by a reactionary and corrupted bureaucracy—a parliamentary, municipal, trade union, coöperative, and banking bureaucracy—is at present engaged in a struggle against its *Left* wing and trying not to remain behind its German prototype (Wels-Severing and Co.). It is clear that the same practical deductions cannot be drawn for France and for Belgium.

Yet it would be erroneous to think that the policy of the German and Belgian social democracies, on one side, and of the French social democracy, on the other, represent, once for all, two incompatible types. In reality, these two types can and will more than once transform themselves into one another. One can support with certainty the idea that if, in its time, the German Communist party had pursued a correct policy of the united front, it would have given a powerful impulsion to the radicalization of the social democratic workers, and the whole political evolution of Germany would have acquired a revolutionary character. On the other hand, it cannot be considered excluded that the social democratic bureaucracy in France, with the active aid of the Stalinists, will isolate the Left wing and give the evolution of the party a retrogressive direction; it is not difficult to foresee its consequences in advance: prostration in the proletariat and the victory of Fascism. As for Belgium, where the social democracy retains virtually the monopoly, as a party, in the proletariat, one cannot, in general, imagine a victorious struggle against Fascism without a decisive regrouping of forces and tendencies within the ranks of the social democracy. A hand must be kept on the pulse of the labor movement and the necessary conclusions must be drawn each time.

What has been said suffices, in any case, for an understanding of the enormous importance that has been acquired, for the destiny of the proletariat—at least in Europe and for the coming historical period—by the internal evolution of the social democratic parties. By recalling to mind that in 1925 the Communist International declared in a special manifesto that the French Socialist party no longer existed at all, we will easily understand how great is the retreat made by the proletariat and above all by its vanguard during the years of the domination of the epigones!

It has already been said that with regard to Germany, the Communist International has acknowledged—after the fact, it is true, and in a negative form—that it was totally incapable of fighting against Fascism without the participation in the struggle of the social democracy. With regard to France, the Comintern has found itself forced to make the same avowal, but in advance and in a positive form. So much the worse for the Comintern, but so much the better for the cause of the revolution!

In abandoning, without explanation, the theory of social-Fascism, the Stalinists have at the same time thrown overboard the revolutionary program. "Your conditions shall be ours," they have declared to the leaders of the S.F.I.O. [*Section française de l'Internationale Ouvrière*, i.e., the French Socialist party]. They have renounced all criticism of their ally. They are quite simply paying for this alliance at the cost of their program and their tactics. And yet, when it is a question of the defensive against the common mortal enemy—defensive, in which each of the allies pursues his vital interests—nobody needs to pay anybody for this alliance, and each has the right to remain what he is. The whole conduct of the Stalinists has such a character that they seem to want to whisper to the socialist leaders: "Demand still more, squeeze harder, don't stand on ceremony, help us rid ourselves as rapidly as possible of those coarse slogans which inconvenience our Moscow masters in the present international situation."

They have thrown overboard the slogan of the workers' militia. They have labelled a "provocation" the struggle for the arming of the proletariat. Isn't it better to divide up the "spheres of influence" with the Fascists under the control of *Messieurs les Préfets*? This combination between wholes is by far most advantageous to the Fascists: while the workers, lulled by general phrases on the united front, will occupy themselves with parades, the Fascists will multiply their cadres and their arms supplies, will attract new contingents of masses and, at the suitable hour chosen by them, will launch the offensive.

The united front, for the French Stalinists, has thus been a form of their capitulation to the social democracy. The slogans and the methods of the united front express the capitulation to the Bonapartist state which, in turn, blazes the trail for Fascism. By the intermediary of the united front, the two bureaucracies defend themselves not unsuccessfully against any interference by a "third force". That is the political situation of the French proletariat which can very speedily find itself faced by decisive events. This situation might be fatal were it not for the existence of the pressure of the masses and of the struggle of tendencies.

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He who asserts: the Second as well as the Third Internationals are condemned, the future belongs to the Fourth International—is expressing a thought whose correctness has been confirmed anew by the present situation in France. But this thought, correct in itself, does not yet disclose how, under what circumstances and within what intervals, the Fourth International will be constituted. It may be born—theoretically it is not excluded—out of the unification of the Second International with the Third, by means of a regrouping of the elements, by the purging and tempering of their ranks in the fire of the struggle. It may be formed also by means of the radicalization of the proletarian kernel of the socialist party and the decomposition of the Stalinist organization. It may be constituted in the process of the struggle against Fascism and the victory gained over it. But it may also be formed considerably later, in a number of years, in the midst of the ruins and the accumulation of débris following upon the victory of Fascism and war. For all sorts of Bordiguists, all these variants, perspectives and stages have no importance. The sectarians live beyond time and space. They ignore the living historical process, which pays them

back in the same coin. That is why their "balance*" is always the same: zero. The Marxists can have nothing in common with this caricature of politics.

It goes without saying that if there existed in France a strong organization of Bolshevik-Leninists, it could and should have become, under present conditions, the independent axis around which the proletarian vanguard would crystallize. But the Ligue Communiste of France has not succeeded in becoming such an organization. Without in any way shading off the faults of the leadership, it must be admitted that the fundamental reason for the slow development of the Ligue is conditioned by the march of the world labor movement which, for the last decade, has known nothing but defeats and setbacks. The *ideas* and the *methods* of the Bolshevik-Leninists are confirmed at each new stage of development. But can it be anticipated that the League, *as an organization*, will show itself capable—in the interval which remains until the approaching dénouement—of occupying an influential, if not a leading place, in the labor movement? To answer this question today in the affirmative would mean either to set back in one's mind the dénouement for several years, which is confuted by the whole situation, or just simply to hope for miracles. It is absolutely clear that the victory of Fascism would mark the crumpling up of all the labor organizations. A new historic chapter would open up in which the Bolshevik-Leninists would have to seek a new organizational form for themselves. The task of today should be formulated concretely in indissoluble connection with the character of the epoch in which we are living: how to prevent, with the greatest probability of success, the victory of Fascism, taking into account the existing groupings of the proletariat and the relationship of forces existing between these groupings? In particular: what place should be taken by the Ligue, a small organization which cannot lay claim to an independent rôle in the combat which is unfolding before us but which is armed with a correct doctrine and a precious political experience? What place should it occupy in order to impregnate the united front with a revolutionary content? To put this question clearly is, at bottom, to give the answer. The Ligue must immediately take its place *on the inside of the united front*, in order to contribute actively to the revolutionary regrouping and to the concentration of the forces of this regrouping. It can occupy such a place under present conditions in no other way than by entering the socialist party.

—But the Communist party, object certain comrades, is nevertheless more revolutionary. Assuming that we give up our organizational independence, can we adhere to the less revolutionary party?

This main objection—more exactly, the only one made by our opponents—rests upon political reminiscences and psychological appreciations, and not upon the living dynamics of development. The two parties represent *Centrist* organizations, with this difference: that the Centrism of the Stalinists is the product of the decomposition of Bolshevism, whereas the Centrism of the socialist party is born out of the decomposition of reformism. There exists another, no less essential difference between them. Stalinist Centrism, despite its convulsive zig-zags, represents a very *stable* political system which is indissolubly bound up with the position and the interests of the powerful bureaucratic stratum. The Centrism of the socialist party reflects the *transitional* state of the workers who are seeking a way out on the road of the revolution.

In the communist party, there are undoubtedly thousands of militant workers. But they are hopelessly confused. Yesterday, they were ready to fight on the barricades by the side of genuine Fascists against the Daladier government. Today, they capitulate silently to the slogans of the social democracy. The proletarian organization of St.-Denis, educated by the Stalinists, capitulates resignedly to P.U.P.ism†. Ten years of attempts and efforts aimed at regenerating the C.I. have yielded no results. The bureaucracy has showed itself powerful enough to carry out its devastating work to the very end.

In giving the united front a purely decorative character, in con-

**Bilan* [Balance] is the theoretical organ, in French, of the Italian Bordiguist faction.—*ED.*
†The P.U.P., or Party of Proletarian Unity, is a Right wing split-off from the communist party, semi-socialist in character, and electoralist in tendency.

secracting with the name of "Leninism" the renunciation of elementary revolutionary slogans, the Stalinists are retarding the revolutionary development of the socialist party. By that they continue to play their rôle as a brake, even now, after their acrobatic flip-flop. The internal régime of the party excludes, still more decisively today than it did yesterday, any idea of the possibility of its renaissance.

The French sections of the Second and the Third Internationals cannot be compared in the same way as two pieces of cloth: which fabric is the best, which the best woven? Each party must be considered in its development, and the dynamics of their mutual relations in the present epoch must be taken into account. It is only thus that we shall find for our lever the most advantageous fulcrum.

The adherence of the Ligue to the socialist party can play a great political rôle. There are tens of thousands of revolutionary workers in France who belong to no party. Many of them have passed through the C.P., they left it with indignation or else they have been expelled. They have retained their old opinion about the socialist party, that is, they turn their backs to it. They sympathize wholly or in part with the ideas of the Ligue, but they do not join it because they do not believe that a third party can develop under present conditions. These tens of thousands of revolutionary workers remain outside of a party; and in the trade unions they remains outside of a fraction.

To this must be added the hundreds and the thousands of revolutionary teachers, not only of the *Fédération Unitaire* but also of the *Syndicat National* who could serve as a link between the

proletariat and peasantry. They remain outside of a party, equally hostile to Stalinism and reformism. Yet, the struggle of the masses in the coming period will seek for itself, more than ever before, the bed of a party. The establishment of Soviets would not weaken but on the contrary would strengthen the rôle of the workers' parties, for the masses, united by millions in the Soviets, need a leadership which only a party can give.

There is no need of idealizing the S.F.I.O., that is, to pass it off, with all its present contradictions, as the revolutionary party of the proletariat. But the internal contradictions of the party can and should be pointed out as a warranty of its further evolution and, consequently, as a fulcrum for the Marxian lever. The Ligue can and should show an example to these thousands and tens of thousands of revolutionary workers, teachers, etc., who run the risk, under present conditions, of remaining outside the current of the struggle. In entering the socialist party, they will immensely reinforce the Left wing, they will fecundate the whole evolution of the party, they will constitute a powerful center of attraction for the revolutionary elements in the "communist" party and will thus immeasurably facilitate the emergence of the proletariat on the road of revolution.

Without renouncing its past and its ideas, but also without any mental reservations from the days of circle existence, while saying what is, it is necessary to enter the socialist party: not for exhibitions, not for experiments, but for a serious revolutionary work under the banner of Marxism.

PARIS, End of August, 1934.

V.

Arms and Capitalism

THE recent and complete fiasco of the Geneva Disarmament Conference, in addition to the advent of Fascism in Germany, has made two things clear: 1. that the capitalist class is giving up the pretense that its contradictions can be solved otherwise than by war; 2. that the Soviet Union, whose strongest weapon against imperialist aggression is a militant working class foreign policy, has given up such a policy and is definitely trailing in the wake of bourgeois diplomacy.

The defection of the Soviet Union, while lending a certain weight to middle class pacifism through Litvinov's "peace" pronouncements, has greatly weakened the organized working class struggle against war. On the other hand, the unprecedented cynicism with which the world press commented on the disarmament conference has greatly encouraged chauvinist agitators. The stage is set for militarists and armament manufacturers in all countries to carry on their activities more feverishly and more impudently than ever.

Liberals write and speak of the armament industry* as though it were a cancer on the body civilized; something that must be cut out, or at least be put under control. As usual they commit the error of identifying civilization with bourgeois rule. The development of this industry is part and parcel of the mechanical impetus afforded by early capitalism. Such development was rendered practical and necessary by the appearance on the field of the national armies following the French Revolution. But it is the growth of imperialism and the class struggle that have given armaments the position of decisive strategical importance which they hold today. Armament manufacturers are typical business men and invaluable members of their class, getting their profits how and where they can. There can be no question of moral distinction between the Rockefeller interests for whom Bolivian soldiers are being slaughtered, and the Du Pont, Colt and Curtiss-Wright Companies that advertize their machine guns and bombers to the Bolivian Government.

Knowledge of the activities of the arms manufacturers and of

*The attention of the reader is directed to the following publications in which valuable data on armaments is available: *Merchants of Death*, by Engelbrecht and Hanichen; *Arms*

and *Men*, by the editors of *Fortune*; *Patriotism Ltd.*, by the Union of Democratic Control, London; *The Navy: Defense or Portent*, by Beard.—ED.

their connections is essential for a practical and militant struggle against war and Fascism.

Fascism has given the armament interests a new lease in life. The extreme nationalism of Fascist theory serves only to emphasize the international character of capitalism. Fascism needs guns. Let us see in what manner Germany is being rearmed.

The Skoda works in Czechoslovakia were bought by Schneider, the French arms magnate, after the war. Since then Skoda has been producing arms for the Little Entente and has been exporting also to more distant countries, notably Japan. But the Skoda Co. has also on its board of directors two Germans, von Arthaber and von Duschnitz, who figure prominently among the contributors to Nazi party funds.

Krupp is legally forbidden by the Treaty of Versailles to manufacture arms on German soil. After the war, however, Krupp brought a large part of his equipment to Holland, where, in conjunction with the *Rheinmetall* group, he controls a number of arms depots and factories under both French and Dutch names. Krupp controls also the Bofors Ordnance and Drydock Co. in Sweden. The *Rheinmetall* group owns the *S. A. d'Armes de Guerre* at Soleur in Switzerland, which is one of the most technically advanced arms factories in the world. This factory, with its 600-rounds-a-minute machine gun, has been selling not only to Germany, but to Switzerland, Austria, Hungary, and Italy as well. Another Ruhr group, controlled by Röchling, has factories in the Saar, which have been selling to both France and Germany. All of these groups have contributed heavily to Nazi party funds.

Thyssen, the head of the German steel trust, contributed three million marks to the Nazi presidential campaign of 1932. Through Hitler he has acquired great political power. Thyssen is also reputed to favor coöperation between the German and French steel interests. Hugenberg, an old co-director of Krupp, co-director also of Thyssen, has been the most open advocate of German expansion in the East.

These firms, by means of holding companies and interlocking directorates, are so constituted that they stand to gain in any imperialist war. But it is not difficult to see where the main urge for an anti-Soviet Franco-German alliance originates.

There are as well many internal sources by means of which Hitler is rearming Germany. It is well known that Germany has

a most efficient commercial air fleet which can be transformed into a military one at a moment's notice. Furthermore, the most famous airplane manufacturing firm, Dornier, is building bombing planes forbidden by the Peace Treaty, and is subsidized by the government. The I. G. Dye Trust is the most important firm to which the care of Germany's supply of poison gases is entrusted.

The French press is corrupt even according to American standards. Schneider is the most important member of the French steel trust, the *Comité des Forges*. The *Comité des Forges* owns both *Le Temps* and *Le Journal des Débats*. *Le Journal*, which in the past has received direct contributions from agents of armament manufacturers, is also the paper which has been printing the most sensational exposures of German rearmament. Excellent weapons for chauvinist propaganda, with a warning that France must keep in trim! Schneider is helping to arm Japan, is arming the Little Entente, is helping to arm even Germany. But foremost, Schneider is arming France. He controls 128 French companies that manufacture all kinds of arms, from tanks to poison gas. He leads two important financial concerns, the *Banque de l'Union Parisienne* and the *Union Européenne Industrielle et Financière*. The main job of these banks is to make loans to governments which will enable them to purchase arms from him. Through the *Comité des Forges*, at the head of which sits France's Morgan, François de Wendel, Schneider has an enormous and not very subtle influence in all high governing circles.

But should anyone decide at this point that to assassinate Schneider would be to save the world, he should not forget that steel magnates control also the manufacture of locomotives, steel rails, etc., and that the manufacture of arms is a comparatively small percentage of the national industry in any country.

Let us look at the United States. The Bethlehem Steel Corporation, which made an average yearly profit of 49 million dollars out of the war, has a special and inaccessible plant where armor plate, cannons, projectiles of every description are manufactured. Bethlehem Steel and the Morgan-controlled U. S. Steel, which made a yearly war profit of 239 millions, are probably the greatest manufacturers of peace-time steel products. They get however the lion's share of the government armament contracts, and the government is spending 200 millions yearly on new armaments. Their methods of salesmanship and politics are well illustrated by the notorious William B. Shearer affair in 1929.

Schwab of the Bethlehem Steel Corporation is one of the founders of the Big Navy League; Schwab and Morgan both sponsored the National Defense Week most enthusiastically. Secretary of the Navy Swanson is a Virginia gentleman in whose state are located the Newport News shipyards where some of the navy's largest battleships are being built, notably the aircraft carriers *Ranger* and *Yorktown*. This company has also obtained the largest share of the 238 millions which the P.W.A. assigned to the navy. And so on.

Volumes of documented evidence could be published, showing the connections between armament manufacturers and the government, between armament manufacturers and patriotic societies of every description. Charles Beard has published *The Navy: Defense or Portent*, in which he denounces the Big Navy League and its lobbying practises. Jonathan Mitchell in the *New Republic* for May 9 has exposed further navy scandals while strongly supporting the Nye-Vandenberg resolution for the nationalization of armament manufacture. But these gentlemen seem to overlook, or if they do not overlook, strongly support, the country's most effective and important military preparations, namely the undisputably military character of the C.C.C. camps, and the Military Procurement Division of the present administration. The Military Procurement Division is an extension of the National Defense Act of 1920, designed principally to consolidate the ties between business and government in time of war. It is estimated that already 12,000 factories have been "enlisted".

The potential as well as the actual military value of the whole N.R.A. machinery is enormous, and the most "liberal" and "enlightened" members of the administration are highly conscious of this fact. It is no secret that Assistant Secretary of Agriculture Tugwell derived his inspiration of capitalist planning from Bernard Baruch's war machinery of 1917-18.

From the point of view of the capitalist state, the N.R.A.'s

strikebreaking machinery, which is being perfected daily, invaluable in times of peace, is quintessential in times of war.

The present administration is leaving nothing to chance. Codes for the chemical industries have been smoothly and successfully negotiated by a former chief of ordnance of the Army, Major General C. C. Williams. This government is without a doubt the most efficiently militaristic one since 1918.

President Roosevelt himself has won his laurels from the steel magnates. Business is bad in the steel mills. Production is declining. Workers are being laid off in all sections except in the armament branches of the industry. There workers are being speeded up so feverishly that dreadful accidents are increasingly frequent. Schwab's Big Navy League, on July 28, praised Roosevelt's "forceful leadership" in promising to build the navy up to treaty strength in three or four years. Our revolutionary president is thoroughly to the League's taste. Juicy orders are in the offing.

It would be impossible in the space of this article to list all the war preparations that are going on. Du Pont, who made a yearly profit of 58 millions during the world war, as against 6 millions in the preceding years, is busy on the one hand in creating red scares, while with Colt on the other, he is selling munitions to Bolivia.

Then there is Vickers-Armstrong, the great British firm whose agents were convicted of espionage in the Soviet Union. Vickers' annual bill for armaments is said by *Arms and the Men* to amount to about 100 million dollars. Vickers is selling also to South America, but mainly to Paraguay, whose government is defending the Dutch Shell Oil interests. The House of Commons has just approved an increase in the British air force of 1304 planes, while the army is being rapidly "modernized". The arms manufacturing business is not languishing in Great Britain.

In the face of these tremendous war preparations the workers are being poisoned on all sides by pacifist and patriotic propaganda.

One of the main demands of practical pacifism is that all manufacture of arms be nationalized. This is to serve two purposes, to abolish the international traffic in arms, and to "take the profits out of war". This in turn is to lessen the likelihood of war by rendering commercial chauvinist propaganda useless and give a sporting chance to such institutions as the League of Nations.

Nationalization has been suggested on various occasions, however, and nothing has come of it for the following reasons:

1. Small nations can import arms far more cheaply than manufacture them. Nationalization would cut off their sources of supply. At all international conferences in which nationalization was suggested, the smaller bourgeois nations protested their "rights" to import arms. On the international arena they play a petty bourgeois rôle. Such a prohibition would leave them open to attack on two sides. On the one hand, they fear being at the mercy of the big imperialist powers. On the other, they fear revolutionists at home and they rightly point out that in the second instance foreign concessions would also be endangered. From the imperialist point of view, then, the present state of affairs is far more convenient: Let the local bourgeois government do the dirty work without any direct intervention except in cases of desperate emergency.

2. It has been pointed out that nationalization would in no way prevent the traffic in raw materials, with its attendant advertising evils.

3. Patents are internationally sold and exchanged by manufacturers. Nationalization would make that impossible and might even aggravate the war situation. Nationalization could only be put into effect by international agreement.

4. Imperialist governments would not cherish petty bourgeois prying and control, and the governments themselves, to whom the liberals appeal, have always been the ones to lead the fight against nationalization.

5. Japan, where the industry is most closely controlled, can hardly be presented as the shining example of a peace loving nation.

It is most revealing of the pacifists' sincerity when they wind up their pleas, as do both Beard and Mitchell, by crying "But nationalization would render more efficient the equipment of the army and the navy"!

John HART

The A. F. of L. at the Crossroads

THE American Federation of Labor, despite its narrow craft union outlook, craft union prejudices and class collaboration policy, coupled with corruption, graft and treachery, is nevertheless a living organism which is subject to change. It can be understood correctly only when viewed in motion, taking into account its own internal dynamics and its reciprocal relation with the existing social forces and institutions as well as the changes within them. Since capitalism is formally acknowledged even in America, we are able to start out from the thesis that none of the living factors in this kind of society is immune from the effects of the class struggle.

Those who regard the labor movement, or the A. F. of L. specifically, as something static, or regard it as an entity separate and apart from these factors, merely pursue a metaphysical method of thought. They come to grief and find the refutation of their conclusions demonstrated by the process of life itself. This has happened more than once.

In the earliest programs of the American Communist party, the A. F. of L. was condemned as hopelessly reactionary and the militants were advised to have nothing to do with it. The position was taken that the I.W.W., which had once gloriously held aloft the banner of rebellion, had to be supported as the basic movement.

Undoubtedly that position can be ascribed to the infantile condition of the Communist party and could not then be corrected by the few voices that presented a more realistic view. Today the I.W.W. is practically non-existent, while the A. F. of L. unions are expanding, and have become the framework for the most turbulent struggles conducted in recent times. In this one comparison alone we have demonstrated before us in unassailable fashion the interplay of dialectic relations. It will be instructive to go on to other examples of how not to view the labor movement and the history of the communist party furnishes them in abundance. The unfortunate Wm. Z. Foster, who had himself contributed much toward a correction of the false union attitude which prevailed in the early period of the party, advanced in 1929 a perspective of decline and disappearance of the A. F. of L. In his opinion it would be superseded by a new company unionism into which "the labor bureaucracy would be organically absorbed largely or wholly". He made the ridiculous assertion that "the main reliance of the employers for propagating reformist illusions among the workers is not so much the A. F. of L. and the S. P., as their own engineer-economist company union apparatus". Foster came to this position by mechanical deductions from the effects of trustification and mechanization of industry in undermining the skilled worker base, which, he asserted, would wipe out catastrophically the craft unions. To this he added the effects of the policy of surrender pursued by the trade union officials.

Of course, his estimate overlooked entirely the dialectic interrelations between the trade union movement and the changing economic conditions. It was devoid of any appraisal of the internal dynamics of the movement which only had to await the effects of the economic changes to produce its repercussion on a large scale. Today the contention of Foster has been refuted by the process of life itself. An equally sorry mess has been made out of the repeated pompous declarations of the lesser, but no less unfortunate Fosters, who later emerged to classify the A. F. of L. as a company union, moribund and openly Fascist, to be replaced by the T.U.U.L. unions. But alas, these unions were only an empty space, unable to elicit any appreciable interest from the working class. Now they are being quietly liquidated, that is, a process equal to liquidating a few secretaries with all their high-toned declarations.

Let us try to picture the developments as they have actually occurred and not as envisaged by these prophets: Today the A. F. of L. is in a process of rapid expansion on a broad front, touching almost all the vital and mass production industries. Many of its affiliated unions are teeming with life and in many instances fighting tenaciously for the right and existence of trade unionism. Their own internal dynamics are increasingly manifest in each new experience. A new vitality never dreamed of before is dis-

played. At this moment one of the formerly most decrepit A. F. of L. unions, the United Textile Workers, is conducting the most extensive strike yet witnessed in this country, and it abounds in militancy. How it will end is still to be seen at the time of this writing.

Let us not be misunderstood, however. It is not a question here of the glory of the A. F. of L., nor of its tradition, its form, its methods, its policies or its leadership. Not at all! Neither do we forget the stimulus to organization given by the N.R.A.; that is elementary knowledge. Long before the N.R.A., technological advances in industry had undermined and narrowed the skilled worker base; the crisis added a levelling force and its economic pressure increased upon the working class as a whole. With certain manifestations of a change in the business cycle, the American workers, weighed down by the low living standard of the crisis, but not defeated, moved in a mighty surge toward organization. New unions of a mass character grew up, most of the old unions expanded and on a whole the movement took on new life. To the workers in these unions this meant a signal for struggle to establish their right of organization and to gain a higher standard of living. The struggle proceeded through the A. F. of L. and in this sense it became the working class instrument. With its quantitative change, i.e., the vast numerical increase in membership, both through the new unions organized and the growth of many of the old unions, a qualitative difference is presented—quantity is transformed into quality. Today's American Federation of Labor is not the same as yesterday's. Much of the past is maintained, nevertheless it is not the same. Hundreds of thousands of new proletarian recruits from the vital industries, who have brought with them and infused into the movement a new spirit of struggle and who are accessible to new ideas and to a militant leadership—that is what is new in the A. F. of L. We cannot speak of its reactionary craft unionism in the old sense of the term. Yesterday's formulæ defining this movement do not apply today.

Again it is necessary to say: Let us not be misunderstood. The whole of the reactionary and corrupt A. F. of L. officialdom still remains in the saddle with single exceptions here and there. Viewing it as a collective group of capitalist agents in labor's ranks, it is still intact and its policy of surrender and class betrayal has not changed in essence. Proof of this, if any is needed, is sufficiently ample in the sell-out agreement in the automobile industry and the action of the San Francisco union leadership which headed the general strike in order to behead it; these examples will surely not be the last of the kind. Modifications of the surrender policy are accomplished only to the extent that there is pressure from the membership, as witnessed in the present national textile strike with its militant mass action. The strike was resisted by the U.T.W. officials until the convention spoke in unequivocal language on behalf of the rank and file workers. The servile support given by the A. F. of L. bureaucracy to the N.R.A. schemes for the strengthening of monopoly capitalism, its recently announced intention of starting an anti-communist campaign and many other examples that could be adduced, only verify the view that this officialdom remains essentially on the same reactionary basis as before. Only, it has been compelled to open up the formerly hide bound and narrow craft organizations, to engage in some actions, and some of the officials have been compelled to speak a different language—when talking to the workers, not to their masters. But this opening up of the organizations has meant a great influx of the unskilled and semi-skilled proletarian strata, those who were lowest in the economic scale. A change in composition followed and with that also a change in position in relation to capitalism.

Employers throughout the country are now making desperate efforts to entrench their company unions and have engaged, ever since the beginning of the second strike wave, in the most slashing and murderous offensive to resist the union developments, fighting every strike, every union advance with all the means at the disposal of the capitalist state. Organization has slowed down since the time of its early spurt and the vast majority of the American workers still remains unorganized. This presents a dilemma to the

*The Communist, January-February 1929.

A. F. of L. officialdom—an open onslaught on union progress and union rights by the whole of the capitalist class on the one hand, and, on the other, a powerful movement from below pressing to meet the challenge, pressing to expand further and to fight it out. *The American Federation of Labor is reaching the crossroads.*

As a workers' organization the A. F. of L. faces a class enemy which in the final analysis gives no quarter. It may give concessions from time to time and it will, Foster's predictions notwithstanding, rely on the A. F. of L. to propagate reformist illusions among the workers in order to head off more militant action and organization. Therein lies the crucial point. Unless the whole framework of these existing unions can be adjusted to meet the new conditions, unless a new outlook, new methods, new policies, new forms of organization can be reached, and a new leadership break the hold of the present upper crust, the inevitable revolts will produce new unions outside of and in opposition to the A. F. of L. Either way, this will not be the end of the labor movement, but rather its real beginning.

When tracing the history of the American trade unions one notable fact is the grand tradition established in working class struggles, often decidedly revolutionary in character, during the early period of capitalist expansion and the bitter exploitation of labor. Once monopoly capitalism became the dominant force in American national economy, it set out to limit and to control the trade unions. The rapidly growing accumulation of capital and super-profits wrung from the constantly expanding market enabled it to give certain concessions to the upper sections of the skilled workers and to confine the trade unions almost exclusively to these sections. The union leaders came under the sway of capitalism and they recognized as their guiding policy only that which was dictated to them by expediency and opportunism. These narrow, conservative craft unions became an instrument to keep the rest of the working class in subjection. They attained a higher wage level for the privileged workers' sections at the price of keeping the growing numbers of unskilled workers without organization and on a lower standard of living.

Under these conditions the A. F. of L. developed and crystallized a bureaucracy which was firmly wedded to capitalism in principle and practise. Its degeneration was inevitable. From the top down, the officialdom in the palmiest days of the craft union development, was in many cases made up of bold, unscrupulous crooks and gunmen, maintaining intimate connections with the political bosses of the capitalist parties, protecting themselves by inside connections with police departments and extending their tentacles deep into the underworld. Open treachery to the working class followed as a matter of course. Organized graft and extortion became commonplace affairs. Selling insurance to employers against strikes or calling off strikes for heavy cash, whereby workers were the pawns who knew nothing of any issue or settlement; combinations for cash with certain manufacturers for the exclusion of materials of other manufacturers; mulcting of employers using non-union materials; exorbitant union taxation or payments for working permits—these were only some of the cruder forms of how the most odious labor fakers used the unions for their own ends to live like lords. A much more refined method was the venture into capitalist business enterprises through the establishments of chains of "labor" banks, holding companies, investment corporations and insurance concerns, which, in the case of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers before the financial crash, amounted to the imposing total of \$100,000,000. Built up on the basis of the workers' slim savings, this wealth was squandered by the corrupt officials, leaving the union members to pay heavy assessments for years to liquidate the accounts. Naturally, only a union ruled by election steals and terrorism could secure such a type of officialdom its spoils. In the unions with so-called socialist leadership, the same practise obtained, although perhaps in a less crude but more cunning form. All in all this period marks the blackest page in American labor history.

Trade union officials find themselves today in a new and a different atmosphere. With consternation and concern they witness the unions and the A. F. of L. as a whole being swept rudely out of their old comfortable path of living more or less peacefully on concessions given to the privileged working class sections. This is the immediate effect of the deep-going changes in class relations

produced by the changes of the economic structure of the country during and since the crisis. Ideological regroupings of class forces follow and proceed apace. Monopoly capitalism, enormously strengthened, is preparing to restore the dislocated process of reproduction at the expense of the workers and to maintain their drastically reduced standard of wages and standard of living. The vast unemployed army remains. Restlessness among the millions of victims of capitalist expansion was foreseen. If the trade unions could no longer be limited and be made to serve as an instrument for keeping the masses in subjection on their old and narrow basis, at least they had to be kept in bounds within safe channels to secure the continued "coöperation of the three factors in industry—capital, management and labor".

The old class collaboration policy required a broader basis to secure this coöperation under the new conditions. Likewise, new and more cunning forms for this policy had to be devised. What could be more attractive than "benevolent" government supervision of monopoly capitalism? Here the N.R.A. labor section and labor relations machinery entered into the picture, attempting to elevate the system of class collaboration to the status of a permanent social institution. It apparently guaranteed the right of collective bargaining and began to weld a closer connection and a closer relationship between the government and industry and the trade union leaders, through the code authorities and the labor boards. But it also afforded a first great stimulus to union organization. Apparently the government supported union organization; in reality, however, it restored and strengthened the discredited and corrupt A. F. of L. and international trade union leaders. A new equilibrium was envisaged.

This equilibrium was relied upon to prevent struggle, but the union leaders counted without the changed class relations. In the class struggle everything is real and flows from its own inner logic. Workers in large numbers, in hundreds of thousands, set into motion by an elemental urge, insisted on making the collective bargaining concession real and on making the trade unions organs of struggle for their own class ends. They began to upset the equilibrium.

Taken by surprise by the first sudden rush to the unions, the directors of monopoly capitalism are now far better prepared, unyielding and fighting every inch of the way against the idea of making the trade unions effective means of serving the masses. In this lies the real significance of the present violent resistance. Union organization has become a matter of a life and death struggle, bringing the government forward in its real authoritative expression: steel-helmeted troops wielding all the implements of modern warfare against workers striking for the establishment of their unions. The weight of the government shifts ever more to the real N.R.A.—the strengthening of monopoly capitalism. The forces of the political state appear in their truest expression when clashing with the trade unions in action. The working masses are being taught new lessons in the rôle of the political state, on the field of battle where these lessons will sink in deeply. Gradually or sharply, the center of gravity will shift in a Leftward direction as the conflict brings to the fore the contradiction between the practise of class collaboration and the reality of class struggle—a contradiction which the trade union officialdom is unable to reconcile.

The conflict finds its reflection within the trade unions where the Leftward direction can develop only in irreconcilable hostility to the corrupt and treacherous officials. The latter are afraid to tear themselves loose from the masses who demand struggle and want leadership. And while they attempt to suppress the militants through their anti-communist campaigns, the pressure upon them from the fighting masses increases and weakens the effects of their collaboration with capitalism in the face of which militant developments and activity of the militants becomes more of a reality. The conclusion is inescapable. *The American Federation of Labor is reaching its crossroads.*

That the voice of the rank and file is now heard more loudly, more impressively and more irresistibly in the unions is commonly acknowledged; that new leadership is emerging in the lower units, forged in the fire of struggle, is evidenced in more than one instance. Some shifts in leadership, up to the very top layers will undoubtedly occur. Changes in outlook, in policy and in form of

organization are far from precluded and most decidedly not impossible. It is, however, just as likely that the revolts growing out of the conflicts with the reactionary bureaucracy will result in splits and new independent unions embracing the masses of the rank and file workers disillusioned with the agents of class collaboration. In either case, the decisive question is that of the working masses and where the working masses are. That is how the question is approached by serious revolutionists. They set out to penetrate the masses with their ideas and to win the masses for their objectives. They have no fetishism of organization.

What will be the course of the A. F. of L. in the further struggle of American capitalism for a respite and for further expansion, is

not yet a settled question. But at all times it must be remembered that it is a living organism, foreshadowing today the potentialities of a working class now awakening and on the march, displaying an unlimited militancy. To fuse this militancy with a leadership that is conscious of the historic mission of its class, courageous, able to forge the instruments with which to build the organizations and able to influence the movement from within—that is the great task today. For the future this much can be said: the unique situation in the United States, which the A. F. of L. reflects, offers exceptional revolutionary possibilities. The real militants have no time to lose.

Arne SWABECK

I Break with the Chinese Stalinists

To the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party:

THE two-year period of my extra-organizational collaboration with the Chinese Communist party has come to an end and the *China Forum* which I founded and edited during that time has been forced to suspend publication. In the interest of our whole movement as well as in my personal interest, I consider it necessary to record here and publish the history of the *China Forum* and the circumstances of its suspension. . . .

* * *

From almost the very beginning of my active work—which I date from the time I began reporting events in China in a communist way—a number of questions presented themselves to me in increasingly forcible form. These arose originally from my discovery of the gross distortions and exaggerations which I found to be characteristic of communist propaganda in China and abroad. I define propaganda as the skillful, clear, accurate and wholly truthful reporting of the facts linked to an incisive, purposive interpretation and a plan of action for dealing with the facts in a revolutionary way. I learned this from the life and work of Lenin and his Bolshevik comrades who taught us that the truth comes from the masses themselves and that only disaster can result from telling them lies. I have never learned to the contrary that it was my revolutionary duty to work in any other way, although I soon found that the present-day Communist party press makes a practise of distinguishing between propaganda and truth.

Examples of exaggeration and distortion most striking to me were naturally those which applied to China, because here I could check allegations with known facts. I first wrote these down to the ignorance or incapacity of individuals. I felt that communist editors abroad would publish accurate facts about China if they could get them. Accordingly with a friend I tried to set up an independent mail news service and sent weekly bulletins to papers all over the world giving brief, sharp, factual accounts of what was going on. This was in the fall of 1931 after my return from the area of the great Central China floods of that summer. I scarcely understood then why this service failed to secure any response from the communist press abroad. After about three months I had to suspend it for lack of support. It simply didn't get published except in a few organs which were not official Communist party papers, including the *New York Militant*.

It wasn't long before I began to perceive, with a deeper study of international events and the history of the Chinese revolution, that a consistent thread ran through the distortions and exaggerations which I found not only in brief casual reports of current events but in the solemn pronouncements made by delegates before plenums of the E.C.C.I. I discovered that these departures from the truth were made necessary by the official premise that ever since the catastrophe of 1927 a mighty, upsurging revolutionary movement has been marching forward in China to the very brink of seizure of power under the leadership of the Chinese Communist party. I discovered that these exaggerations were necessary because the premise was false and along with it all the basic tenets of the policies being pursued by the Communist International and the Communist party in China. I cannot begin here to give a summary of some of these distortions (which I verbally

cited to you by the dozen), ranging from particular incidents (the wilfully false picture given of the cotton mill strike in Shanghai in January 1932, even to the point of transposing it to February to heighten the impression given of the workers' rôle in the Shanghai war) to high-flown generalizations like the statement recently made before the plenum of the E.C.C.I. that the C.C.P. has "won over the majority of the Chinese working class and the peasantry". . . .

In denying the presence of a mighty revolutionary upsurge (i.e., a vast organized march toward the seizure of power), I respect facts made still clearer perhaps when compared to the facts and figures of the monster mass movements of the 1925-27 period. The tragic errors of the communist leadership in 1927 were primarily responsible for the decapitation of that great movement and because no lessons have been drawn from these events to this very day, these errors, monstrously accumulated, are still responsible for the tragedies of today. But for the purposes of our comparison here, let us take for example the single fact that in 1926 in Greater Shanghai there were 257 strikes. In 1932 there were 82. Let us remember that on the eve of the workers' seizure of power in Shanghai in March, 1927, there were more than 800,000 workers, handicraftsmen and petty traders out on the streets fighting with arms in hands for demands of a far-reaching political character. A close check for the entire country in the latter half of 1933 showed me that less than one-thirtieth of that number were engaged in strikes and other disputes during any given month and that almost invariably the demands were defensive demands against wage cuts and lockouts. Moreover, the lack of cohesive leadership—often in departments of the same factory or in one or more of a group of factories—or even sometimes lack of even the most elementary organization—has in almost every case led to deadening failure and relatively easy betrayal by the yellow "labor leaders" and "mediators" of the Kuo Min Tang. In 1925 the shooting of thirteen students by British police in Shanghai was the touch-off for a general strike which paralyzed the city and which was seconded by vast sympathy strikes which broke like a series of tidal waves over the entire country. In January 1932, when the Japanese imperialists used the Shanghai International Settlement as a base for operations which cost the lives of tens of thousands of Chinese, not a single strike interrupted the normal course of the public or other services in that settlement. In the factories there were no strikes but a large scale lockout to which the overwhelming majority of Shanghai's workers submitted without protest. . . .

In the case of the widespread but isolated and individual cases of peasant uprisings, and this includes the Red armies in Kiangsi, these struggles await the leadership of a strong working class movement before they can have a successful issue. The Red armies in their restricted and surrounded areas and with their meagre resources have fought heroically against the Kuo Min Tang attacks upon them. But until the Kuo Min Tang is shaken from its bulwarks in the imperialist-controlled working class centers, their prospect of revolutionary triumph remains necessarily dim. No revolutionary purpose is served by taking refuge in the fiction that these armies have proletarian leadership because individual workers, undoubtedly leaders of superior quality and

courage, have been torn from their factories and from their fellow workers and sent down to occupy key positions in the Red army districts and in the Red armies themselves. Indeed, this common practise of extracting the most conscious and progressive working class elements from their working class environment and sending them down to the Red districts is a good index to the criminal transposition of emphasis which has helped paralyze the working class movement in the cities. If the White Terror doesn't carry off the workers' leaders as they arise, the C. P. does and has done so in hundreds of cases. This helps in no small part to explain why it has also been impossible to mobilize a genuine mass anti-Japanese movement in the face of military aggression and why the White Terror of the Kuo Min Tang has succeeded, by filling mass graves and innumerable prisons with the martyred dead and living, in downing the anti-imperialist movement or efforts toward the organization of such a movement and paving the way for the ever-increasing encroachments of the imperialists. The party has not yet gripped and directed the deep and bitter and often inarticulate hatred of the masses of the people for their oppressors and this includes large sections of the lower petty bourgeoisie who could be won by successful mass pressure from below. This is because the party has failed to translate the realities of everyday events into its program and tactics. . . .

* * *

But precisely because at all costs I desired to carry on the *Forum's* open struggle against the common enemy—against the Kuo Min Tang and the imperialists—I sedulously avoided bringing these issues into the columns of the paper, increasingly against my better judgment. I leaned over far backward in this respect. This expressed itself in many of the current issues with which we had to deal.

I ask you to recall the whole uphill fight which the *Forum* waged on behalf of Paul and Gertrud Ruegg in the spring and summer of 1932 during which time I repeatedly warned against the emphasis which was being placed on the "legal" aspects of the case and the "negotiations" with the Kuo Min Tang to the detriment of mass pressure and the capitalization of the case for political purposes. You paid lip service to the need for mass pressure—particularly here in China—but in fact the "legalities" and futile negotiations remained the major pillars of the defense. Until in the very end I finally rebelled, I wasn't even permitted to give Ruegg his honorable and rightful title—secretary of the Pan-Pacific Trade Union Secretariat! Yet although I felt the struggle for the Rueggs was being seriously handicapped by the tactics being pursued, I carried on the fight with all the energy at my command and you will recall that it was I who created the local defense committee and was chiefly responsible for the widespread press propaganda campaign and the considerable sympathy which we aroused. Yet the strictly non-political attitude which Ruegg was forced to assume at the trial (in contrast to the highly political attitude of his prosecutors!) was in my opinion one of the major reasons for the fate to which he and his wife were condemned.

I ask you to recall the whole period of the organization and activities of the China League for Civil Rights, from December 1932 to June 1933, in which I took an active part. I gave full play to this hybrid League and its work without once publishing the basic criticisms which I often voiced to you and which in the end were wholly confirmed by what happened after the Kuo Min Tang murdered Yang Chien in June that year. I ask you to recall the views I set forth in August and September 1933, on the subject of the "Anti-War Congress" which at your specific request I did not publish. Instead, to my regret, I published the foul rot of Marley & Co. without freely giving play to the true facts about that farcical junket which had convinced me that the policies which gave it birth do not one single whit advance the international struggle against imperialist war.

On one occasion—and this at least I can take comfort in—I passively resisted when you requested me to write and publish a slanderous attack on Chen Du Hsiu when he was condemned to 13 years imprisonment by the Kuo Min Tang. Your request was specific. I was not to deal with the issues which had brought Chen Du Hsiu from being the leader of the C. P. in 1927 to being leader of the Chinese Opposition in 1933. I was only to string

together a vile series of labels in an effort to explain why the Kuo Min Tang even imprisoned the leader of the Left Opposition. As you know, that attack was never written or published.

Again in December 1933, upon my return from Fukien, you specifically demanded that I set aside the results of my own personal investigations in Foochow in order to write on your behalf (but over my signature!) an utterly baseless and slanderous attack on the Left Opposition. You will recall that you charged at that time that the "Trotskyists" were prominently identified with the new government set up in Fukien by Chen Ming-shu and Tsai Ting-kai. You lumped the Left Opposition with the Third Party and the so-called Social Democrats among the petty bourgeois satellites of the Fukien militarists. It was as much to satisfy myself on this very point as to perform a mission for you, that I went down to Foochow and spent two weeks there and learned through direct contact with dozens of people prominently concerned that the Left Opposition was stoutly and clearly opposed to the Foochow régime. I haven't place here to discuss the relations of the C. P. to the short-lived Fukien government or the character of the "negotiations" which were going on down there. The important thing here is that on my return you demanded that I write slanders which flew in the face of everything I myself had learned. It is interesting, as a sidelight on your methods in factional strife as you conceive it, that your representative in Foochow sent back a report, through me, ironically enough, that one of the most prominent of the youthful pseudo-radicals in Foochow, Wu Cui-yuen to be exact, was a leading "Trotskyist". It so happened that I had met and had several lengthy interviews with Wu and by the time I left Foochow I understood his position and his personality exceedingly well. He was as much a Trotskyist as Mei Lan-fang is! Yet you actually demanded that I ignore my own knowledge of the man and in my article on Fukien set him down as a "Trotskyist". I was faced on the one hand by your demands that I write falsehoods to suit your policies and on the other by my deep desire to set forth the actual facts about the Opposition's attitude toward the Fukien régime. But once more, to preserve the shreds of our relationship, I drove a middle course and did neither, leaving the whole question out of my article. . . .

* * *

Nevertheless, abruptly in January of this year you forced an ultimatum upon me and subsequently forced the break in our relationship because I could not and would not, at your demand, devote the *China Forum* to policies which I could not and do not believe compatible with the interests of the Chinese revolution and the international proletarian revolution. I could not, at your demand, set aside the convictions to which I had literally been driven by the stinging lash of catastrophic events in China, Germany and the world over. Particularly my deep interest in Chinese events during the last three years made it impossible for me, finally, to give active support to policies and tactics whose disastrous effects were being a thousandfold confirmed for me by the tragic events of every swiftly-passing day. I could not ignore questions which strike at the roots of our work and the whole structure of our hopes for a revolutionary future.

Despite the fact that these questions are rocking the entire International today, you denied my right to raise them in print. You demanded more. You demanded that I attack anybody who did so—primarily the people you call "counter-revolutionary Trotskyists"—the only people who are facing these problems today in a fearless, revolutionary way! You demanded that the *China Forum* become a stereotype for the policies and vulgar factional slanders which I could neither then nor now be party to. In reply to my questions on China you simply quoted back at me the lies and half-lies I've been so used to reading in *Imprecorr*. You even declared: "For propaganda purposes a certain amount of exaggeration is necessary . . ." and went on amazingly to say: "but we know the true facts and we base our policies on them, not on these exaggerations!" A new slant on modern-day C.I. tactics! Facts, you say, are curious things. They have to be turned around and around and around, and examined closely until their true nature becomes apparent. The trouble is you turn them so far and so quickly that they turn into something like a dizzily turning top of fancy—or at best wish-fulfilling misrepresentations.

To my questions on Germany you quoted Heckert, Platnitsky

and the E.C.C.I.'s famous resolution declaring that the collapse of the German party and the slaughter of the German workers were based on the past, present and future correct policies of the C.P.G.! You declared I had no right to offer critical comment on the dangerously opportunistic foreign and domestic policies of the U.S.S.R., most notably on the entry of the U.S.S.R. on a straight nationalist basis into the disgusting corridors of imperialist intrigue. To the contrary, I was lovingly, fawningly to fondle and hail the policies which have meant disaster in China, Germany and elsewhere and are rapidly leading the U.S.S.R. into the vacuum of nationalist isolation from the world-wide proletarian movement. This I was to do, to begin with, by publishing Stalin's face on the front page and columns of the customary penegeyrics to his infallibility. Above all and before all, I was to take up cudgels against "counter-revolutionary Trotskyism". That was to be the main point of my reformation—to raise no questions myself and slander anybody else who did so.

In reply to your demand that I submit to an editorial board in order that these editorial policies should be effectively put into practise, I offered (1) to continue publication strictly as before, meanwhile arguing out my differences with you in discussions on the side; (2) to throw the columns of the *Forum* open to a general discussion of all basic revolutionary questions, with free play to unorthodox as well as orthodox views. If your views were correct, I argued, it would be a distinct advantage to you to have such an opportunity to display their brilliance alongside the puny efforts of your critics; (3) to publish orthodox news and views but to reserve for myself the right to comment and criticize.

These repeated offers you repeatedly refused. You offered to discuss these questions with me verbally if in the meanwhile I threw the *Forum* open to your editorial board. My other proposals were unthinkable! Give the *Forum's* readers a chance to hear "counter-revolutionary" viewpoints? Never that! I could only display my revolutionary purity by acceding to your demands. We would talk things over until spring, when if all went well (i.e., if I showed a satisfactory adaptation to your viewpoint) I could pack up for an educational trip to the Soviet Union where I would certainly become convinced of the error of my ways. In other

words, you wanted my signature on a promissory note with the amount left blank for you to fill in. You put this in the form of an ultimatum and you told me that if I did anything but accept I would forthwith enter the camp of the "counter-revolution".

I had to refuse these terms. I had to refuse to lend myself to a slanderous and baseless struggle against the International Left Opposition. I had to refuse to lend space to the nauseatingly fawning praise of Stalin and uncritical reception of Stalinist policies which characterize the Communist party press the world over. I had to refuse to take shelter in the cold and draughty empty spaces which stretch behind the impressive façade and early traditions of the Communist International. I would like to go to the Soviet Union for a visit one day—but I had to refuse your offer on your terms. I had to refuse, in short, to become a hack prostitute in the name of the revolution.

In the end, too, I had to refuse to turn over to you the printing plant I had built up with so much pain and struggle because I considered it not your property but the property of the working class movement. Because I could not carry on the *Forum* myself, for lack of financial resources and because of heavy debts contracted, I disposed of the plant and turned every farthing of the proceeds over to where I now consider the true interests of our movement lie. It was with a deep and abiding bitterness that I had to see the *Forum* go down under the blows of those whom I had considered comrades, when for two years it had fought off all its many enemies on the outside.

Yet with it came the realization that we have to build anew over the ruins you have wrought. The revolution and the building of our future moves forward and when we trample down the defenses of our enemies we shall crush underfoot everything and everybody that stands in our way. No sycophantic, blind allegiance to a name, an empty façade, a torn and shredded prestige can lead us forward. Only unswerving fidelity to our goal and active struggle toward this end with the weapons of a correct and tested political line will lift us from defeat to ultimate victory. To this struggle I shall continue to dedicate all my energies.

PEIPING, CHINA, May 20, 1934.

Harold R. ISAACS

A Stupendous Bureaucracy

ALMOST a quarter of a century ago appeared the first edition of *Die Soziologie des Parteiwesens in der modernen Demokratie*—"investigations into the inexorable tendencies of group life" by the Italian professor Roberto Michels which were the first serious study of bureaucratism in the European labor movement. Then still in his "radical socialist" period, Michels traced the stratification of an upper crust in the trade unions and the social democracy in particular, with so much painstaking talent and instructive results that one is more than repaid by a second reading.

Pyramiding the social democratic structure from the broad mass of voters, through the party membership, attendance at party branch meetings, up to the officials and finally the narrow group of all-powerful party committees, and adorning his thesis with an imposing mass of data, he sought to establish a "universal law of development" of his own called the "iron law of oligarchy". According to Michels, the triumph of oligarchy is organically inherent in every form of democracy and operates most relentlessly in every workers' organization.

"Every workers' party," his views were once summed up, "is a mighty oligarchy standing upon piteous democratic feet. . . . The mass—it too organically and forever—is incapable of ruling. It is completely amorphous and indifferent, always needs somebody to distribute its work for it, must constantly be led. It asks for this leadership, and the opinion that it is in a position to influence its leaders in any way, is nothing but a wretched deception or self-deception. The whole history of the labor movement is a perpetually recurrent assault of the democratic waves upon the cliffs of oligarchy, being shattered against these cliffs, a new assault, etc., without end. An endless struggle of the democratic opposition against the oligarchy, a conversion of the democracy into oli-

garchy, a fusion with the oligarchy, the rise of a new democratic opposition, etc."

For all the glaring defects apparent in Michel's fatalistic sociology, his study was and remains invaluable for an understanding of the phenomenon of bureaucratism in the labor movement. And in order to combat effectively what is injurious and fatal in bureaucratism, it is necessary to understand it. Such an understanding will, furthermore, make it possible to grasp some of its unique and ordinarily less comprehensible forms in the present-day Stalinist parties.

In his penetrating examination into the causes of the opportunist decay of the social democracy, its collapse in the World War, G. Zinoviev presented his readers in 1916 with the shocking information that on the eve of the war the German social democracy with an approximate membership of a million and the trade unions with three times that number, employed between them 4,010 officials. "In the hands of these upper 4,000 is accumulated the power in the party and the trade unions. Upon them depend all the affairs. They hold in their hands the whole powerful apparatus of the press, the organization, the relief funds, the whole election apparatus, etc." (*Der Krieg und die Krise des Sozialismus*, p. 511.)

The post-war period so extended the influence, numbers and power of the German social democracy that the 1914 figures paled by comparison. The omnipotence of the highest instances of the party bureaucracy was mightily assured throughout the ranks by the enormous increase of posts at its disposal for distribution to lesser officials. The latter (not every individual, to be sure, but as a group), to preserve themselves in office, served as the channels through which the real party leadership exercised its power in the ranks.

The available posts, according to the detailed study made a few years ago, were occupied by party members falling into the following categories:

"1. Those who are *directly* dependent [upon the party chiefs], among them the employees of the party, the trade unions, the auxiliary organizations and the economic enterprises; 2. those who are *indirectly*, but in part just as much dependent: who occupy positions in the state apparatus, the municipalities, the social-political bodies, etc., and 3. those whom we can call *expectant candidates* for high class sinecures. Among these we must again distinguish between those who already have such functions which offer them quick prospects of cornering a post and those who 'hope' to make a career for themselves. Without doubt the number of the latter is very high." (Rudolf Feistmann, "Der S.P.D.-Apparat", *Roten Aufbau*, Vol. II, No. 8. Berlin.)

Among the posts occupied by deserving social democrats, Feistmann listed: two-thirds of the police chiefs of Prussia, members of the Reichstag, numerous Landtags and municipal boards, members of the Board of Directors of the Coke syndicate, the match syndicate, the Reichsbank, the federal railways, the Federal Health Council, the Senate of the Kaiser-Wilhelm-Akademie, several banks, etc., etc. His final results, he tabulated as follows, without counting the "expectant candidates":

Party and trade unions	16,905
Auxiliary organizations	2,320
Economic enterprises	83,392
Parliaments	46,667
Social-political bodies, representatives	60,363
Social-political bodies, officials and employees (ap.) ..	50,000
Teachers' organization	6,000
Prussian administration	16,000
Administration of other provinces	4,000
Party schools, etc.	1,500
Building inspectors, etc.	507
Economic enterprises which cannot be estimated (ap.)	1,600

Grand total: 289,254

Well over a quarter of a million posts!

While it should be borne in mind that these 300,000 rested upon a party membership of more than a million, a trade union membership of several million, and an electorate of more than ten million, it was nevertheless a tremendous weapon for the preservation of the party leadership and its conservative policies. This was further facilitated, to be sure, by the fact that the leadership, besides having the "responsibility" for maintaining a multitude of respectable institutions, was so closely interwoven with the whole capitalist state machinery that it not only served as its prop but was in a position to operate it for its own ends—at all events, up to two years ago.

The German social democracy is only the most striking example of this phenomenon in the sphere of reformist organizations throughout the world. Disregarding the Soviet Union, it is possible to say that the official Communist party in the United States is the outstanding, that is, the worst example, of a similar development in the sphere of Stalinist organizations. Documentary material which facilitated Feistmann's calculations of the S.P.D. is of course not available in the case of the American Stalinists. But a study will make possible an adequate approximation of the state of affairs here. The figures are of course drastically reduced, as compared with Germany, but not disproportionate to the organization considered. If the bureaucracy of the Stalinist party does not number hundreds of thousands, neither are its supporters counted by the millions.

The American Stalinist party is one of the top-heaviest labor organizations in the world. The number of its institutions and offices does not grow at the same speed as the growth of its membership and influence, but at a far more rapid pace; at times the former remains stable, or even advances while the latter declines. At all times, the best and the worst, the latter shows a turnover which produces a ceaseless change in its composition. The tremendous turnover in party membership is one of the most important features of the Stalinist bureaucracy.

"We have had in the past two years, innumerable resolutions, speeches and articles about fluctuations of membership, and fine suggestions on how to overcome them. But these things have re-

mained on paper—and the fluctuation today is as high as seventy-five percent. Many of these are old members. In the last registration we found that only 3,000 members were in the party before 1930." (*Party Organizer*, Sept.-Oct. 1932.)

Accepting the official membership figures for 1932, this means that *less than one-fourth* of the membership had been in the party for as long as two years; the other 10,000 members were practically raw material.

These new elements—six, twelve, eighteen months in the party—do not get an opportunity in so short a period to absorb the fundamental teachings of Communism (assuming for the moment that even six years of Stalinism could give them these teachings!). Especially in recent years, the first and last principle they learn is unquestioning obedience to the party leadership which they can neither elect nor recall.

"We have lots of elements of bureaucracy among our leading comrades. . . . They feel that all comrades 'below' them must show great respect and honor to them, accept their opinion and shortcomings as the last and final word on every subject. This dignity and artificial importance repels the proletarian rank and file of the party." (*Party Organizer*, March 1931.)

Because of the speed with which the new recruit leaves the party, there is not to be found in it any more or less stable mass of workers out of which a consistent, organized opposition to the bureaucracy might crystallize. Any leadership may be appointed or removed, any policy may be set down or changed from above, and it will meet with no resistance in the lower ranks. That is, no *organized* resistance; an obstreperous or inquiring *individual* is either bribed or bludgeoned into silence, or promptly expelled to prevent others from being "infected" with his ideas.

The apparent contradiction between the outrageously false policies and bankruptcy of the leadership, and its "unanimous" acceptance by the membership, is "dialectically resolved" as follows: The highhanded régime of the leadership and its disastrous policies drive the eager converts to Communism out of the party; this fluctuation in turn makes it impossible for a force to crystallize in the ranks capable of changing either the leadership or its course. Periodically the contradiction reappears, not at a higher, but at a lower level. . . .

The membership fluctuates and is weak; the apparatus is powerful, beyond the control of the ranks, and extraordinarily numerous. For in addition to other iniquities inflicted upon it, the comparatively small circle of members and sympathizers is obliged to carry a disproportionately vast officialdom.

"We have in our [New York] district," says the *Party Organizer*, Feb. 1931, "over 100 different mass organizations." (In the last three years the number has increased considerably, and with it, the number of posts at the disposal of the central party secretariat.) In the Sept.-Oct. 1931 issue of the same periodical, it says: "The resolution adopted at the New York district plenum states that 'there exists a far-reaching bureaucratization of the party apparatus. . . . A similar resolution was adopted at the beginning of August by the Chicago party organization.'"

Just what this means in more concrete terms may be seen from a partial list of the party and party-controlled organizations which are staffed exclusively by party members, who thus constitute the full-time party apparatus. While the list confines itself to New York, it should be remembered that this is the decisive political and organizational center of the Stalinists.

CENTRAL ORGANIZATIONS (with their district, local and frequently foreign-language departments): Communist Party, Young Communist League, Trade Union Unity League, International Labor Defense, International Workers Order, Friends of the Soviet Union, Workers International Relief, Workers Ex-Servicemen's League, Unemployed Councils, League Against War and Fascism, National Students League, City Council of Associated Workers Clubs, United Council of Workingclass Women, John Reed Clubs, League of Struggle for Negro Rights, National Committee to Aid Victims of German Fascism, Labor Sports Union, Anti-Imperialist League, Labor Research Association, National Committee for the Defense of Political Prisoners, Chinese Anti-Imperialist Alliance, Icor, National Textile Workers Union, Needle Trades Workers Industrial Union, Marine Workers Industrial Union, Steel and Metal Workers Union, National Furniture Work-

ers Union, Food Workers Industrial Union, World Tourists, etc., etc. (In addition, two or three very generously staffed institutions which special conditions suggest leaving unnamed.)

PERIODICALS: *Daily Worker*, *Morning Freiheit*, *Ukrainian Daily News*, *Daily Panvor*, *Unità Operaia*, *The Labor Defender*, *Labor Unity*, *Hunger Fighter*, *Novy Mir*, *Fight*, *Young Worker*, *Needle Worker*, *Food Worker*, *Furniture Worker*, *Marine Worker*, *The Communist*, *Der Hammer* (Yiddish), *Der Hammer* (German), *Amerikas Zihnas*, *Us Iln*, *Laisve*, *Student Review*, *New Masses*, *New Theater*, *Liberator*, *Party Organizer*, *Rank and File Federationist*, *New Pioneer*, *Empros*, *Communist International* (English edition), *Ny Tid*, *Soviet Russia Today*, etc.

CULTURAL AND SEMI-CULTURAL ORGANIZATIONS: Workers School (of New York, of Harlem, of Brooklyn), Workers Bookshops, International Publishers, Workers Library Publishers, Pen and Hammer, Artef, Garrison Films, Freiheit Gesangs Verein, Freiheit Mandolin Orchestra, Workers Music League, Film and Photo League, Jewish Workers University, etc.

CENTERS AND INSTITUTIONS: Workers Center, Camp Nitgedaiget, Camp Unity, Ukrainian Labor Home, Golden's Bridge Colony Workers Coöperative Colony (apartment buildings), Finnish Workers Hall, Czechoslovak Workers House, Scandinavian Hall, Amalgamated Rank and File Center, Italian Workers Center, Spanish Workers Center, Hungarian Workers Home, Camp Kinderland, Camp Wo-Chi-Ca, etc.

LOCAL UNIONS AND MISCELLANEOUS: United Shoe and Leather Workers Union, Educational Workers Club, Custom Tailoring Workers Industrial Union, Transport Workers Union, Nurses and Hospital Workers League, Curtain and Drapery Workers Union, Relief Workers League, Alteration Painters Union, Office Workers Union, Unemployed Teachers Association, China and Glass Decorators Independent Union, Silk Screen Process Workers League, Taxi Drivers Union, Sign and Advertizing Art Workers Union, Anti-Fascist Action, Laundry Workers Industrial Union, Smoking Pipe Workers Industrial Union, Building Maintenance Union, Independent Carpenters Union, Tobacco Workers Industrial Union, Jewelry Workers Industrial Union, etc., etc., etc.

If we apply the criteria employed by Feistmann—again omitting the not inconsiderable number of "expectant candidates"—the number of party members employed in the totality of these organizations, from the humblest clerical workers down to the Gen-Sec of the party himself, will be found to reach an enormous figure. Some of the institutions listed have no more than one paid official; the Marine Workers Industrial Union, with its 250 members locally, will have eight; the *New Masses* will be staffed with ten; the *Morning Freiheit* with well over fifty; the Bronx coöperative apartments—a big business institution with all the big business practises and malpractises—has an even more imposing personnel.

A careful approximation would yield a total of about 1,000 party members in New York City occupying posts for which they are directly or indirectly (and not very indirectly, either!) dependent upon the good will of the central party leadership—1,000 out of about 3,000 party members in the city!

They constitute the bureaucratic caste, appointed and removable only from above, which dominates the party's ranks. Whatever may be the character of this or that individual, as a group they are the obedient henchmen of the party secretariat which is, in turn, appointed by and responsible to the Stalin secretariat alone. They guarantee an unimpeded and unmolested continuity of Stalinist policy and Stalinist sovereignty. Divorced from the ranks, in the truest sense of the term, they rule over the membership, by actual intimidation if necessary.

"In some cases, two or three of the most developed comrades take upon themselves the right to make all decisions beforehand and monopolize the leadership among themselves. Under these conditions the remainder of the local comrades are either politically terrorized into silence or made to act the part of messenger boys for the 'leadership.'" (*Party Organizer*, Feb. 1931.)

Should any kind of insurgency manifest itself in the party ranks, this bureaucracy is always available for flying squadrons to suppress, vote down or expel the recalcitrants. A classic example: "In shop nucleus No. 1, Section 2, New York, situated in a large leather goods factory, the following comrades were recently attached: Radwansky, editor of *Novy Mir*; Rose Pastor Stokes, em-

ployed in the W.I.R.; Rappoport, bookkeeper in the *Freiheit*; and Litwin, cashier in the Coöperative Restaurant. On the motion of Stokes, and with the help of these four functionaries, the organizer of the nucleus [a Lovestone suspect], who is at the same time the shop chairman, was expelled from the party." (*Revolutionary Age*, Dec. 1, 1929.)

Finally, it should be borne in mind that this bureaucracy, unlike any other that has ever existed in the labor movement, is bolstered up by a state power. It has behind it all the formal authority and prestige of the Soviet Union, to say nothing of more ponderable support. It has developed to a point where it is a self-perpetuating machine, part of an even bigger machine of the same type. It cannot be recast from within. It has immunized itself and the organization to which its bottom is irremovably glued, against the possibility of internal reform.

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The problem of bureaucratism can neither be approached nor resolved from a subjective or abstract, that is, from a sub- or supra-social standpoint. A bureaucrat can no more be dismissed as a rude official than a bureaucracy can be set down as an evil in itself. The bureaucracy is the totality of officials or employees that staffs the apparatus and directly administers the affairs of a given institution. It can therefore be judged only in connection with this institution, its class basis, its class policies, its organizational structure and the milieu in which it functions.

When the revolutionary movement is in its infancy and its participation in the class struggle is as rare as its ranks are few, it can and does do without paid officials. As soon as it emerges from the initial formative stage, from pure discussion, and enters the arena of battle against the organized class foe, it realizes the imperative need of internal reorganization. The bourgeoisie has institutions, machinery, a press, spokesmen, writers, organizers, strategists, a general staff. To combat it effectively, the working class is compelled to bring out of its midst or to win over from other classes, those best qualified to organize its army, build its machinery, popularize its cause, plan and direct its battles. The larger grows the revolutionary and labor movement, the greater is its need of all kinds of auxiliary institutions and of all kinds of men and women to staff them—organizers, speakers, writers, secretaries, strategists, leaders, etc., etc. To set oneself against the building of such an apparatus and a body of qualified officials, is equivalent to loading the rising labor movement with stupid prejudices and with the backwardness of its own yesterday. It means fastening it to the Procrustean bed of its infancy and making it fit not by cutting off its legs but its head.

If a bureaucracy is considered not just as an abusive term, but as the officialdom which grows with the living movement of labor, it is patently indispensable. It makes for smooth routine, for system and efficiency in work, for planning and responsibility, for far-seeing supervision and centralization of effort.

It contains obvious dangers, as, alas! both reformism and Stalinism have showed: corruption, malfeasance, ossification, self-perpetuation, conservatism, usurpation. They are no more than the dangers inherent in the modern class struggle. The antidotes to these poisons go by the names of revolutionary class policy and workers' democracy. Whoever yields on either score has contributed to the degeneration of his own officialdom.

The bureaucracies of the existing movements became corrupt and degenerated because they forsook Marxism and suppressed workers' democracy. Now they play a reactionary rôle which makes necessary their elimination. "But this does not mean that the labor movement will be able to get along in the future without a large organizational apparatus, without a whole stratum of persons who stand specifically in the service of the proletarian organization," Zinoviev wrote in his time. "Not back to those days when the labor movement was so weak that it could do without its own employees and officials, but forward to the day when the labor movement itself will be a new one, when the tempestuous mass movement of the proletariat *subordinates* this stratum of officials to itself, destroys routine, wipes away the bureaucratic rust, brings new people to the surface, breathes fighting courage into them, and fills them with new spirit!"

Engels on Historical Materialism

A LETTER TO CONRAD SCHMIDT
London, October 27, 1890.

Dear Schmidt:

I SEIZE the first free moment to write you. I think you would be well advised to accept the position at Zurich*. You can always learn considerably about economic matters there, especially if you bear in mind that Zurich is still only a third-rate money and speculation market, and that, consequently, the effects which make themselves felt there are weakened, and indeed deliberately falsified by double and triple-fold refraction. But one acquires a practical knowledge of the business and is compelled to follow first-hand market reports from London, New York, Paris, Berlin, Vienna—and the world market is then revealed in its reflected form as money and security market. Of the economic, political and other reflections the same thing is true as of the images in the human eye. They all pass through a convex lens and therefore appear upside down, standing on their head. Only the nervous system is lacking to set them right on their feet again. The money-market expert sees the movement of industry and the world market only in the inverted reflection of the money and security market, and takes the effect for the cause. I saw that take place as far back as the Forties in Manchester. The London market reports were absolutely useless as a guide to the development of industry and its periodic maxima and minima because m'lords wanted to explain everything as arising from the crises in the money market which were, after all, only symptoms. Behind the matter at that time was the desire to explain away the fact that industrial crises arose out of temporary overproduction; in addition there was a bias which invited distortion. This last is now irrelevant—once for all, at least for us; besides it is a fact that the money market can also have its own crises, in which direct industrial disturbances play only a subordinate rôle or none whatever. In this connection there is still much to be ascertained and investigated especially in the last twenty years.

Wherever there is a division of labor on a social scale, there will also be found the *growing independence of workers* in relation to each other. Production is in the last instance the decisive factor. However, as soon as the *commercial exchange* of commodities separates itself from actual production it follows a movement which, although as a whole still dominated by production, in turn obeys in its particular details and within the sphere of its general dependence, its own laws. These flow from the nature of the new factor involved. This movement has its own phases and reacts in turn upon the course of production. The discovery of America resulted from the hunger for money, which had already driven the Portuguese to Africa (*cf. Soetbeer's Edelmetall-Produktion*), because the tremendous expansion of European industry in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries together with the corresponding commercial activity demanded more means of exchange than Germany—the great silver country from 1450 to 1550—could provide. The conquest of India by the Portuguese, Dutch, and English from 1500 to 1800 was undertaken for the sake of *imports from India*. At that time no one thought of exports. And yet what colossal counter-effects these discoveries and conquests which were determined purely by interests of trade, had upon *exports* to those countries and upon the development of large scale industry.

The same is true for the *money market*. Just as soon as dealing

*Conrad Schmidt had written over the commercial section of Engels that he intended to take a Zurich newspaper.—E.D.

in money is separated from commodity exchange, it acquires a development of its own, special laws determined by its particular nature, and its own phases. Yet they all take place within the given limits and conditions of production and commodity exchange. Where dealing in money is extended in the course of its further evolution to include securities that are not merely government consols but industrials and railroad stocks, and thereby wins direct control over a phase of the production which as a whole controls it, the reaction of the money market upon production becomes all the stronger and more complicated. The investment bankers are the owners of railroads, mines, steel mills, etc. These means of production take on a double aspect: business has to be run now with an eye to the interests of direct production, and now with an eye to the needs of the stock-holders in so far as they are money lenders. The crassest illustration of this is furnished by the activities of the North American railroads which depend completely upon the immediate market operations of a Jay Gould, Vanderbilt and others—operations that are totally foreign to the road in question and its interests as a common carrier. And even here in

England we have witnessed decades of struggle between different railway companies in competitive territories in which an enormous amount of money went up in smoke not in the interest of production and communication but solely because of a rivalry whose main function was to make possible market operations of the wealthy stock-holders.

In these few intimations of my conception of the relation between production and commodity exchange, and of both to the money market, I have already answered in essence your questions concerning *historical materialism* in general. The matter can most easily be grasped from the standpoint of the *division of labor*. Society gives rise to certain public functions which it cannot dispense with. The people who are delegated to perform them constitute a new branch of the division of labor *within society*. They acquire therewith *special interests* in opposition even to those who have designated them; make themselves independent of them, and the *state* is here. And now the same thing takes place as in com-

modity exchange and later in money exchange: while the new independent power must, on the whole, submit to the movement of production, in turn it also *reacts*, by virtue of its immanent, i.e., its once transmitted but gradually developed relative independence, upon the conditions and course of production. There is a *reciprocity* between two *unequal forces*; on the one side, the economic movement; on the other, the new political power which strives for the greatest possible independence and which having once arisen is endowed with its *own movement*. The economic movement, upon the whole, asserts itself but it is affected by the reaction of the relatively independent political movement which it itself had set up. This political movement is on the one hand the state power, on the other, the opposition which comes to life at the same time with it. Just as the money market reflects, on the whole, with the qualifications indicated, the movement of the industrial market, but naturally in an *inverted* fashion, so there is reflected in the struggle between government and opposition, the struggle between already existing and contending classes but again in an inverted form, no longer direct but indirect, not as a *class struggle* but as a struggle for *political principles*. So inverted is this reflection that it required thousands of years to discover what was behind it.

The reaction of the state power upon economic development can take a three-fold form. It can run in the same direction, and

then the tempo of development becomes accelerated; it can buck up against that development in which case today in every large nation the state power is sure to go to smash for good; or it can block economic development along some directions and lay down its path along others. This last case is ultimately reducible to one of either of the foregoing two. It is clear that in the second and third cases the political power can do great damage to the course of economic development and result in a great waste of energy and materials.

We must add to the above the case of conquest and brutal destruction of economic resources in which under certain circumstances it was possible in the past for a local or national economic development to be completely destroyed. Today cases of this kind usually produce opposite effects, at least among the large nations. Often it is the conquered who in the long run wins more economically, politically and morally than the conqueror.

The same is true for law. Just as soon as the necessity arises for the new division of labor which creates *professional jurists*, another new independent domain is opened which, for all its dependence upon production and trade in general, still possesses a special capacity to react upon these fields. In a modern state, law must not only correspond to the general economic situation and be its expression; it must also be its *coherently unified expression*, free from glaring internal inconsistencies. In order to achieve this, the fidelity with which the law reflects economic conditions constantly diminishes. This is all the truer, the more rarely it happens, that the legal code expresses the harsh, unrelieved and naked fact of class rule. For that contradicts the very "*concept of law*". The pure and consistent jural concept of the revolutionary bourgeoisie of 1792-96 already appears falsified in many respects in the Code Napoléon. And in so far as it is incorporated it is subject to daily modifications of all kinds because of the growing power of the proletariat. That doesn't prevent the Code Napoléon from serving as a legal model for new codifications of law in all parts of the world. The course of "legal development" consists, in large part, first in the attempt to erect an harmonious system of law by eliminating the contradictions flowing from the direct translation of economic relations into jural propositions; and then in the fact that the influence and compulsion exerted by the further economic development keeps on upsetting the system and plunging it into new contradictions. (I speak here for the time being only of civil law.)

The reflection of economic relations as principles of law is necessarily also an inverted one. The process takes place without the participants becoming conscious of it. The jurist imagines that he is operating with *a priori* propositions, while the latter are *after all* only reflections of the economic process. And so everything remains standing on its head. This inverted reflex so long as it is not recognized for what it is constitutes what we call *ideological conceptions*. That it is able to exert a *reactive influence* on the economic basis and within certain limits to modify it, seems to me to be self-evident. The foundations of the law of inheritance, corresponding stages in the development of the family being presupposed, are economic. Nonetheless it would be very hard to prove that, e.g., the absolute freedom of testamentary disposition in England, and the strongly restricted right in France, in all particulars have only economic causes. Yet both methods react in a very significant way upon the economic system in that they influence the distribution of wealth.

And now as concerns those ideological realms which tower still higher in the clouds—*religion, philosophy*, etc.—they all possess from pre-historical days an already discovered and traditionally accepted fund of—what we would today call idiocy. All of these various mistaken ideas of nature, of the very creation of man, of spirits, magical forces, etc., have as their basis, in the main, negative economic grounds. The primitive economic development of the pre-historical period is supplemented by false ideas of nature, but in places it is often also conditioned and even caused by them. However, even if economic need has been the chief driving force in the advance of natural knowledge, and has become even more so, it would be altogether pedantic to seek economic causes for all this primitive idiocy. The history of science is the history of the gradual elimination of this idiocy, i.e., its replacement by new, but

always less absurd, idiocy. The people who supply it belong again to special spheres in the division of labor and imagine that they are working up an independent domain. And in so far as they constitute an independent group within the social division of labor, their products, inclusive of their errors, exerts a *counter-acting influence* upon the entire social development, even upon the economic. Nonetheless they still remain under the *dominant influence of economic development*. For example, in philosophy this is easiest to demonstrate for the bourgeois period. Hobbes was the first modern materialist (in the spirit of the eighteenth century) but an absolutist at a time when in the whole of Europe absolute monarchy was enjoying the height of its power and in England had taken up the struggle against the people. Locke was, in religion as in politics, a son of the class-compromise of 1688. The English Deists, and their more consistent followers, the French materialists, were the genuine philosophers of the bourgeoisie—the French, even of the bourgeois revolution. In German philosophy from Kant to Hegel the German philistine makes his way—now positively, now negatively. But as a definite domain within the division of labor, the philosophy of every age has as its pre-suppositions a certain intellectual material which it inherits from its predecessors and which is its own point of departure. That is why philosophy can play first violin in economically backward countries: France in the eighteenth century as opposed to England upon whose philosophy her own was based; and later Germany as opposed to both. But in France as in Germany, philosophy, like the general outburst of literary activity of that time, was a result of an economic upswing. The final supremacy of economic development even in these realms is now established but it takes place within the conditions which are set down by the particular realm: in philosophy, e.g., through the effect of economic influences (which in turn exert influence through disguised political, etc., forms) upon the existing philosophical material which our predecessors have handed down. Of itself *economics* produces no effects here directly; but it determines the *kind of change* and development the already existing intellectual material receives, and even that, for the most part, indirectly, since it is the political, jural and moral reflexes which exercise the greatest direct influence upon philosophy.

I have said what is necessary about religion in the last section on Feuerbach.

If Barth imagines that we deny all and every retroaction of the political, etc., reflexes of the economic movement upon that movement itself, *he is simply contending against windmills*. He ought at least take a glance at Marx's *Eighteenth Brumaire*, which almost restricts itself to the treatment of the *special rôle* that political struggles and events play, naturally within the sphere of their *general* dependence upon economic conditions; or in *Capital*, e.g., the section on the working day, where legislation, which certainly is a political act, operates so decisively; or the section on the history of the bourgeoisie (Chap. 24). Or else, why are we struggling for the political dictatorship of the proletariat, if political power has no economic effects? Force (i.e., the state power) is also an economic power!

But I have no time at present to criticize the book. The third volume must first come out, and besides I believe that, for example, even Bernstein can do the job quite well.

What all these gentlemen lack is dialectics. All they ever see is cause here, effect there. They do not at all see that this is a bare abstraction; that in the real world such metaphysical polar opposites exist only in crises; that the whole great process develops itself in the form of reciprocal action, to be sure of very unequal forces, in which the economic movement is far and away the strongest, most primary and decisive. They do not see that here nothing is absolute and everything relative. For them Hegel has never existed.

Yours, etc.

A LETTER TO J. BLOCH

London, September 21, 1890.

Dear Sir:

YOUR letter of the 3rd inst. was forwarded to me at Folkestone; but as I did not have the book in question there, I could not answer you. Returning home on the 12th I discovered such

a pile of urgent work waiting for me, that only today have I found the time to write you a few lines. This in explanation of the delay which I hope you will kindly pardon.

To Point I*. First of all you will please note on p. 19 of the *Origin* that the process of development of the Punaluan family is presented as having taken place so gradually that even in this century marriages of brother and sister (*of one mother*) have taken place in the royal family of Hawaii. And throughout antiquity we find examples of marriages between brother and sister, e.g., among the Ptolemies. Secondly, we must here distinguish between brother and sister deriving from the side of the mother, or deriving only from the side of the father; adelphos, adelphæ come from delphos, womb, and originally signified, therefore, only brother and sister on the *side of the mother*. The feeling had survived a long time from the time of the mother-right that the children of the same mother who have different fathers, are more closely related than the children of the same father who have different mothers. The Punaluan form of the family excludes only marriages between the first group, but by no means between the second who according to the existing notion are not even related (since mother-right rules). As far as I know, the cases of marriage between brother and sister in ancient Greece are restricted either to those individuals who have different mothers or to those about whom this is not known, and for whom, therefore, the possibility is not excluded; hence, they are absolutely not in contradiction to the Punaluan usage. You have overlooked the fact that between the time of the Punaluan family and the time of Greek monogamy there lies the jump from the matriarchate to the patriarchate, which alters matters considerably.

According to Wachsmuth's *Hellen. Altertümern*, in the heroic age of Greece, "there is no sign of any concern about the too close blood relationship of husband and wife, except for the relation of parent and child" (III, p. 156). "Marriage with one's own sister was not disapproved of in Crete" (*ibid.*, p. 170). The last also according to Strabo, Bk. X, for the moment however, I cannot find the passage because of the absence of chapter divisions.—By *one's own* sister I understand, until there is proof to the contrary, sisters on the father's side.

To Point II†. I qualify your first major proposition as follows: According to the materialistic conception of history, the production and reproduction of real life constitutes *in the last instance* the determining factor of history. Neither Marx nor I ever maintained more. Now when someone comes along and distorts this to mean that the economic factor is the *sole* determining factor, he is converting the former proposition into a meaningless, abstract and absurd phrase. The economic situation is the basis but the various factors of the superstructure—the political forms of the class struggles and its results—constitutions, etc., established by victorious classes after hard-won battles—legal forms, and even the reflexes of all these real struggles in the brain of the participants, political, jural, philosophical theories, religious conceptions and their further development into systematic dogmas—all these exercise an influence upon the course of historical struggles, and in many cases determine for the most part their *form*. There is a reciprocity between all these factors in which, finally, through the endless array of contingencies (i.e., of things and events whose inner connection with one another is so remote, or so incapable of proof, that we may neglect it, regarding it as non-existent) the economic movement asserts itself as necessary. Were this not the case, the application of the history to any given historical period would be easier than the solution of a simple equation of the first degree.

We ourselves make our own history, but, first of all, under very definite presuppositions and conditions. Among these are the

*Bloch had asked how it came about that even after the disappearance of the consanguine family, marriages between brother and sister were not forbidden among the Greeks, as may be concluded from Nepos.—H.D.

†Bloch had asked how the fundamental principle of the mate-

rialistic conception of history was understood by Marx and Engels themselves; whether the production and reproduction of real life constituted the *sole* determining factor or were only the foundation upon which all other relations developed a *further activity of their own*.—H.D.

economic, which are finally decisive. But there are also the political, etc. Yes, even the ghostly traditions, which haunt the minds of men play a rôle albeit not a decisive one. The Prussian state arose and developed also through historical, in the last instance, economic causes. One could hardly, however, assert without pedantry that among the many petty principalities of North Germany, just Brandenburg was determined by economic necessity and not by other factors also (before all, its involvement in virtue of its Prussian possessions, with Poland and therewith international political relations—which were also decisive factors in the creation of the Austrian sovereign power) to become the great power in which was to be embodied the economic, linguistic and, since the Reformation, also the religious differences of North and South. It would be very hard to attempt to explain by economic causes, without making ourselves ridiculous, the existence of every petty German state of the past or present, or the origin of the shifting of consonants in High-German, which reinforced the differences that existed already in virtue of the geographical separating wall formed by the mountains from Sudeten to Taunus.

Secondly, history is so made that the end-result always arises out of the conflict of many individual wills, in which every will is itself the product of a host of special conditions of life. Consequently there exist innumerable intersecting forces, an infinite group of parallelograms of forces which give rise to one resultant product—the historical event. This again may itself be viewed as the product of a force acting as a whole without consciousness or volition. For what every individual wills separately is frustrated by what every one else wills and the general upshot is something which no one willed. And so the course of history has run along like a natural process; it also is subject essentially to the same laws of motion. But from the fact that the wills of individuals—who desire what the constitution of their body as well as external circumstances, in the last instance economic (either personal or social) impel them to desire—do not get what they wish, but fuse into an average or common resultant, from all that one has no right to conclude that they equal zero. On the contrary, every will contributes to the resultant and is in so far included within it.

I should further like to beg of you to study the theory from its original sources and not at second hand. It is really much easier. Marx hardly wrote a thing in which this theory does not play a part. *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Bonaparte* is an especially remarkable example of its application. There are many relevant passages also in *Capital*. In addition, permit me to call your attention to my own writings, *Herrn E. Dühring's Umwälzung der Wissenschaft* and *L. Feuerbach und der Ausgang der klassischen deutschen Philosophie* where I give the most comprehensive exposition of historical materialism which to my knowledge exists anywhere.

Marx and I are partly responsible for the fact that at times our disciples have laid more weight upon the economic factor than belongs to it. We were compelled to emphasize this main principle in opposition to our opponents who denied it, and there wasn't always time, place and occasion to do justice to the other factors in the reciprocal interaction. But just as soon as it was a matter of the presentation of an historical chapter, that is to say, of practical application, things became quite different; there, no error was possible. Unfortunately it is only too frequent that a person believes he has completely understood a new theory and is capable of applying it when he has taken over its fundamental ideas—but it isn't always true. And from this reproach I cannot spare many of the recent "Marxists". They have certainly turned out a rare kind of tommyrot.

To Point I again. Yesterday (I am writing now on the 22nd of September), I found the following decisive passage, in Schoemann's *Griechische Altertümer* (Berlin, 1855, I, p. 52), which completely confirms the view taken above: "It is well known, however, that marriages between half-brothers or sisters of *different mothers* was not regarded as incest in late Greece."

I hope that the appalling parenthetical expressions which, for brevity's sake, have slipped from my pen, won't frighten you off, and I remain,

Yours sincerely,
F. ENGELS

A LETTER TO HANS STARKENBURG

Dear Sir:

HERE are the answers to your questions*:

1. By economic relations, which we regard as the determining basis of the history of society, we understand the way in which human beings in a definite society produce their necessities of life and exchange the products among themselves (in so far as division of labor exists). Consequently the *whole technique* of production and transportation is therein included. According to our conception, this technique determines the character and method of exchange, further, the distribution of the products and therewith, after the dissolution of gentile society, the division into classes, therewith, the relationships of master and slave, therewith, the state, politics, law, etc. Under economic relations are included further, the geographical foundations upon which they develop and actually inherited remains of earlier economic stages of development which have persisted, often through tradition only or *vis inertiae*, and also, naturally, the external milieu surrounding this social form.

If the technique, as you properly say, is for the most part dependent upon the state of science, then so much the more is science dependent upon the *state* and *needs* of technique. If society has a technical need, it serves as a greater spur to the progress of science than do ten universities. The whole of hydrostatics (Torricelli, etc.) was produced by the need of controlling the mountain streams in Italy in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. We only acquired some intelligible knowledge about electricity when its technical applicability was discovered. Unfortunately, in Germany, people have been accustomed to write the history of the sciences as if the sciences had fallen from the sky.

2. We regard the economic conditions as conditioning, in the last instance, historical development. But race is itself an economic factor. But there are two points here which must not be overlooked.

(a) The political, legal, philosophical, religious, literary, artistic, etc., development rest upon the economic. But they all react upon one another and upon the economic base. It is not the case that the economic situation is the *cause, alone active*, and everything else only a passive effect. Rather there is a reciprocal interaction with a fundamental economic necessity which in the last instance always asserts itself. The state, e.g., exerts its influence through tariffs, free trade, good or bad taxation. Even that deadly supineness and impotence of the German philistine which arose out of the miserable economic situation of Germany from 1648 to 1830 and which expressed itself first in pietism, then in sentimentalism and crawling servility before prince and noble, were not without their economic effects. They constituted one of the greatest hindrances to an upward movement and were only cleared out of the way by the revolutionary and Napoleonic wars which made the chronic misery acute. Hence, it is not true, as some people here and there conveniently imagine, that economic conditions have an automatic effect. Men make their own history, but in a given, conditioning milieu, upon the basis of actual relations already extant, among which, the economic relations, no matter how much they are influenced by relations of a political and ideological order, are ultimately decisive, constituting a red thread which runs through all the other relations and enabling us to understand them.

(b) Men make their own history but until now not with collective will according to a collective plan. Not even in a definitely limited given society. Their strivings are at cross purposes with each other, and in all such societies there therefore reigns a *necessity*, which is supplemented by and manifests itself in the form of *contingency*. The necessity which here asserts itself through all those contingencies is ultimately, again, economic. Here we must treat of the so-called great man. That a certain particular man and no other emerges at a definite time in a given country is naturally pure chance. But even if we eliminate him, there is always a need for a substitute, and the substitute is found *tant bien que mal*; in the long run he is sure to be found. That Napoleon—this

*1. To what extent are economic relations *causally* effective (are they sufficient causes, occasions or permanent conditions etc., of social develop-

ment)? 2. What rôles do the factors of *race* and historical *personality* play in Marx-Engels' conception of history?—*n.o.*

particular Corsican—should have been the military dictator made necessary by the exhausting wars of the French Republic—that was a matter of chance. But that in default of a Napoleon, another would have filled his place, that is established by the fact that whenever a man was necessary he has always been found: Cæsar, Augustus, Cromwell, etc. Marx, to be sure, discovered the materialistic conception of history—but the examples of Thierry, Mignet, Guizot, the whole school of English historians up to 1850 show they were working towards it; and the discovery of the same conception by Morgan serves as proof that the time was ripe for it, and that it *had* to be discovered.

So with all other accidents and apparent accidents in history. The further removed the field we happen to be investigating is from the economic, and the closer it comes to the domain of pure, abstract ideology, the more we will find that it reveals accidents in its development, the more does the course of its curve run in zig-zag fashion. But fit a trend to the curve and you will find that the longer the period taken, the more inclusive the field treated, the more closely will this trend run parallel to the trend of economic development.

The greatest obstacle to the correct understanding of the theory in Germany is the irresponsible neglect of the literature of economic history. It is hard not only to get rid of historical conceptions which have been drummed into one's head at school but even more so to gather together the material necessary to do it. Who has even read, e.g., old G. v. Gülich, whose dry accumulation of material nonetheless contains so much stuff which explains innumerable political facts?

In addition I believe that the fine example which Marx himself gives in his *Eighteenth Brumaire* ought to give you considerable information on your questions just because it is a practical illustration. I also believe that in the *Anti-Dühring*, ch. I, 9-11, and II, 2-4, as well as III, 1, or the introduction, and then in the final section of *Feuerbach*, I have already treated most of the points.

I beg of you not to weigh gingerly each separate word of the above by itself but to take the connections into account. I am sorry that I have not the time to work things out and write you with the same exact detail that I would have to do for publication.

Please pay my respects to Mr. . . . and thank him for me for sending along the . . . , which cheered me up greatly.

F. ENGELS

FROM A LETTER TO FRANZ MEHRING

YOU have expressed* the main facts admirably and for every open-minded person convincingly. If I were to take exception to anything, it would be to the fact that you ascribe more credit to me than I deserve, even if I include everything I could have possibly discovered in the course of time by myself; but which Marx with his quicker *coup d'œil* and greater breadth of view, discovered much sooner. When one has had the good fortune to work together for forty years with a man like Marx, one does not during his lifetime usually receive the appreciation one believes he deserves. But just as soon as the greater of the two dies, the lesser is easily overrated. That seems to be the case with me right now. History, however, will take care of all that and by that time one is happily here no longer and cares nothing at all about it.

Only one point is lacking which Marx and I did not stress systematically enough in our writings and in relation to which we are equally to blame. Namely, we both placed and *had to place* the chief weight upon the *derivation* of political, legal and other ideological notions, as well as the actions which they led up to, from fundamental economic facts. In consequence we neglected the formal side, i.e., the way in which these ideas, etc., arose, for the sake of the content. That gave our opponents a welcome occasion for misunderstanding. Paul Barth is a striking example.

Ideology is a process which of course is carried on with the consciousness of the so-called thinker but with a false consciousness. The real driving forces which move him, he remains un-

*The reference is to Mehring's "On Historical Materialism" which appeared as an appendix to the first edition of his *Lesing-Legende* in 1893; in it he settled accounts with the then lecturer on philosophy at Leipzig, Paul Barth, mentioned by Engels elsewhere in these letters.—*ED.*

aware of, otherwise it would not be an ideological process. He therefore imagines false or apparent driving forces. Because it is a thought process, he derives both its content and form from pure thought, either his own or that of his predecessors. He works with purely conceptual material which he unwittingly takes over as the product of thought and therefore does not investigate its relations to a process further removed from and independent of thought. Indeed this seems to him self-evident, for it appears to him that since all activity is *mediated* by thought, it is ultimately *grounded* in thought.

The historical ideologist (and historical here simply takes in political, jurial, philosophical, theological, in short, all domains which belong to society and not merely to nature)—the historical ideologist is confronted in every scientific field by material which has been built up independently out of the thought of earlier generations, and which through the minds of these successive generations has undergone an independent development peculiar to itself. External facts from this or other fields may have contributed to determine this development but these facts, according to the tacit presupposition made, are themselves mere fruits of a thought process. And so we still remain in the realm of pure thought which has succeeded so well in digesting even the toughest facts.

It is this appearance of an independent history of state constitutions, systems of law, of ideologies in every special field, which, above all, has blinded so many people. When Luther and Calvin "transcend" the official Catholic religion; when Hegel "transcends" Fichte and Kant; and Rousseau, indirectly with his *contrat social*, the constitutionalist, Montesquieu—it is a process which remains within theology, philosophy and political science. It merely represents a stage in the history of these intellectual do-

mains and never emerges from the field of pure thought at all. And ever since the illusion of the eternity and ultimacy of the system of capitalist production has been added, even the refutation of the Mercantilists by the physiocrats and A. Smith has been regarded not as the intellectual reflection of altered economic realities, but only as a victory of thought, as a correct insight, won at last, into actual conditions existing always and everywhere. If only Richard the Lion-hearted, and Philip Augustus, had introduced free trade, instead of involving themselves in crusades, five hundred years of misery and stupidity would have been spared us.

This side of the matter, which I can here only indicate, we have all neglected, I think, more than it deserved. It's the old story. In the beginning the form is always neglected for the content. As already said, I myself have made that error and it has always occurred to me only *post festum*. I am far from reproaching you with it. As an old sinner in this respect I have hardly the right, just the contrary. But I do wish to call your attention to this point for the future.

This is bound up with the stupid conception of the ideologists. Because we denied that the different ideological spheres, which play a part in history, have an independent historical development, we were supposed therewith to have denied that they have any *historical efficacy*. At the basis of this is the ordinary undialectical notion of cause and effect as fixed, mutually opposed, polar relations, and a complete disregard of reciprocity. These gentlemen forget, almost intentionally, that an historical factor, once it has been brought into the world by other—ultimately economic facts—thereupon also reacts upon its surroundings and even affects its own causes. Thus Barth, e.g., in connection with priesthood and religion, on p. 475 in your book. . . . Friedrich ENGELS

Roosevelt and the State

THE capitalist state throughout its history represents the embodiment of the rule of the bourgeoisie. So long as capitalism exists, the government is endowed with the powers of the state as the executive committee of the big bourgeoisie. But as the system of capitalist exploitation changes, as it undergoes the inevitable development towards ever greater concentration of capital, towards the coalescence of industry into powerful monopolies under the all-pervasive domination of finance capital, as the capitalist nation follows, in short, those iron laws of economic necessity that rule underneath all the anarchy of capitalist production, new demands are made on the national state in accordance with the new needs that have arisen. The present rapid growth in the duties and powers of the state, its "authoritarian" regulation and control of business and industry, did not begin with Roosevelt. But it is rapidly coming to the point where quantity changes to quality, where it is beginning to be clearly recognized that the system of individual capitalism, having given way to monopoly finance capitalism, is taking the form of state capitalism. The implications of this process are manifold in relation to the class struggle and the workers' movement.

In the United States the transformations that catapulted into power as their final outcome a Mussolini and a Hitler in Europe, commence with Roosevelt under the guise of liberalism. The politics of liberalism are possible during the cataclysm of the general world crisis only because of the political backwardness of the American masses, and *only so long as the working class remains politically weak, without a strong, active vanguard party*. The moment masses of workers rally to such a party, that moment the capitalists can no longer rule behind the screen of liberal democracy and the big bourgeoisie will have to resort to new forms of state power. But it is hardly sufficient to characterize Roosevelt as a liberal without analyzing the philosophy and mode of operation of liberalism itself.

Liberalism accepts the revisionist view of the state as being above the classes, acting as mediator and buffer between the classes. The liberals believe, for this reason, in government by "experts" (state bureaucrats) who can act in the interests, the common interests, of all, as against the special interests of any single class

or "section" of capitalist society. And since the state is to "hold the arena" for the preservation of "fair play" in the class struggle, the liberals are the upholders of bourgeois democracy. We are not concerned at the moment in exposing the hypocrisy and dishonesty of this entire "philosophy", in showing the impossibility of reconciling the irreconcilable in which liberalism pretends to be engaged. Accepting the system of capitalist exploitation as socially necessary, the liberals theorize in terms of "bourgeois socialism" which aims to eliminate the "evils" of the capitalist mode of production (that is, its glaringly rotten features). Fundamentally they aim to preserve the capitalist system in its bourgeois democratic form.

To preserve capitalism today, to organize society in the form essential for the support of the conditions underlying the capitalist mode of production as against the encroachments of the workers as well as of individual capitalists, the state is forced to intervene more and more directly and on a greater and greater scale. It was the middle class, including the farmers, that placed Roosevelt in the saddle. But the middle class has no independent policies for the solution of capitalist contradictions. So long as it remains under the illusions of bourgeois democracy, it follows the lead of the big bourgeoisie; its representatives and spokesmen carry out, in properly disguised form, the behests of finance capital. Thus under the auspices of the liberal Roosevelt, the state becomes as never before to the same extent the "ideal personification of the total national capital". This superstructure of capitalism extends its bureaucratic tentacles throughout the vitals of the body politic. Individual initiative gives way to the functioning of salaried state employees operating as "expert" administrators of industry, regulators of production, dictators over the relations between capital and labor, over hours and conditions of work. This process is far from completion, *and would it be completed under the forms of bourgeois democracy*.

The process continues without the volition or willingness of the participants or of the individual capitalists. Roosevelt was far from realizing all the consequences of the program of the N.R.A. That program was necessitated by an "emergency" but emergencies (crises) are integral parts of social evolution, they are focal points

hastening the otherwise normal development of society, but in the same direction. There goes on at present a concerted attack on the N.R.A. by the forces of reactionary capitalism that would like to cancel it out, to wipe it from the slate now that its apparent usefulness has passed. But that is more easily said than done, for the N.R.A. is the first step in the direction that capitalist development must take, towards ever greater concentration of power in the national state—before its downfall and disappearance historically. As Engels pointed out, the capitalists fear nothing so much as this development which yields up ultimately their sacrosanct social functions to a salaried bureaucracy, thereby plainly revealing their utter uselessness and their reactionary rôle as fetters on the means of production. American capitalism, just as its European counterpart, is forced by the exigencies of the crisis and the need to recover profits, to turn to the state for help despite the fact that the more the state helps, the greater the threat to capitalism, for state concentration of power (state capitalism leading towards possible state ownership) tends to bring the class struggle “to a head”.

The ideology of the New Deal, fundamentally liberal opportunism, is not a clear and fixed set of concepts. But in its operation it finds itself continually and apologetically at variance with reality. Richberg, reporting on the present status of the N.R.A., shows clearly that the building of the “superstate” commenced by the present régime, is not a matter of volition: “The very thing that we in the administration are trying to do is get away from the superstate. We are trying to decentralize problems by balancing forces. We are letting private initiative handle things.” But if private initiative (private property) could have handled things then there would have been no need for an N.R.A. Like it or not, Roosevelt is paving the way towards a new form of state power. In the period of upturn, and the aftermath of the crisis, Roosevelt has cast for himself the rôle of mediator between the classes. To carry out this rôle, Roosevelt relies in turn on wings of the N.R.A. extending to right and to left, on the class collaborationists in the camp of the bosses and those in the camp of the proletariat, on the Johnsons, Harrimans and Swopes on the one hand, and the Perkinses, Greens and Gormans on the other. The rôle of mediator is possible only if the economic situation does not force an intensification of class warfare to the breaking point between the classes, only while the wings of class collaboration remain intact and do not crumple up. So long as Johnson can persuade the bosses that they have nothing to fear from the N.R.A., that they will receive the substance and the workers the shadow; so long as the labor lieutenants of capitalism can save face by misleading the working class in sham battles, Roosevelt can disarm the workers and place on their necks the yoke of arbitration. But this gaining of time for the salvation of capitalism solves nothing and acts in fact under conditions that inexorably drive the workers to fight for existence itself, to set the stage for an ever fiercer struggle on a widening arena. Deeper strata of the working class become involved in the conflict and the strikes of whole industries take on the elemental character of natural forces.

The strikes themselves tend to aggravate the economic situation and the instability of capitalism. They therefore stand more and more in the way of Roosevelt’s plans to “force” recovery; strikes become more and more anathema to the bureaucrats who want to balance forces and regulate business for profits. For the working class the strikes above all else act as political lessons, revealing the true nature of Roosevelt and the N.R.A. as well as that of the supporters of class collaboration in the trade union ranks. Thus the N.R.A. itself becomes a precipitant aiding to crystallize out the two major forces striving for power in capitalist society. This crystallization, this molecular process of cleavage, is an indication that the proletariat is learning to rely for the solution of its problems on its own militant action. Once that lesson is learned, the whole system of mediation is challenged, and this in turn becomes a challenge to the capitalist state. Sooner or later Roosevelt, personifying this state, may be compelled to resort to the use of military force to break the resistance of the strikers to the plan of capitalism to solve its problems by loading all the burdens on the backs of the workers. In relation to the capitalists, the N.R.A. is the exercise of the police powers of the state in the interests of the entire class; in relation to the workers the N.R.A. will then become

the use of the state’s military force to impose the will of the capitalists. Roosevelt and his Secretary of War, Dern, fear the necessity of resorting to martial law and Federal troops because that will mean the end of class collaboration. The class struggle going on underneath the N.R.A., will then have remorselessly superseded it and will take its own irresistible course. Roosevelt’s balancing of forces, his attempt to achieve social equilibrium, is doomed to give way to a more deadly use of the state apparatus of repression.

Liberal politics operates within the framework of bourgeois democracy; and bourgeois democracy is a deceptive screen which hides the real relation of forces in capitalist society. This cover or screen will be torn aside when the workers take the road of revolutionary struggle. The mounting wave of strike struggles is the prelude to more militant action, possibly to the revolutionary storm. In this period, when capitalism is forced to support millions of workers and of the middle class instead of the workers and the oppressed petty bourgeoisie supporting and maintaining the capitalists, the big bourgeoisie is undergoing a slow but steady process of weakening by the defection of the middle class. Wide strata of the petty bourgeoisie feel their normal ties with the big bourgeoisie broken. Large sections could be won over to the support of an independent communist party pursuing a correct revolutionary policy, but no such party now exists. Hence desperate elements of the middle class allied with the *lumpenproletariat* turn for a “solution” of their uprooted situation to Fascism.

Elements and tendencies that advocate extreme measures of force and violence to suppress the trade unions and working class parties, to get rid of bourgeois democracy as well as working class democracy, exist in capitalist society at all times. But normally these elements, these roots of Fascism are held in check by the inter-relationship of class forces. The most reactionary wing of the capitalist class is ready at all times to wage relentless war on the oppressed toilers who dare to fight for better conditions and a greater share of capitalist income. This wing demands the immediate use of the police and military force of the state to put down the rebellious workers. Generally such repressions remain localized and are of short duration. It is only when the struggle begins to take on major proportions, only when it engrosses the entire nation, that the extremists of capitalist reaction gain a wider hearing in their own class. And it is only under conditions of crisis that pauperize and render desperate the middle class that the Fascist tendencies inherent at all times in capitalist society can seek mass support and make a bid for state power. It is in serious sectional conflicts that the Fascist forces begin to recruit and organize before they can close their ranks on a national scale. And it is therefore in these sectional conflicts, already occurring in the United States, that the working class must smash and crush the incipient Fascism by united action.

Let the working class take matters more and more into its own hands—and the whole situation impels it on this path—and Roosevelt, like Brüning in Germany, will be compelled to tolerate the Fascists and even to patronize them, since his main task is to save capitalism. Just as the liberal Wilson, faced with Bolshevism in Europe, was pushed in the World War into the closest alliance with European reaction, so Roosevelt and the liberals, in the national class struggle, will be forced by the threat of proletarian victory, into the camp of reaction.

One cannot predict in advance the stages of the struggles ahead. But it is clear that Roosevelt’s program is building up a stronger and more powerful state structure. This apparatus is designed to meet the needs of capitalist imperialism at home and abroad. The same strengthened military forces being expanded for the purposes of the imperialist war, will also be useful in the suppression of working class resistance at home. The imperialist war is merely the external manifestation of the class struggle. With the trend towards the superstate, it is no accident that military figures, generals, colonels, majors, are found located in strategic positions in industry and politics. For the state will be called upon to exert its police and military powers to a greater and greater degree.

When the state intervenes in the class struggle by the use of its military-police forces to act as “mediator” between the classes, the state appearing, because of the balance of class forces, to be independent of classes, it has taken on the character of Bonapartism. The executive wielding the power of such a state becomes Bona-

partist. This stage has not been reached yet in America. Roosevelt is neither Bonapartist nor Fascist. Bonapartism does not and cannot decide the issues of the class struggle, it cuts no Gordian knots. But it precedes, if developments follow the German rather than the Polish sequence, the decisive clash that brings either proletarian victory or the catastrophe of Fascism. By his contribution in building up the state along the lines needed to salvage capi-

talism in decay, the liberal Roosevelt is paving the way toward Bonapartism. He is giving a Bonapartist tinge to the state. Unless there comes a decisive change in the current of events,—something that we do not visualize at this stage of development—we may look forward to the increasing use of the state's power for repression.

Jack WEBER

Whither the N.A.P.?

UNDER this title, the September number of *Neue Front*, the Paris organ of the Socialist Workers Party of Germany, prints an article of more than casual significance. It marks the beginning of the end of a whole policy. Unsigned, the article is announced as sent in by a member of the Norwegian Labor party; the editorial board signifies its intention to "return to the question of our attitude towards the entire national and international policy of the N.A.P." in a coming issue. With or without comment by the editors, the appearance of the article is already a revealing symptom which can be understood with half a political eye.

After the German débâcle of the two old Internationals, the leaders of the Socialist Workers party, like their co-thinkers of the Dutch Independent Socialist party, came to a fork in the road. To the Left was the path of the Fourth International in alliance with the Communist Internationalists. To the Right was the path of Fenner Brockway and Martin Tranmæl. For a brief period of time, they took some mincing steps to the Left. The Bloc of Four was established at last year's Paris Conference and the first stone laid at the foundation of the new International in the form of a joint declaration. But one foot was even then pointed to the Right, and without any political explanation for disrupting the Bloc of Four, the other foot was soon withdrawn and a resolute march undertaken to the camp of Tranmæl.

The policy of the S.W.P. was explained on the grounds that it was necessary "to stay with the masses" of the N.A.P. and foster their evolution to the Left. The Communist Internationalists warned that the S.W.P. was adopting a course which could only reproduce, on a smaller scale, the sorry experiences of the Stalinists in the Anglo-Russian Committee of 1926. Tranmæl needed the revolutionary reputation of the S.W.P. (as did Purcell the Russians' in his time) to cover himself from attacks by the confused Left wing of his own party, to stunt its growth. Behind the screen of the cordial alliance with the S.W.P., Tranmæl could lay his plans: emasculate the Left wing and pull the whole party back into a reformist swamp. When his position was sufficiently consolidated, he would appear in the open, unscathed because of lack of previous criticism, and fling to the scrap-heap the shield which had served him so well in his hour of need.

These warnings were irritatedly dismissed with a reproachful reference to "Trotskyist sectarianism". The article below, appearing as it did in the press of the S.W.P., only facilitates a summary and a judgment of the latter's policy. Its pathetically belated last words—"A Tragic Evolution. Now the Opposition Must Be Organized"—could, by themselves, be called sufficient self-condemnation not to require

additional comment. It has finally been discovered that Tranmæl has been preparing his step "for some time now", that it was "launched a few months ago". Here, as so often in the past, the "error of Trotskyism" apparently consisted in having pointed out "for some time now" that which should and could have been foreseen.

An error uncorrected leads to new errors. An error ignored leads to its repetition. The grave errors of the Anglo-Russian Committee policy were either ignored by the S.W.P. or dismissed as a "Russian question". They would not imbibe the rich lessons, of international significance. Now Tranmæl is able to speed away to the Right with "the masses" about whom the S.W.P. expressed such deep concern, while the latter is left standing on the spot, taken by surprise, stupefied and mouth agape. From this experience, too, a valuable political lesson can be learned.

We print below an unabridged translation of the *Neue Front* article.—ED.

On August 17-18, the so-called "Northern Workers Conference" took place in Stockholm. It was convened by the Northern Collaboration Committee, composed of the social democratic parties and trade unions in Denmark, Sweden, Finland and Iceland. According to the Swedish social democratic press, however, the convention occurred at the express wish of the Norwegian trade union center. The Norwegians appeared at the conference with the strongest delegation—consisting of representatives from the Norwegian Labor party [*Norske Arbejderparti*: N.A.P.] and the trade unions—headed by Torp, Tranmæl, Nygaardsvold, Madsen and Halvard Olsen.

The result of the Stockholm conference is summarized in a joint resolution, from which we take the following excerpts:

"... It was clear from the reports, in the unanimous opinion of the conference, that the labor parties and the trade union organizations in all the countries concerned, are pursuing a completely parallel line: in so far as the most important internal political questions are concerned, such as the methods for the struggle against unemployment, the measures for assisting agriculture in the crisis, the endeavors to regulate social conditions so as to afford the working masses and their standard of living a greater security—and that the labor organizations are conducting a policy which is uniform in all its principal aspects. It was further made clear that all the parties stand on the same fighting lines for the safeguarding and preservation of democracy, popular sovereignty and popular freedom. . . ." (*Arbejderbladet*, August 28, 1934.)

It is further emphasized in the resolution that the positive agreement which found expression in the political resolution, indicates that there exists a foundation for a

far-reaching collaboration. A joint Northern Committee cannot, however, be formed as yet because the N.A.P. and the Norwegian trade unions do not belong to the same international organizations as the other Scandinavian parties and trade unions. Nevertheless, "conferences for dealing with social, economic and political questions of common interest for the northern countries" are to be held in the future.

Stauning and Per Albin Hansson, the prime ministers and chairmen, respectively of the Danish and Swedish social democracy, very clearly expressed their satisfaction after the Stockholm conference. Stauning in particular gave voice to the joy he felt because the wicked Norwegian children, after fifteen years of disobedient behavior, have nevertheless found their way back to the hearth of their ancestors.

More significant, however, is an interview granted by the chairman of the N.A.P., Torp, printed by the Oslo *Arbejderbladet* under the heading: "Oscar Torp Looks Hopefully for a Development of the Collaboration and Believes in a Rapprochement with the Second International." (Since then, Torp—under pressure of the already discernible resistance of the members, to be sure—has denied having spoken of a "rapprochement with the Second International".)

Tranmæl has very speedily grasped the fact that the line set down at the Stockholm conference is not the line of the members of the party. He is therefore seeking to pass off the significance of the affair as harmless. But the facts are plain enough. By the joint resolution, the heads of the Norwegian party and trade unions voted their complete agreement with the policy of the Danish and Swedish social democrats. That is the real essence of the Stockholm conference and the organizational consequences resulting from it are, in the last analysis, only a matter of form.

It may be thought that what is involved in the inaugurated collaboration is a sort of Scandinavian united front. We revolutionary socialists would be the very ones to greet vigorously such a united front of all the Scandinavian labor organizations, the establishment of a genuine Scandinavian front against Fascism. Unfortunately, this is not the case. The resolution cited above shows plainly that it is a question of an agreement on the political basis of the Danish and Swedish social democrats and not of a united class front.

Were it a question of a united front for definite joint actions, it would also be incomprehensible why the other tendencies in the Scandinavian labor movement—especially the Socialist party of Sweden—remained excluded. The Stockholm conference is much rather an alliance against the Socialist party of Sweden [formerly the Communist party, led by Kilbom] and the other

revolutionary factors in the Scandinavian labor movement. This course was, after all, launched a few months ago, when Tranmæl took an open position against Ström's socialist opposition in Göteborg and a position in favor of the Swedish party leadership. At the congress of the Norwegian Youth League in May, the party leadership also bent all its efforts against a collaboration with the Socialist Youth League.

Light is thrown on the fundamental attitude of the party leadership to the united front, however, in an article by Ole Colbjørnsen (the "theoretician" of the party leadership and the author of the Norwegian Three-Year Plan) in *Arbejderbladet* of August 20. There Colbjørnsen baits the revolutionary labor movement in such a shameless manner, as would be a credit to the extreme Right winger in the Second International. The article bears the following characteristic heading: "A Sharper Front Against the Siamese Twins, Communism and Fascism."

How can this attitude be made to tally with the long-standing previous agitation for the unification of the Second and Third Internationals? The agitation in favor of it was heretofore the standing answer to all the demands for international activity. Indeed, it is with this slogan that the party also came forward in the Working Com-

munity of Independent Left Socialist Parties.

In November, the next congress of the trade unions is to take place. It is the intention not to have the question of affiliation with the International Federation of Trade Unions [Amsterdam International] be decided there, but to propose it first for a vote by the membership.

The N.A.P., at its convention in 1919, broke with the Second International and affiliated with the Comintern. In 1923, the break with the C. I. was consummated by a majority decision. The party then participated in the formation of the so-called Paris Bureau. When it once more united with the social democrats in 1927, it withdrew from the Paris Bureau and the Socialist party withdrew from the Second International.

The guiding line for the international policy of the party, underscored by several conventions, was: "assemble all forces on an international scale on the foundation of the class struggle." Proceeding from this view, it inaugurated the collaboration with the I.L.P., the then German and Dutch Left wings, etc., which led to the founding of the International Working Community in Berlin in 1932.

However, for quite some time now the party leadership has been preparing the rapprochement with the international social

democracy. A trial balloon was launched at the Youth congress in May. The overwhelming majority, however, rejected the collaboration with the Danish and Swedish social democrats.

Now the party leadership is obviously and consistently travelling the road to Canossa. Regardless of how fast is the pace towards the Labor and Socialist International, regardless as to whether new incidents will slow it down on this road—the party leadership, by its conduct at the Stockholm conference, has challenged the revolutionary section of the membership and showed the necessity of rallying the Left wing forces in the party. The Stockholm agreement signifies the solidarization of the Norwegian party leadership with the Danish and Swedish social democracy, the Right wing in the Second International. It signifies at the same time a rejection of further collaboration with the international revolutionary forces who are working for the formation of a new labor movement.

A substantial part of the N.A.P. membership—probably the largest—and primarily the Youth, are rejecting the course of the Stockholm conference revealed so plainly.

Rjukan Arbejderblad of August 20 gives voice to this attitude in a lengthy article under the heading: "A Tragic Evolution. Now the Opposition Must Be Organized."

Russia, Japan and "Red Mongolia"

GENERAL Tanaka begins his celebrated memorandum of 1927, which lays bare the rapacious aspirations of Japan, with the following words: "In order to conquer China, we must first conquer Manchuria and Mongolia." The first part of this program is today an accomplished fact: the annexation of Manchuria, established as a vassal empire. Now it is Mongolia that Nipponese imperialism aims to attack, "Red" or Outer Mongolia. It is thus named to distinguish it from Inner Mongolia which still remains under more or less effective dependence upon China, and is a very extensive region of more than 500,000 square miles, almost entirely desert land (the Gobi) with the exception of its eastern part which is still touched by the lingering breath of the Chinese monsoon. It is mainly at the foot of its mountain ranges, with its grassy plains, that a nomadic Mongol population is situated (some 600,000 inhabitants) and engages in breeding. The nature of the soil, the climate, manifestly determine this occupation and the nomadic life that flows from it. The grassy plains being held in common, the pastures belong to all by the same token. Not all the Mongols, however, own live stock. Moreover, the social distinctions are determined by the quantity of cattle owned. According to recent statistics, 74% are *arats*, that is, shepherds, 24% are lamas, that is, Buddhist monks, and 2% are princes, nobles and officials. In every family, all the male children (with the exception of the eldest who remained a "black" man, that is, a layman as distinguished from the monk who took the red or yellow robe) became lamas. Monachism was thus so far developed that in 1918 the lamas made up 44% of the male population of the country. But not all the lamas lived in a lamasery, some engaged in commerce, others lived on

alms and even to this day there is no want of lamas among the highwaymen or "brigands" so much heard about in China. In Urga, the Mongolian city, resided also a Grand Lama who occupied, in the lamaic hierarchy, the first place after the Grand Lama of Tibet.

The Mongols who did not belong to any of the noble families, were serfs. Not serfs of the soil, but of the *yurts* (tents), from which they tended the herds of their masters.

Out of this motley, and socially backward milieu, emerged the people's republic of Mongolia, or Urga. Back in 1911, under the influence of czarist Russia, Outer Mongolia broke away from China in order to establish itself as a sovereign state headed by the Living Buddha of Urga, called the "Great Saint" (Hu'ktu'ktu). Mongolia was thus a feudal theocratic state, with the Buddha at its head incorporating its temporal sovereign and religious chieftain.

The tri-partite accord of 1915, according to which Mongolia formed an autonomous state under the suzerainty of China and the protectorate of Russia, did not last long. Indeed, after the Russian revolution, the Soviet republic renounced—as it did for Constantinople—all its protectorate rights, and China proclaimed the annexation of Mongolia. Even after the establishment of the people's state of Mongolia, in 1921, China retained its claims upon it and the Russo-Chinese agreement of 1924 acknowledged them by declaring that Outer Mongolia was an integral part of China. Obviously, it was a purely platonic declaration which remained on paper.

After the February revolution in Russia, a union almost exclusively of Russian workers and employes was founded in Urga. This organization, which took a socialist position, was persecuted by the

"autonomous government" of Mongolia at the instigation of the Russian consul general who was the real master of the country. When later on, in February 1921, Urga was occupied by the Whites under Baron Ungern, in the service of Japanese imperialism, the first class movement in Mongolia was completely liquidated. It is at the same period that revolutionary Mongol elements, made up mainly of fugitive intellectuals on Russian territory (petty officials back in Mongolia), held a conference in the frontier town of Kiakhta which gave birth to the Revolutionary People's party of Mongolia. The social composition of the delegates to this conference was as follows: three lamas, two shepherds, two officials. All the social layers of Mongolia were represented. A few days after the conference, a revolutionary government of the people was constituted with its seat at Maimashan, also a frontier town, but situated on Mongolian territory. In July 1921, the Mongolian Red army, led by Sukhe Bator, who gave his name to the city of Urga, and supported by Soviet troops, freed the territory of Mongolia from the White bands and thereby vested the people's government of Mongolia with a genuine existence.

Up to 1924, religious affairs were left in the hands of the Grand Lama of Urga. It was only after his death that an end was put to his "reincarnations". All power was in the hands of a coalition government in which sat members of the revolutionary party and the progressive and anti-Chinese elements of the feudal and clerical strata.

Outer Mongolia was not a Soviet land, but a democratic republic: no Soviets but a parliament, the "Grand Kuruletan" convened for the first time in 1925, with its members elected by universal suffrage, was the basis of the popular power. Only the

feudal nobility was excluded from participation in elections. In this connection, the new fiscal policy aimed at expropriating the wealth of the nobility, made its appearance only towards the end of 1929. At that time, taking as the fiscal unit the *bodo*, which is the equivalent of the price of a single unit of horned cattle or a dozen small animals, there were 46% poor *arats* (with less than 10 *bodos*) or *arats* with no live stock at all, 46% of middle *arats* (with 10 to 100 *bodos*) and 8% with more than 100 *bodos*. The latter constituted the 8% of the population owning 48.2% of the entire national wealth.

The old fiscal law exempted from taxation only those 5% of the *arats* who owned no live stock at all or only one animal. The new law exempts all who have less than 20 *bodos*, that is, 63.5% of the population.

Another thorny problem is the religious question. In Mongolia, even today, the clergy constitutes a prodigious social force, and the monasteries own 15.7% of the national wealth. The live stock belonging to monasteries is tended by their vassals, who are reduced to virtual slavery. A considerable section of the party and the youth organization has not yet divested itself of religious influences and the wealth of the lameries has not yet been expropriated. Instead, it has been put in the same category as the *arat's* in order to avoid complications inside the country.

No communist party was constituted in Mongolia on the pretext that the backward conditions of the country prevented its formation. In reality, its place was taken by the Revolutionary party and by the youth federation which adhere to the Communist and Youth Communist Internationals.

The "Revolutionary People's" party which had only 150 members in 1921, now has 10,000 members and the federation of the revolutionary youth some 8,000 members. As in Russia, they are totalitarian organizations which exclude any possibility of the creation of oppositional parties.

The trade union movement of Mongolia was centralized, in 1922, in a Pan-Mongolian trade union committee, adhering to the Red International of Labor Unions. The movement is still very weak, embracing some 10,000 members at most and above all, is only beginning its recruitment among the shepherds and the agricultural workers.

What are the reasons for the retardation and the obstacles that are found in the development of "Red" Mongolia towards socialism?

In the period of the struggle against the Whites and the Chinese authorities, a large section of the feudal nobility and the big clergy was on the side of the Revolutionary party and even belonged to it.

The national "liberation" movement of 1921 did not curb the economic power of the seignioral layers (feudal and clerical). The nobles, did, it is true, lose some of their political power. In addition, of their own accord, like the nobles of the revolution of 1789, they gave up their patents of nobility, renounced their privileges, and in witness thereof, cut off their little braid which only the nobles had the right to wear. Only, they retained the real wealth of the country: the live stock and the masses of *arats* remained in their service as of yore.

It is clear that after the establishment of the democratic power, after its consolidation, after the suppression of feudal privi-

leges in the political régime of the country, a beginning should have been made in extirpating the feudal relations in the economic life of the country, in realizing an anti-feudal reformation and a re-division of the national wealth (the live stock).

But a large section of this nobility speedily turned hostile to the new power. As far back as 1922, a conspiracy was discovered in which members of the government had participated. Among the fifteen persons who were then shot, was Bodo, the former prime minister, and a couple of other ministers, notably the minister of justice. Shortly afterward, it was the commander of the army who was shot in 1924 by order of the third congress of the party, because of his relations with China.

The differentiation within the leading organs of the party and consequently also in the state apparatus—which is now composed exclusively of party members—gave birth to a Right wing which took over the party. It was supported by the feudal elements, the officialdom, the Grand Lamas, the well-to-do sections of the *arats*, and allied itself with the nascent Mongol bourgeoisie formed by commercial and foreign (primarily Chinese) capital. In particular, the interests and the hopes of this nascent bourgeoisie manifest themselves in the tendency "towards the East", that is, towards the separation of the Mongolian People's party (the word "revolutionary" has been eliminated) from the Comintern, the breaking off of relations between Outer Mongolia and Soviet Russia, the alliance with the Kuo Min Tang and even with Japanese imperialism. The opposition which manifested itself inside the party on the part of the *houdons*, shepherds and poor peasants without land or live stock, was smashed.

It goes without saying that the triumph of Centrism in Russia, the crushing of the Chinese revolution in 1927, have had very important repercussions within the party and have resolved its crisis in a negative manner.

In conclusion, Mongolia is not only dominated militarily by Russia—detachments of the Russian cavalry are located in Mongolia and the Mongolian Red army is constituted on the model of the Russian army, its officers coming from the Moscow Military School—but it is also dominated economically. If the land is almost entirely in the hands of Chinese, Mongolian export trade (wool, pelts, leather) runs to 2½ million *tourikh* (the *tourikh* is worth half a dollar) to Russia and 6 million to China.

Not only in order "to be able to conquer China", but also for the immediate task of occupying the maritime provinces of Asiatic Russia, the Japanese imperialists and militarists deem it indispensable first to occupy Outer Mongolia.

Already in March 1918, the Japanese, using the assassination of a national in Vladivostok as a pretext, disembarked their troops, who occupied the maritime provinces and advanced into the very heart of Siberia, supporting the Whites on the way. But faced with a victorious offensive of the Reds, and above all because it did not feel fit to risk a war, Japan retreated and did not press its military march further. On October 24, 1922, the last Japanese soldier had abandoned Vladivostok. And in 1925, half the island of Sakhalin, occupied in 1920, was also evacuated and restored to Russia.

But this renunciation by Japan is only temporary. Today, in 1934, Japan is once more turning to these lands. The occupation of Mongolia in particular, would signify an appreciable gain for Japan both from the economic and the military standpoints. Besides its unexploited subterranean wealth, Mongolia has 1,340,000 horses, 270,000 camels, 1,500,000 head of horned cattle and 10,600,000 head of small cattle.

From the military standpoint, and that of the consolidation of its strategic positions, the occupation of Mongolia is necessary to Japan. The fact is that after the creation of the Manchurian empire, Japan has shifted its frontiers to the Amur river. Once it has occupied the maritime province and the whole of the island of Sakhalin, the Sea of Japan would become one in reality and not only in name. The ceding of the Eastern Chinese railway by Russia to Manchuria, would leave the maritime province of Asiatic Russia standing on one foot.

But beyond the Amur river there is still the Red army of the Far East, which is spread from Lake Baikal to Vladivostok, with its cavalry forces in Red Mongolia. The Japanese occupation of Mongolia would mean a shaft in the flank of the Red army, the possibility of carrying out a more or less dangerous sortie on Chita where the General Headquarters of Blücher, the commander of the Red army, are located. In this way, the moment the Japanese army would try to force a passage from the Amur towards Harbin and the maritime province, it could threaten by way of Mongolia to cut off the Trans-Siberian railway which still remains the principal commercial and provisions line, pending the building of new "Arctic" railways.

The occupation of Outer Mongolia would then be an eventual base for Japanese penetration of Central Asia and Turkestan, whose natural wealth (especially cotton) was not neglected in the celebrated memorandum of Tanaka.

The offensive of Nipponese imperialism is moving ahead in Asia. Yesterday it was Manchuria, today the threat is aimed at Outer Mongolia. But here the dangers of a conflagration with Soviet Russia may be possible (without being certain), despite the fact that Russia seems to have decided upon making the greatest concessions in order to avert a war.

One may thus affirm that the policy of Centrism in "Red" Mongolia has tended to weaken the exploited strata upon which the Soviet state could have based itself in the situations of tomorrow, and has strengthened the nascent bourgeoisie and the Mongolian feudal elements who will openly support the plans of Japanese imperialism when it passes over to the attack.

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DOCUMENTS OF THE HISTORY AND THEORY OF THE WORKING CLASS MOVEMENT

What We Gave and What We Got

The Balance Sheet of the Anglo-Russian Trade Union Unity Committee

IN HIS report at the general membership meeting of the Moscow railwaymen, comrade Andreyev made the first—and still the only—attempt to put two and two together in the question of the Anglo-Russian Committee. Comrade Andreyev did not succeed in putting two and two together, but instead—despite his own intentions—he did make a serious contribution toward explaining just where lies the difference between opportunist and Bolshevik policies.

1. Comrade Andreyev begins by very plaintively relating how the British busted up the A.-R.C. just at the time when it should have gone on living for many, many years. Imperialism has passed over to the offensive, strangling China, preparing a war against the U.S.S.R.: “That is why the existence and activities of the A.-R.C. and similar organizations are most urgently needed right now.” Again, further on: “It is precisely right now, at the time of this offensive of capital against the working class, that the urgent need for the existence of the A.-R.C. becomes especially clear.” And so on, in the same vein.

Concurrently, comrade Andreyev supplies a lot of direct information about the measures that were taken to preserve the A.-R.C. (in enumerating these measures, however, he religiously avoids the Berlin conference of the A.-R.C. in April of this year). But all these exertions availed nothing: the A.-R.C. broke up just at the moment when the need for it became most acute.

As a matter of fact, this presentation as it stands is of itself a merciless condemnation of the very policy that Andreyev is defending. One may suffer defeat at the hands of an enemy despite the most correct policy, because the enemy is stronger. But when, in the course of many months, one forges a weapon against the enemy and then complains that this weapon went to pieces in one's hands on the eve of the battle—that is tantamount to self-condemnation: either the blacksmith is bad, or he forged out of worthless material.

2. After the General Council had broken the general strike in May 1926, the defenders of the official line said to us: “But didn't we know all along that the General Council is composed of reformist traitors?” Let us allow that we knew. But did we foresee that the General Council would collapse precisely when the need for it would be most urgent? Obviously this was not foreseen. Because not even the worst blacksmith would begin forging a weapon which he knew beforehand would fall apart on the eve of the battle.

Yet the controversy between the Opposition and the majority revolved precisely around this question. The Opposition said: “The members of the General Council are liberal labor politicians of divers shades. As is always the case with liberals, they have been plunged to the Left by the first and still formless revolutionary wave. The general strike swept them to the Right. They

The dispute between the Russian party officialdom and the Leninist Opposition around the question of the Anglo-Russian Committee, established between the British and Russian trade union leaders, is of more than historical importance. It throws a brilliant light on the knotty problem of the united front, especially valuable at the present time when it has been brought forward in new form by the change of front of the Stalinist parties. Practically every important aspect of the problem was embraced in the conflict seven years ago. The document reproduced here draws a balance of the A.-R.C. experience. Suppressed, like so many others, in the Soviet Union, it never appeared there or in any other country. This is its first publication, from the original manuscript in the archives of the author, a copy of which was brought back to this country by the editor. We are indebted to John G. Wright for the translation from the Russian.—ED.

can have no independent policy. Swept to the Right, they become transformed into the active agency of the bourgeoisie. Their rôle will be counter-revolutionary. Since they have betrayed the general strike of their own workers, and the strike of their own coal miners, only a pathetic philistine can pin any hope on the possibility that these people would protect the Chinese revolution or the Soviet Union from the blows of British imperialism. Quite the contrary. In the critical moment they will come to the aid of imperialism against the revolution.” Such was our prognosis in this question. But after the English had broken the A.-R.C. comrade Andreyev comes before Soviet workers with his pathetic lamentations: the A.-R.C. left this world just at the time when its activity was “most urgently needed”.

In politics, comrade Andreyev, this is called bankruptcy!

3. We said above: let us allow that the representatives of the official line did actually know whom they were dealing with—in which case their responsibility would be all the greater. As a matter of fact, they are vilifying themselves after the event. Their appraisal of the General Council was false, they did not understand the internal processes in the English working class, and they sowed illusions because they shared them themselves.

a) There is no need of going into the period prior to the strike: during that period Purcell, Hicks and the others were pictured as our most trustworthy friends, almost our adherents. A veritable cloud of proof can be produced. We shall confine ourselves to a single instance. In his pamphlet, *The Practical Questions of the Trade Union Movement*—published in 1925—comrade Tomsy said:

“Those [trade unionists] who have entered into the agreement with us are maintaining themselves staunchly both against bourgeois lies and slanders, and against the

former [?] leaders of the English movement: Thomas, Clynes, and MacDonald. The leaders of the British trade unions, the section that is furthest to the Left—one can say with assurance, the majority—are working harmoniously with us. This gives us the assurance of and the occasion for hoping that the English, who are averse to striking quick agreements, who take a long time to think, weigh, discuss and hesitate prior to coming to this or another decision, will strictly fulfill the agreement; and that we shall not have to put to ourselves the question: what will the unity of the world trade union movement give the Russian worker?” (p. 48.)

b) In the nature of things, matters did not improve very much after the strike was broken, either. Even after the Opposition came out with utmost decisiveness for a break with the Anglo-Russian Committee as an institution which was false and rotten to the core and which served only to befuddle the workers by its existence, the Moscow Committee lectured the party as follows in the special theses issued against the Opposition:

“The Anglo-Russian Committee can, must, and undoubtedly will play a tremendous rôle in the struggle against all types of intervention directed at the U.S.S.R. It will become the organizing center for the international forces of the proletariat in the struggle against all attempts of the international bourgeoisie to start up a new war.” (*Materials toward the Summary of the July Plenum of the C.E.C. of the C.P. S.U., Agit-Prop Department of the Moscow Committee.*)

As a matter of fact, in the agitation among the rank and file, that is, in the really important agitation embracing the masses, the fundamental, chief, and pertinent argument against the Opposition was the following: We are threatened by the war danger and the General Council will help us to ward it off, but the Opposition, pursuing its “factional aims”, demands that we break with the General Council. And from this sprang the stupid and base accusation of semi-defensism, defeatism, etc.

On the other hand, the Opposition maintained that the General Council would dilly-dally so long as no serious danger threatened its masters, the bourgeoisie, and then later on it would break with us at the moment when it best serves the bourgeoisie, i.e., when most dangerous to us.

Now comrade Andreyev comes forward and tearfully laments that the General Council broke with us, you see, just at a time when the activity of the A.-R.C. was “most urgently needed”. Needed by whom—us or the English bourgeoisie? For the General Council is the agency of the English bourgeoisie in the workers' movement. It is clear that it broke the bloc with us when this break happened to be “most urgently needed” by Chamberlain.

In politics, comrade Andreyev, this is precisely what is meant by bankruptcy.

c) As for the famous argument of com-

rade Rykov to the effect that since Baldwin was demanding the dissolution of the A.-R.C., therefore the Opposition was aiding Baldwin—didn't this argument in its entirety flow from the false appraisal of the General Council, from the misunderstanding of its class nature and its social rôle?

The General Council is the agency of the English bourgeoisie. A good master must watch his agency like a hawk. Agents have their own personal interests. The agent in his operations may go further than is profitable to the master. Baldwin watches sharply after his agency, he exerts pressure on it, frightens it, and presents it with demands for an accounting. Baldwin had to see to it that the General Council makes no extra promises, and that it be able to make a timely break with us. The closer the approach of great problems the more inevitable the rupture. Among us those failed to understand this, who made a false appraisal of the General Council, who painted it up, cherished illusions on this score and hoped that in a major and serious question the A.-R.C. would carry out a policy directed against Chamberlain. The Opposition took its point of departure from the fact that a break was inevitable and that this break must occur over *such questions as would be most clear and comprehensible to the English working masses.*

4. But even during the very last period, even after the Berlin conference, comrade Tomsy continued to paint up the General Council. He rejected indignantly all references to the fact that the A.-R.C. had become a reactionary impediment in the way of the workers' movement. He asserted that the A.-R.C. is playing and can play a progressive rôle, even in case of war. True, in April 1927 he expressed himself much more cautiously: 99% in favor of the General Council's betraying us in case of war, as against 1 chance in a hundred that it might not betray. Can we—demanded Tomsy—reject even one chance against 99 in so great a cause? To reason in such manner is to turn politics into a lottery. But guaranteeing the defense of the U.S.S.R. by lottery methods is a pitiful policy indeed, all the more so since the odds to lose are 100%. And when the loss became patent, comrade Andreyev with many sighs told the assembled railwaymen how fine it would have been had the opportunists turned out to be not as they are in reality but as comrade Andreyev had imagined them to be.

All this, comrade Andreyev is precisely what is called the opportunistic policy of illusions.

5. Today, after the event, there is no lack of volunteers anxious to renounce the wretched crib of comrade Uglanov upon the subject that the Anglo-Russian Committee "will become the organizing center of the international forces of the proletariat in the struggle against all attempts on the part of the international bourgeoisie to start up a new war".

But precisely in this hope lay the crux of our entire official policy. It was precisely in this that the party was fooled. It was precisely by this that the Opposition was "beaten".

In the July 1926 joint plenum, comrade Stalin lectured us complacently:

"The aim of this bloc [the A.-R.C.] consists in organizing a wide working class movement against new imperialist wars in general, and against intervention into our country on the part [especially so!] of the

most powerful of the imperialist powers of Europe—on the part of England in particular" (*Minutes*, 1st issue, p. 71).

Instructing us Oppositionists that it is necessary to "be concerned about the defense of the first workers' republic in the world from intervention", Stalin added for good measure:

"If the trade unions of our country in this cause, meet with the support on the part of English, even if reformist, trade unions, then this should be hailed. . . .

"VOICES: Correct!" (*Idem.*, p. 71.)

We may be quite sure that among those shouting "correct" was also the voice of comrade Andreyev. Yet these were the voices of blind men who were exposing the defense of the U.S.S.R. to the danger of a sudden blow. It is not enough for one to "be concerned about the defense of the U.S.S.R."; one must also be concerned about the Marxist line of the policies; one must know the basic forces of the world struggle, understand class relations and the mechanics of parties; and one must be a Marxist-Leninist and not a philistine.

Stalin keeps chewing his ideas with the smugness of a provincial wiseacre. Each vulgarity is numbered: first, secondly, thirdly and fourthly. First, pinning hope on Chiang Kai-Shek; secondly, pinning hope on Wang Chin Wei; thirdly, on Purcell; fourthly, on Hicks. Today's hope is being pinned on the French radicals, who, if you please, will repel the French imperialists, but this falls under fifthly. . . . It is not enough for one to "be concerned about the defense", one must have some inkling as to what's what.

In the same speech Stalin goes on to sermonize: "If the reactionary English trade unions are willing to enter into a bloc with the revolutionary trade unions of our country against the counter-revolutionary imperialists of their own country—then why not hail this bloc?" (p. 71.)

Stalin cannot understand that were the "reactionary trade unions" capable of waging a struggle against their own imperialists, they would not be reactionary trade unions. Falling into middle-class superficiality, Stalin loses all sight of the line of demarcation between the concepts *reactionary* and *revolutionary*. Out of sheer habit he refers to the English trade unions (i.e., obviously their leadership) as reactionary, but he really cherishes entirely Menshevik illusions about them.

Stalin sums up his philosophy as follows:

"And so, the A.-R.C. is the bloc between our trade unions and the reactionary trade unions of England . . . for the purpose of struggle against imperialist wars in general, and against intervention in particular." (p. 71.)

That's just it: both in general and in particular. In general, and in particular—middle class narrowness (suggested topic for the "Red" professors of the Stalinist school).

With the smugness of a provincial wiseacre Stalin concludes his sermonizing with an attempt at irony,

"Comrades Trotsky and Zinoviev should remember this, and remember it well." (p. 72.)

That's just it! We have remembered everything very firmly indeed. We have remembered that our criticisms of the Stalinist hopes in Purcell as the guardian angel of the workers' state were called by Stalin a deviation from "Leninism to Trotskyism".

"VOROSHILOV: Correct!

"A VOICE: Voroshilov has affixed the seal!

"TROTSKY: Fortunately, all this will appear in the minutes." (p. 71.)

Yes, this is all to be found in the minutes of that very same July plenum which removed Zinoviev from the Political Bureau, which thundered against "Trotskyism" and which assumed the defense of the Uglanov-Mandelstamm crib.

We now propose that the speeches of Stalin together with our speeches on the question of the A.-R.C. be published for the congress. This would provide an excellent examination as to whose views stand the test of events and of time: the views of Stalin or the views of the Opposition?

6. We shall pass over the scholastic constructions of Bukharin. Upon this question he observed seven theoretical-Fridays a week. Here is the sophism that the A.-R.C. is a trade union organization and not a political bloc. Here is also the sophism that the A.-R.C. is not the union of leaders but the union of masses. Here too is the defense of the April capitulation in Berlin by an argumentation of a state and diplomatic character. And many, many other things besides. We evaluated these theories in their own time for what they were worth. It would be a fruitless waste of time to unwind, after the event, Bukharin's talmudic knots. The course of events has swept away Bukharin's scholasticism, as so much rubbish, out of which only one fact emerges clearly: *the ideopolitical bankruptcy*. And just to think that all this put together is being served up as the general line of the Comintern!

"From the moment the general strike was broken [relates Andreyev] there was begun the preparation of a plan how best to destroy the A.-R.C., or to reduce the A.-R.C. completely to a cipher, to such a position as would keep it from being a hindrance to the General Council. . . . This is what the plan of the present leaders of the General Council amounted to. And what happened at the last Congress was the fulfillment of this plan."

All of which is entirely correct. The General Council did have its own plan, and it did execute this plan methodically. "The break is the fulfillment of a carefully thought out plan which the General Council had prepared and which it executed during the last Congress." This is absolutely correct. The General Council knew what it wanted. Or rather, the masters of the General Council knew where it had to be led. But did comrade Andreyev know where he was going? He did not. Because not only did he fail to hinder but he also assisted the General Council to fulfill its perfidious plan to the greatest benefit of the General Council itself, and its actual political principals, i.e., the British bourgeoisie.

8. If the General Council did have a plan and if it was able to execute this plan methodically, then couldn't this plan have been understood, deciphered and foreseen? The Opposition did foresee. As early as June 2, 1926, two weeks after the General Strike was broken we wrote to the Political Bureau:

"But may not the General Council itself take the initiative to break away? This is more than probable. It will issue a statement that the C.E.C. of the Russian trade unions is striving not toward the unity of the world working class but to fan discord

among trade unions, and that it, the General Council, cannot travel along the same road with the C.E.C. of the Russian unions. Then, once more we shall call after them: *Traitors!*—which will express all the realism there is in the policy that consists of supporting rotten fictions." (*Minutes of the Political Bureau*, June 8, 1926, p. 71.)

Hasn't this been confirmed literally, almost letter for letter? We did not break with the General Council after it had betrayed the general strike and had aroused against itself the extreme exasperation of millions of English workers. We did not break with it under conditions already less favorable to us, after it had broken the coal miners' strike, together with the priests of the bourgeoisie. Nor did we break with it under still less favorable conditions—on the question of British intervention in China. And now the English have broken with us over the question of our interfering in their internal affairs, our striving to "give orders" to the English working class, or to turn the English trade unions into instruments of our state policies. They broke on those questions which are most favorable to them, and which are most apt to fool the English workers. Which is precisely what we had been forecasting. Whose policy, then, turns out to be correct, sober and revolutionary? The one that penetrates the machinations of the enemy and foresees the tomorrow? or the policy that blindly assists the enemy to carry its perfidious plan to completion?

9. During the July 1926 plenum a cable was received from the General Council with its gracious consent to meet with the representatives of the C.E.C. of the Russian unions. At that time this cable was played up as a victory not over the General Council but over the Opposition. What an effect there was when comrade Lozovsky brought up this telegram!

"What will you do," he demanded from the Opposition, "if they [the General Council] do consent; more than that, what will you do if they have already consented? We have received such a cable today.

"TROTSKY: They have consented that we shield them temporarily by our prestige, now when they are preparing a new betrayal. (Disorder, laughter.)" (p. 53.)

All this is recorded in the minutes. At that time our forecasts were the subject for taunts, disorder and laughter. Comrade Tomsky did indeed crow over the receipt of the cable.

"TOMSKY: Our little corpse is peering out of one eye. . . . (Loud laughter.)" (p. 58.)

Yes, the laughter was loud. Whom were you laughing at then, comrade Andreyev? You were laughing at yourselves.

And how comrade Lozovsky did taunt the Opposition with the fact that its expectations had not materialized.

"What makes you so certain," he inquired, "that your second supposition will materialize? Wait . . ." (p. 53.)

To which we answered:

"TROTSKY: This means, that for the moment the wiser and the more astute among them have gained the day, and that is why they have not broken as yet. (Disorder.)" (p. 53.)

Again "disorder". To Andreyev, Lozovsky and others it was absolutely clear that the Opposition was motivated by "gross factional considerations", and not by the concern how we should distinguish correctly friends from enemies, and allies from

traitors. Hence the laughter and the disorder in the production of which comrade Andreyev by no means took the last place. "What makes you so certain that your second supposition will materialize?" inquired comrade Lozovsky. "Wait. . ." The majority was with Andreyev and Lozovsky. We had to wait. We waited more than a year. And it so happened that the Anglo-Russian Committee which, according to Rykov, should have tumbled bourgeois strongholds—assisted instead its own bourgeoisie to deal us a blow, and then screened Chamberlain's blow by dealing its own supplementary blow.

When the test of great events comes, comrade Andreyev, one must always pay heavily for the policy of opportunistic illusions.

10. We have already recalled that Andreyev in his report skipped completely over the Berlin conference of the A.-R.C., April 1927, as if no such conference had ever been. Yet this conference marks the most important stage in the history of the A.-R.C. after the general strike was broken. At the Berlin conference the delegation of the C.E.C. of the Russian unions renewed its mandate of faith in the General Council. The delegation behaved as if there had been neither the betrayal of the general strike, nor the betrayal of the coal miners' strike, nor the betrayal of the Chinese revolution, nor the betrayal of the U.S.S.R. All the notes of credit were renewed and comrade Tomsky boasted that this was done in the spirit of perfect "mutual understanding" and "heart-to-heart relations". It is impossible to give traitors greater aid. What did we get for it? The disruption of the A.-R.C. within four months, at the time when our international position became worse. In the name of what did we capitulate in Berlin? Precisely upon this question, comrade Andreyev didn't have a word to say to the membership meeting of the railwaymen.

Yet in Berlin capitulation was no accident. It flowed in its entirety from the policy of "preserving" the A.-R.C. at all costs. From the end of May 1926 the Opposition hammered away that it was impermissible to maintain a bloc with people we call traitors. Or the converse: we cannot call traitors people with whom we maintain a bloc. We must break with the traitors at the moment of their greatest betrayal, in the eyes of loyal and indignant masses, aiding the masses to invest their indignation with the clearest possible political and organizational expression. This is what the Opposition demanded. And it also forewarned that if the bloc was not broken, the criticism of the General Council would necessarily have to be adapted to the bloc, i.e., reduced to nothing. This forecast was likewise completely verified. The manifesto of the C.E.C. of the Red unions on June 8, 1926 contained a rather sharp, although inadequate, criticism of the General Council. Subsequent manifestos and resolutions became paler and more diffuse. And on April 1, 1927, the Russian delegation capitulated completely to the General Council.

At no time was the position of the British trade union leaders so difficult as in May, June and July 1926. The scissure between the leaders and the revolutionary vanguard of the proletariat stood revealed during that period as never before. We had two courses open to us: to deepen this

scissure or to assist the General Council to plug it up. Thanks to the assistance we gave the strikers, our prestige was very high. Our breaking relations with the General Council would have been a powerful supplementary blow to its authority and position. On the contrary, the preservation of the political and organizational bloc assisted the General Council to negotiate with least losses the frontier most dangerous to it. "Thank you," it said to those who helped keep it in the saddle. "I can go on from here myself." Incidentally, there was no gratitude expressed, the C.E.C. of the Russian trade unions merely received a kick.

On one point Andreyev is correct: this break is the fulfillment of a carefully thought-out plan.

11. But did Andreyev have a plan himself? We have already stated that he had none whatever. Perhaps the most severe indictment of Andreyev lies in his silence about the Berlin conference of April 1927. Yet at the April plenum of the C.E.C. comrade Andreyev spoke very decisively in defense of this conference. Here is what he said then: "What did we set as our task? At this Anglo-Russian Committee [in Berlin] we set as our task to force the English to give us a direct and clear [!] answer to what their views were about continuing the existence of the Anglo-Russian Committee. And in my opinion, *we did force them to do this* [?!]. Jointly with us, they said that they were for continuing the existence of the Anglo-Russian Committee, for activating it, and so forth. At this Anglo-Russian Committee we were to force through a definite decision upon the question of unity and to a certain degree the condemnation of the Amsterdam International for its evasion of unity proposals. . . . *We forced such a decision* [?!]. We forced through a resolution on this question. We had to force an answer from them on the question of the war danger, and imperialist mobilization. In my opinion, *in this sphere also, we forced through*, of course not a 100% Bolshevik decision [?!], but a maximum possible decision that could have been forced through under the given conditions." (p. 32.)

Such were the victories gained by comrade Andreyev at the Berlin conference: the English expressed themselves "directly and clearly" in favor of continuing the existence of the A.-R.C.; more than that, in favor of "activizing it". It is no laughing matter indeed! Andreyev forced a clear answer from the English on the question of trade union unity, and finally—hear! hear!—on the question of war. Small wonder, that in that very same speech of his, comrade Andreyev—poor fellow!—spoke of how the Opposition "has hopelessly sunk in the mire of its mistakes".

But what to do now? In April "we forced the General Council to give us clear and direct answers". The Opposition, sunk in the mire of its mistakes, alone failed to understand these successes. But in September, the Trade Union Congress arranged by the General Council broke with the Anglo-Russian Committee. Whence comes this contradiction between April and September? Right now, Andreyev admits that the collapse of the A.-R.C. is the fulfillment of a plan conceived back at the time of the general strike, that is, in May 1926. What then was the import of the "clear and direct" answers of the English in April 1927? Hence follows that

these answers were neither clear nor direct, but swindles. The job of the General Council consisted in hoodwinking, gaining time, causing a delay, preparing the Congress, and using it as a shield.

The Opposition issued timely warning on this score as well. Open the minutes of the April 1926 plenum to page 31. We said at that time:

"A particular danger to world peace is lodged in the policy of the imperialists in China." This is what they have counter-signed. How come their tongues didn't turn inside out, or why didn't we pull them by the tongue and compel them to speak out precisely who the imperialists were? It is no mere coincidence that *all this* was signed on the first day of April, this date is symbolic. . . . (Laughter.)

"KAGANOVICH: You mean to say we fooled them!"

As may be observed, comrade Kaganovich hit the bull's eye. Now it has become quite clear as to who fooled whom. Andreyev has some cause to be plaintive over the fact that after all his victories in April 1927 the English liquidated the A.-R.C. at that very moment when it was most urgently needed.

This, comrade Andreyev, is what one would call having hopelessly sunk in a mire!

12. But this wasn't enough; comrade Andreyev expressed himself even more harshly about the Opposition at the April Plenum:

"Our Opposition comes out with the demand that we break with the English unions. Such a position is a position to isolate us at the most difficult moment, when imperialism is mobilizing its forces against us. You maintain that your position is presumably revolutionary, but you are giving objective aid to the Chamberlains because the Chamberlains want no connections whatever between our trade union movement and the English trade union movement and they want no Anglo-Russian Committees to hinder them." (p. 33.)

The Opposition proposed that we do not seize hold of a rotten twig while passing over a precipice. But the policies defended by comrade Andreyev did bring us into isolation "at the most difficult moment, when imperialism is mobilizing its forces against us". That is the job which was literally fulfilled by the official policies. By supporting the General Council, we weakened the Minority Movement. Within the minority itself, by our conciliationist line, we supported the Right elements against the Left. By this policy we put a brake on the revolutionary education of the proletarian vanguard, including the Communist party among the number. We assisted the General Council to hold its position without losses, to prepare a reactionary Congress of trade union bureaucrats in Edinburgh, and to break with us against the resistance only of a small minority. We assisted the General Council to isolate us in our most difficult moment and thus to realize the plan conceived by the General Council far back during the time of the general strike.

This, comrade Andreyev, implies giving objective aid to the Chamberlains!

13. But now, defending the policies of bankruptcy before a non-party meeting, comrade Andreyev says:

"A few hotheads from the Opposition in our Communist party proposed to us dur-

ing the entire period the following tactic: 'Break with the English traitors, break with the General Council.'"

This utterly cheap, philistine phrase about "hotheads" is taken from the dictionary of middle-class reformism and opportunism, which are incapable of a long-range policy, that is to say, the policy of Marxian prescience and Bolshevik resolution. In April 1927 Andreyev reckoned that he had forced serious commitments from the English. To this we replied:

"Political swindlers in the staff of the Amsterdam agency of capitalism commonly sow pacifist bargains of this type in order to lull the workers and thus keep their own hands free for betrayal at the critical moment." (p. 38.)

Who proved to be correct? Policies are tested by facts. We saw above what Andreyev expected in April of this year, and what he received in September. Wretched niggardliness, shameful nearsightedness! That is the name for your policy, comrade Andreyev!

14. Andreyev has one remaining solace: "The responsibility [!] for the breaking up of this organization [the A.-R.C.] falls entirely and squarely [!] upon the leaders of the English trade union movement." This statement proves that Andreyev has learned nothing. "The responsibility" for the breaking of the A.-R.C.! One might think that this was the most frightful of crimes against the working class. The General Council broke the general strike, assisted the coal barons to enslave the miners, screened the destruction of Nanking, supported the policies of Chamberlain against the workers' state and will support Chamberlain in case of war. And Andreyev seeks to scare these people by "responsibility" for breaking the A.-R.C.

What did the English workers see of the A.-R.C., particularly from the time of the general strike: banquets, hollow resolutions, hypocritical and diplomatic speeches.

And on the other hand, since when have we become afraid of assuming the responsibility for breaking with traitors and betrayers? What sort of a pathetic, wishy-washy, rotten liberal way is this of putting the question, anyway! To prolong the life of the A.-R.C. for four months we paid by the most disgraceful capitulation at Berlin. But in return, don't you see, we have rid ourselves of the most horrendous "responsibility—the responsibility of having broken with the betrayers of the working class. But the entire history of Bolshevism is impregnated with the determination to assume responsibility of this sort!

Comrade Andreyev, you are also one of those who babble about Trotskyism but who have yet to grasp the main thing in Bolshevism.

15. The perplexed reporter says: "Now every proletarian must give himself a clear accounting, weigh the documents, and compare our policy with theirs." (Andreyev, *Report at the Meeting of Railwaymen.*)

This is of course a praiseworthy manner of putting the question. One shouldn't accept anyone's say so. On this score Lenin had the following to say: "He who accepts somebody's word is a hopeless idiot." This Leninist aphorism applies to all countries, the Soviet Union among them. It is essential that our workers gain a clear conception of the policies of comrade Andreyev, i.e., the entire official policy in the question of the Anglo-Russian Committee. To this end, all the documents must be pub-

lished and made available to every worker.

We trust that comrade Andreyev will support this proposal of ours. Otherwise he'll be in the position of one who maintains that what is good for the English is death for Russians. But this is the viewpoint of chauvinists and not internationalist revolutionists.

16. But what to do now, after the rotten stage decoration has collapsed completely? Comrade Andreyev replies: "The leaders refuse to make agreements with us—we will carry on this policy of the united front over the heads of the leaders and against their wishes, we shall carry it on from below, by means of our ties with the masses, their rank and file organizations, and so forth."

Fine. But didn't Manuilsky say more than a year ago, at the July plenum: "Comrade Zinoviev appears here to console us that after breaking with the Anglo-Russian Committee we shall have to build new bridges to the workers movement. But I want to ask—*have you seen these bridges?* Did comrade Zinoviev outline new ways for realizing the idea of trade union unity? What is worst in the entire Opposition of comrades Zinoviev and Trotsky is *this state of helplessness [!!!]*." (p. 24.)

Thus a year ago the proclamation read that the liquidation of the Anglo-Russian Committee must create a state of helplessness: there being no other bridges in sight. He was considered a true revolutionary optimist who believed in the Purcellian bridge. And now this bridge has collapsed. Cannot one draw the conclusion that precisely Manuilsky's position is the position of helplessness and occlusion? It may be objected that no one would take Manuilsky seriously. Agreed. But didn't all the other defenders of the official line declare that the A.-R.C. is the "incarnation" of the brotherhood between the Russian and English proletariat, the bridge to the masses, the instrument of the defense of the defense of the U.S.S.R., and so forth and so on . . . ?!

To the Opposition—such was the objection of the representatives of the official line—the Anglo-Russian Committee is the bloc between leaders, but for us it is the bloc of toiling masses, the incarnation of their union. Now, permit us to ask: Is the breaking of the A.-R.C. the breaking of the union of the toiling masses? Comrade Andreyev seems to say—no. But this very same answer goes to prove that the A.-R.C. did not represent the union of toiling masses, for it is impossible to make a union with strikers through the strikebreakers.

17. It is incontestable that we must find ways other than the General Council. Moreover, after this *reactionary partition* has been eliminated, only then do we obtain the possibility of seeking genuine connections with the genuine masses. The first condition for success on this road is the merciless condemnation of the official line toward the Anglo-Russian Committee for the entire recent period, i.e., from the beginning of the general strike.

18. The tremendous movements of the English proletariat have naturally not passed without leaving a trace. The Communist party has become stronger—both in numbers and in influence—as a result of its participation in the mass struggles. The processes of differentiation within the many-millioned masses continue to take place. As is always the case after major defeats, certain and rather wide circles of the working class suffer a temporary drop

in activity. The reactionary bureaucracy intrenches itself, surmounting internal shadings. At the Left pole a selection of revolutionary elements and the strengthening of the Communist party takes place at a rate more rapid than prior to the strike. All these phenomena flow with iron inevitability from the gigantic revolutionary wave which broke against the resistance not only of the bourgeoisie but also of its own official leadership. One can and must continue building on this foundation. However, the thoroughly false policy restricted to the extreme the sweep of the offensive and weakened its revolutionary consequences. With a correct policy the Communist party could have garnered immeasurably more abundant revolutionary fruits. By the continuation of the incorrect policies it risks losing what it has gained.

19. Comrade Andreyev points to the workers' delegations as one of the ways toward establishing connections with English masses. Naturally, workers delegations well picked, and well instructed, can also bring benefit to the cause of workers' unity. But it would be a rock-bottom mistake to push this method to the foreground. The import of workers' delegations is purely auxiliary. Our fundamental connection with the English working class is through the Communist party. It is possible to find the road to the toiling masses organized into trade unions not through combinations, nor through false deals at the top but through the correct revolutionary policy of the British Communist party, the Comintern, Profintern and the Russian unions. The masses can be won over only by a sustained revolutionary line. Once again this stands revealed in all its certainty, after the collapse of the A.-R.C. As a matter of fact, the point of departure for the erroneous line in the question of the A.-R.C. was the straining to supplant the growth of the influence of the Communist party by skilled diplomacy in relation to the leaders of the trade unions. If any one tried to leap over actual and necessary and inevitable stages, it was Stalin and Bukharin. It seemed to them that they would be able through cunning manoeuvres and combinations to promote the British working class to the highest class without the Communist party, or rather with some coöperation from it. This was also the initial error of comrade Tomsky. Again, however, there is nothing original in this mistake. That is how opportunism always begins. The development of the class appears to it to be much too slow and it seeks to reap what it has not sown, or what has not ripened as yet. Such, for example, was the source of the opportunistic mistakes of Ferdinand Lassalle. But after the methods of diplomacy and combination have described a complete circle, opportunism then returns, like the fishwife in the fable, to its broken trough. Had we from the very beginning correctly understood that the A.-R.C. is a temporary bloc with reformists which can be maintained only up to their first shift to the Right; had we generally understood that a united front with the "leaders" can have only an ephemeral, episodic and subordinate significance; had we, in correspondence with all this, broken with the Anglo-Russian Committee on that very day when it refused to accept the assistance of the Russian workers to the English strikers—this entire tactical experiment would have been justified. We would have given impetus to the movement of the Left minority and the British

Communist party would have received a lesson in the correct application of the tactic of the united front.

Instead of this we shifted the tactical axis over to the side of the bloc with the reformist tops. We attempted to transform a temporary and an entirely legitimate agreement into a permanent institution. This institution was proclaimed by us to be the core of the struggle for the unity of the world proletariat, the center of the revolutionary struggle against war, and so forth and so on. Thus we created political fictions, and we preached to the workers to have faith in these fictions, i.e., we were performing work which is profoundly harmful and inimical to the revolution. To the extent that the treacherous character of our allies became revealed—to which we tried to shut our eyes as long as possible—we proclaimed that the crux of the matter lay not in them, not in the General Council: that the A.-R.C. is not a bloc between leaders but a union of masses, that the A.-R.C. is only the "incarnation", only a "symbol" and so forth and so on. This was already the direct policy of lies, falsehoods and rotten masquerades. This web of falseness was crumpled by great events. Instead of lipping, "the responsibility for this does not fall on us", we must say, "to our shame—we deserve no credit for it".

Andreyev says that the whole truth must be told to every English worker. Of course, everything possible must be done. But this is not at all easy. When Andreyev says: "Now no one will believe the members of the General Council any longer," that is simply a cheap phrase. As the Edinburgh Congress shows, our policy strengthened the General Council. The Berlin conference alone—disregarding all the rest—did not pass scot free for us. We shall have not only to scrub but to scrape away the ideological confusion we have spread. This primarily refers to the British Communist party, and in the second place to the Left wing Minority Movement.

As far back as the time of the general strike, as well as the coal miners' strike the leadership of the British Communist party was far from always able to display initiative and resolution. One must not forget that the C.E.C. of the British Communist party long refused to print the July 8 manifesto of the Russian unions as too sharp toward the General Council. For him who is able to judge symptoms this episode must appear as extremely alarming. A young Communist party whose entire strength lies in criticism and irreconcilability, reveals at the decisive moment a surplus of qualities of the opposite order. At bottom of it is the false understanding and the false application of the policy of the united front. Day in and day out the English Communist party was taught that the union with Purcell and Hicks would aid the cause of the defense of the U.S.S.R. and that the Russian Opposition which does not believe this was guilty of defeatism. Everything was stood on its head. This could not pass without leaving its traces upon the consciousness of the British Communist party. . . . This could not and it did not pass scot free. The Right wing tendencies have become extremely strengthened among the leading circles of the British Communist party: enough to recall the dissatisfaction of a number of the members of the English Central Committee with the C. I. theses on war as being far too "Left"; enough to recall Pollitt's speech in Edinburgh, the

speeches and articles of Murphy, and so on. All these symptoms indicate one and the same thing: for a young party, still lacking real Bolshevik tempering, the policies of the Anglo-Russian Committee inevitably implied the opportunistic dislocation of its entire line. This applies even to a larger measure to the Left wing Minority Movement. The evil caused here is not so easily remedied. It is pregnant with party crises in the future. Of course these words will supply pathetic functionaries with the pretext to speak of our hostility toward the British Communist party, and so forth. We have witnessed this in the past more than once, particularly in the case of China. Up to the last moment the Chinese Communist party was proclaimed as the exemplar of Bolshevik policies, and after the collapse—as the progeny of Menshevism. We have nothing in common with such repulsive political oiliness. It has already brought the greatest harm both to our party and to the Comintern. But this will not cause us to pause on the road of fulfilling our revolutionary duty.

Andreyev's report aims to smear over one of the greatest tactical lessons of the recent period. In this lies the most serious harmfulness of the report and of similar speeches and documents. It is possible to move forward only on the basis of an all-sided examination of the experience with the Anglo-Russian Committee. To this end all the basic documents that shed light on this question must be made available to all communists. In order to move forward it is necessary to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth, both to the Russian and English workers.

Moscow, September 23, 1927.

Leon TROTSKY

Announcement

AS OUR readers will observe, the present issue of THE NEW INTERNATIONAL is a combined September-October number. We were reluctantly impelled to take this step because, despite our earlier hopes, it has proved technically impossible to make up for the time lost for various reasons in getting out the first two issues of the review. We were confronted with the alternative of appearing three or four weeks late with every issue—at least for the coming months—or of frankly acknowledging to ourselves the uncomfortable reality and "doubling up". We chose the latter. This now makes it possible for us to realize our determination to come out regularly henceforward, and *on time each month*. The next number will therefore be dated November, and regularly thereafter. At the same time, our readers should bear in mind that we urgently need their generous assistance to assure our existence.

The combining of the September and October numbers of our review into one, compelled us to omit a number of articles from the current issue. They will, however, appear in forthcoming numbers. The November number, which will be devoted mainly to the anniversary of the Russian revolution, will also contain the first article on "Passports to Utopia", an examination of new theories of money and credit, by John Marshall. In addition, we hope to print an article by Max Eastman, presenting his standpoint on Marxism and dialectics together with a reply.

Bolshevism

A HISTORY OF BOLSHEVISM. From Marx to the First Five Years' Plan. By ARTHUR ROSENBERG. Translated from the German by IAN F. D. MORROW. viii+240 pp. London and New York. Oxford University Press. \$3.75.

It is with great astonishment that one reflects on the fact that Bolshevism as an organized movement, thirty years old in Russia and fifteen internationally, has up to now not had its real history written. Not since the early days of Christianity, has a movement rallied more millions of people in more countries beneath its banner; yet nothing has appeared in French, German or English that even pretends to give an account of its ideas and its evolution. A little brochure by one Komor does exist, it is true, but it is nothing more than ludicrous official apologetics; not even the slightly more substantial pamphlet by Kabakchiev makes any serious claims for itself; the few chapters at the end of Lenz' book on the Second International are final proof that by the very nature of his calling it is politically impossible for a Stalinist to do the job.

The single merit of Arthur Rosenberg is that his is the first attempt to write a critical history of Bolshevism that deserves even fleeting attention. In the light of what is said above, this is a dubious distinction. But it is all that can be said in favor of the work now offered to the English-reading public.*

Lenin and Bolshevism stem from Marx. Rosenberg's acknowledgement of this derivation is accomplished, however, by an exposition of Marxism which is positively stupefying. Marx, Engels and Lenin were not proletarian but bourgeois revolutionists, the most radical, logical and consistent, the most unique bourgeois revolutionists, but bourgeois nonetheless. The first stage of the evolution of socialist thought and action, "the Marx-Engels and Bolshevik type of revolution" prevalent in the Germany of the former's days and the Russia of the latter's, "was the organization of the workers for the purpose of completing the bourgeois democratic revolution. At this stage in the development of Marxism the working class acted under the direction of a small group of professional revolutionaries sprung from the radical bourgeois intelligentsia". The bourgeoisie, however,

*Offered, by the way, in a most annoying translation. Mr. Morrow is obviously unacquainted with the literature of the proletarian movement—first qualification for the translator of such a book. Arnold Ruge persistently becomes Rugge; critical philosophy becomes philosophical criticism; Marxism, Communism; leading spirits, intellectuals; socialism as an economy based purely on needs becomes an economy based on barter in the barest necessities of life; the national question, nationalism; bourgeois becomes middle class, so that for page after page you get middle class revolution, middle class dictatorship, middle class parliamentarism, middle class parties! Elsewhere, the translation is so . . . liberal that quotations in this review are revised after the original.

could not accomplish its own revolution; that was the political mission of the proletariat. Since the Germany of 1848 had put a "naïve and inexperienced working class" and Russia a "stupid and uneducated peasantry", the revolution could be carried out only by an autocratically disciplined party in which the intellectual leaders exercised supreme and unquestioned power. Until the masses themselves became conscious of their mission, a dictatorship of the leaders had to obtain in the party which, should it prove recalcitrant, would have to be destroyed and a more docile one substituted for it.

Thence the distinction between the party of Marx and Lenin, and the reformist parties of the Second International (the "second stage") where "the working class had so far developed as to have a voice in their own organizations and to seek to improve their condition as a class within the bourgeois capitalist society" (this is not Rosenberg's only reference to *bourgeois* capitalism!). Thence also, the root cause of the abolition of democracy in the Soviet Union, the establishment of a party dictatorship "instead of" a proletarian dictatorship, and a despotic dictatorship of a leading caste in the party itself.

Finally, in the third stage, "the working class consciously determines its own fate. It is now no longer contented with the improvement of its conditions within bourgeois society but seeks to attain to power through revolution. This revolution, however, is no longer a radical-democratic revolution as in the first stage; it is now a socialist revolution which transforms the private property of the bourgeoisie into social property. In such a revolution the workers would not merely be the executive organs of a party leadership but would act on their own independent initiative". This stage, according to the ingenious author, is represented by the groups led in Russia by Trotsky, in Poland and Germany by Rosa Luxemburg, in Holland by Gorter. . . . All this constitutes the theory which only confirms Rosenberg's departure from revolutionary Marxism.

The obscure Polish revolutionist, Vatslav Makhaiski (Volski) developed the idea over thirty years ago that Marxism was not the theory of the socialist proletariat, but of the declassed petty bourgeois intelligentsia plus the ex-worker who had acquired an education and risen above his class. These appropriated a considerable portion of social value, concealed by Marx in *Capital*. Their position rendered desperate by the pressure of capitalist concentration, they sought to establish their own rule with the aid of the real proletariat whom they repaid for this service by a consolatory socialist mythology. Until every worker, said Makhaiski, became fully educated, that is, until increasing assaults upon the state by elemental strike action broke down the educational monopoly in the hands of its rulers (finance capitalists or "declassed intellectuals"), there would be no emancipation, and every government could be nothing but a dictatorship *over* the proletariat. At once fascinating and fantastic in its middle class utopianism, its kinship with Rosenberg's views is patent.

The accusation of middle class democracy against Marx and later against Lenin is not a new one, nor has it ever had any

basis other than ignorance or malice. The unevenness of social development, known to every important social thinker in history, even if specifically formulated as a law only in Lenin's time, is of course an essential component of the Marxian world conception. The classless socialist society cannot, therefore, be established merely by the wish of the proletariat or its vanguard, regardless of time or place; it is the logical outcome of the interplay of inexorable social forces evolving at a different rate of speed in every country and age. Fundamentally this determines the conception of the permanent revolution which comes to a close with the perfection of a harmonious world socialist economy; a new epoch begins for human development with social laws of its own. The "revolution in permanence" was the battle-cry of the Communists in Marx's time, as it is today. The German nation, the terrain on which capitalist productive forces could be liberated from the irksome bonds of reactionary feudalism, did not exist. Next in order of social progress, it could be brought into existence by the Bismarckian method, from above, by a combination between the landed nobility (the Junkers) and a timid bourgeoisie, or by the revolutionary method, from below, by an upsurge of the masses which would establish them as a powerful independent factor prepared to carry the bourgeois revolution beyond its "natural" boundaries to the dictatorship of the proletariat and the inauguration of socialism.

Rosenberg points out insinuatingly that the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* of Marx and Engels proclaimed itself an "organ of democracy". But the term did not then have the connotation of present-day middle class liberalism, as a slight acquaintance with Marxism would reveal. The Communists of that time generally called themselves "red democrats". Among the German signatories to the *Demokratische Gesellschaft für Vereinigung aller Länder*, when it was founded in November 1847, were not only vice-president Karl Marx, Hess and Weerth, but Stephan Born, to whom Rosenberg points as a true representative of the "independent" and "strictly proletarian" movement. In the very first issue of the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung*, Marx so caustically settled accounts with the bourgeois democrats of the Frankfurt National Assembly—which did nothing but *talk* about "the establishment of German unity"—that the paper lost half of its respectable shareholders. It lost the other half when Marx impassionedly eulogized the proletarian heroes of the Paris insurrection of June 1848 in which all the bourgeois classes and parties united to crush the rebels.

"From the very beginning," wrote Marx in the last issue of the paper before its suppression, "we have considered it superfluous to conceal our views. In a polemic with the local Prosecutor we exclaimed: 'The real opposition of the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* first begins with the tri-color republic.' . . . We summed up the old year 1848 with the words: 'The history of the Prussian bourgeoisie, as well as of the German bourgeoisie as a whole, from March to December, proves that a purely bourgeois revolution and the founding of bourgeois sovereignty under the form of the constitutional monarchy, is impossible in Germany, that only the feudal-absolutist counter-revolution is possible, or else the social-republican revolution.'"

At the very start of his revolutionary activity, Lenin, whom Rosenberg calls "a true bourgeois revolutionist of the 1848

type", expressed the views which were incorporated into the Minsk party program, and which, consequently, were the common views of the later Bolsheviks, Mensheviks and Trotskyists: "The social democrats [he wrote in 1897], as is known, set themselves the task, in their practical activity, of directing the class struggle of the proletariat and of organizing this struggle in its two manifestations, in the socialist (struggle against the capitalist class with the goal of destroying class society and organizing the socialist society), and the democratic (struggle against absolutism with the goal of conquering political freedom in Russia and of democratizing the political and social order of Russia. We say 'as is known', for since its first appearance as a separate social-revolutionary tendency, the Russian social democrats have most emphatically pointed to this task, they have constantly underscored the dual manifestation and the dual content of the proletarian class struggle and emphasized the inseparable connection between their socialist and their democratic tasks."

It is only on the (not unimportant!) question of how to effect these tasks that the Russian socialists split. Rosenberg divides the groups as follows: Lenin was resolved only upon a radical completion of the bourgeois revolution; the Mensheviks were not interested in the democratic revolution, but in pursuing a proletarian reformist policy; Trotsky was interested only in the "self-determination of the workers" by a purely socialist revolution and, like Rosa Luxemburg, was grandly unconcerned with the national or agrarian questions. Were it not for the seriousness of the subject matter, Rosenberg's serpentine convolutions in arriving at this analysis would be positively entrancing.

In actuality, the divisions stood as follows: the Mensheviks aimed at a bourgeois revolution in collaboration with (i.e., by subordinating themselves to) the bourgeoisie, as was proved to the hilt by their conduct after the February revolution. The Bolsheviks aimed at a "democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry" which would solve the problems of the agrarian revolution, give freedom to oppressed nationalities, and with the aid of the European socialist revolution which it would herald, "grow over" into a socialist revolution. Trotsky who, unlike Rosa Luxemburg, shared Lenin's view of the importance of the peasantry and the subject nationalities for the coming revolution whose democratic character he never disputed, argued that while the democratic revolution stood next on the order of the day in Russia, its problems could only be solved fundamentally by the seizure of power by the proletariat (no other class being able to play a leading or independent or equivalent rôle), which, counting on the indispensable state aid of the European proletariat, would have to proceed to socialist measures because of an inability to confine itself ascetically to the formal bounds of the bourgeois revolution.

Wherever living realities do not harmonize with the tortured constructions of Rosenberg, he either bends or cuts them down to fit, or cavalierly dismisses them. Not accidentally, Trotsky found himself side by side with Lenin throughout the early years of the Bolshevik revolution. To Rosenberg, this means that "the task of the historian in judging Trotsky will be rendered more difficult by the fact", that's all. "Some

years later occurred the inevitable break between Trotsky and the party leaders"—he remembers. (Yes, with Stalin, not with Lenin.) But then, some years later occurred also the break between Lenin and the party leaders. This fact is sedulously ignored by Rosenberg; it is an inconvenient flaw in his argument that Stalin is the legitimate heir and continuator of Leninism!

Again: Trotsky argued that the Russian revolution could triumph only on the world arena. "Nevertheless, there was no theoretical reason why such a Russian democratic dictatorship of the workers and peasants should not be able to maintain itself in a bourgeois world in the event of the defeat of the world revolution. Thus Leninism was ready with its line of retreat in face of a defeat of the world revolution, whereas it was absent in Trotskyism." As if the stew was not messed up enough, Rosenberg must needs add some Stalinist juice to it. In 1915, Lenin argued that *not even the democratic revolution* in Russia could hold out without the European socialist revolution; what he said after the 1917 revolution about Russia's possibilities of isolated development is too commonly known to the veriest peruser of his writings.

Rosenberg, who finds that the social patriotic defense of the fatherland in 1914 "was defensible from a Marxian standpoint inasmuch as neither Marx nor Engels had denied the idea of nationality" (!), just as easily concludes that Stalin's defense of "socialism in one country" is defensible from the Leninist standpoint.

Is it necessary to add that Rosenberg denies the proletarian character of the Soviet Union? He concludes that state capitalism exists in Russia today, that there is no dictatorship of the proletariat, but a dictatorship of the party over the proletariat. The formula is a familiar one. Although it sours with age, every backslider from revolutionary Marxism offers it as good wine. State capitalism has as its foundations *bourgeois property relations*. Rosenberg completely ignores this fundamental Marxian criterion for the sake of some glib journalistic superficialities. Our ultra-revolutionary turncoat, for whom Marx and Lenin were backwoods democrats, proves to be a venerated Kautskyan. If only the Left Social Revolutionists had not been outlawed by the Bolsheviks! "The competition between the two parties would have kept democracy alive within the Soviets." Rosenberg's animadversions on "party dictatorship versus" proletarian dictatorship, should prove disturbingly enlightening to those who have recently raised the subject for discussion. Not for nothing did the Berlin socialist *Vorwärts* write on October 10, 1932: "Arthur Rosenberg has provided the European labor movement with the scientific premises on the basis of which the discussions with Soviet Russia can, in the future, be undertaken in an objective manner."

With the majority of the Independent Social Democrats, Rosenberg joined the German Communist party in 1920. He was always at the extreme Left wing, and with the collapse of the Brandler leadership in 1923, Zinoviev and Stalin gave his group the accolade which put it into power for a brief year. At the thirteenth convention of the Russian party, "der radikale Arthur", as he was known, distinguished himself in the valiant struggle against "Trotskyism", in the capacity of German delegate. There-

The Press

UNDER the title "Poland, the U.S.S.R. and the Reciprocity Pact", the Moscow correspondent of *Le Temps*, spokesman of the French reaction, writes in the issue of August 5, 1934:

"With Stalin, two fundamental principles have triumphed in the Soviet Union: at home, the principle of the construction of socialism in a single country; abroad, the principle of the peaceful coexistence of the two capitalist and communist worlds. At the present time, the policy of the Kremlin in no way seeks to bring the revolution to the four corners of Europe. It is perfectly well known here that a policy of revolutionary expansion would engender against the Soviet Union a unification of all the other countries and that the relationship of forces would be disastrous for Moscow.

"The Soviet Union, today and for a long time to come, is, as far as one can foresee in politics, a factor of stabilization. It aims to preserve the territorial *status quo*.

"On the other hand, in order to calm Poland's very legitimate apprehensions, one may have in mind a military support other than the sending of troops. The aid once given by Soviet Russia to Kemalist Turkey against Greece, in the form of munitions, raw materials and subsidies, is an example of the possibilities of military collaboration excluding any occupation of territory. Let us add thereto aviation, the coöperation of which would be of the same order. As may be seen, a technical agreement could be established, and that is the business of technicians. In any case, Poland must take into account the genuine danger which threatens it, namely, that of German expansion towards the East, the *Drang nach Osten* against which the Polono-Germanic non-aggression pact constitutes but a feeble barrier. Poland must choose; and should it insist upon its negative attitude, the pact of mutual assistance might well find a formulation outside its ranks. It appears to us that Poland, isolated in an unattractive *tête-à-tête* with Germany, is at this very moment preparing its turn-about-face. But it will try to extract concessions in various fields as payment for its inevitable reversal."

by, as he now anonymously confesses, he paid the Russian leaders for the patronage conferred upon his group in Germany. When the ultra-Leftist Maslow-Fischer leadership was turned out in disgrace, and joined the Trotsky-Zinoviev opposition, Stalin exerted special efforts to win back Rosenberg, who was no less than a member of the executive committee of the Comintern. Stalin's conquest was heralded triumphantly throughout the International, but it was short-lived. Rosenberg divested himself of what he now calls the "mythology" of Soviet Russia . . . and of Marxism. He quit the party in 1927 and devoted himself thenceforward to literary work. From a physical point of view, so to say, there are not many so well situated to essay a history of Bolshevism as is Rosenberg. The result reveals how woefully inadequate are his intellectual and political qualifications.

F. K. v. ARNECKE

At Home

THE August issue of THE NEW INTERNATIONAL received a hearty welcome and response from a swiftly-increasing list of readers and supporters. Despite the ban on the magazine by the Canadian authorities, which means a loss of almost 400 readers at present, 3,600 copies of the 4,000 printed have been disposed of, with additional calls for bundles and subscription copies arriving each day in the mails.

The Spartacus Youth Club of San Francisco writes, "THE NEW INTERNATIONAL has made a very fine impression on all who read it. Send 20 more at once." Bundle increased from 20 to 40 copies. The Manhattan branch, Spartacus Youth Club, sold 75 copies, an increase of 25 copies over the July issue, and has taken more copies. The San Francisco branch of the Communist League, through its literature agent, writes: "Send 10 more copies of the second issue (increase order to 20); they seem to be going pretty good; expect to have some subs soon." From Spartacus Youth Club, Chicago: "The magazine was received with great enthusiasm among the membership"—result: an increase in the bundle order.

Literature agent A. C. Doughty from Los Angeles reports that "the second issue is selling nicely". Los Angeles branch disposes of 85 copies. Similar report from Cleveland which also takes 85 copies.

New York City (agents, newsstands, Youth and League branches, etc.) is disposing of over 700 copies at present; Chicago sales total 275. The formation of a League branch in North Philadelphia brought a letter from the literature agent, saying, "Send a bundle order of 30 for the N. Phila. branch." The mails a week later delivered another letter and money order with the notice: "Increase bundle order to 50 copies; send additional bundle of August issue." The other Philly branch disposes of 35 copies.

Boston branch again increases bundle order: from 50 to 75. Total sales in Boston now 100. Detroit literature agent reports: "Enclose express money order. Send 40 copies instead of 25. The magazine sells well and everyone speaks highly of it." Waukegan, Ill., makes another nominal increase of its order from 15 to 20 copies. All cities report August issue selling well. Minneapolis and Cleveland are preparing a subscription drive for the magazine. Subscriptions are beginning to come in more often.

THE NEW INTERNATIONAL has met with remarkable success in foreign countries. From far off Sydney, Australia, a letter reaches us from a bookshop: "Received copies of NEW INTERNATIONAL this morning and now at five o'clock, six hours after receiving them, they are sold. Therefore, the above order post haste for an increase. Better send 30 copies. There will be a good market for them here. The contents are of splendid quality. Hurry these journals along each issue. My customers are full of praise at the high quality of the format." Total orders in Australia thus far, 105 copies.

The live agent in Glasgow, Scotland, again increases his order, this time from 50 to 70 copies, and asks for 20 more of the August issue. He says, "We hope nothing interferes with the regular publi-

cation of THE NEW INTERNATIONAL."

From Cape Town, South Africa, the Lenin Club there writes: "Hearty congratulations; we wish you every possible success. Enclosed six U.S.A. dollars; please acknowledge. Increase our bundle to 30 copies." Total bundles in South Africa to date equal 75.

From London, come bundle orders from three more bookshops. A group of comrades in the I.L.P. who share our views, increases its bundle order from 30 copies to 50.

This expresses the general attitude toward THE NEW INTERNATIONAL. More could be quoted. Here are a few comments from individuals.

John Dos Passos, one of America's most famous revolutionary authors, writes from California: "Thanks very much for sending me THE NEW INTERNATIONAL. I read it with great interest."

Max Eastman, who has just finished a second volume on arts and letters, writes: "You are certainly getting out an excellent magazine and I congratulate you on its well-merited success."

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