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Etc., Etc.

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A MONTHLY ORGAN OF REVOLUTIONARY MARXISM

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Inside Front Cover: Three Conventions

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THREE CONVENTIONS

AT THE END of this month, three conventions of tremendous importance to the labor and revolutionary movements will take place in the city of New York. On November 26, the third national convention of the Communist League of America will open up and draw a balance sheet under the six years of its existence as an independent group fighting for the principles of revolutionary communism. Banded together at the end of 1928 as a handful of revolutionists expelled for "Trotskyism" from the communist party, the League has grown and developed to the point where it is prepared by its whole past to contribute substantial strength, both in numbers and in Marxian ideas, to the formation in this country of a new revolutionary party.

It is symbolical of the shifting of the center of gravity, both in world politics and economics as well as in the world revolutionary movement, from the old world to the new, that the Communist League of America is today the firmest and most influential section of the International Communist League. The shift is further emphasized by the fact that the first of the new revolutionary parties to be formed in any of the important countries will be launched in the United States, with inexhaustible prospects of growth and power ahead of it.

On the same date and in the same city will open the convention of the American Workers Party. It too has experienced an evolution which makes it a highly impor-

tant and valuable component part of the movement for the new party. Differing from the Communist League both in its starting point, its traditions and its road of development, the American Workers Party nevertheless has progressed to a point where the two have met in an increasingly firm unity. In this convergence, there is nothing accidental. Both groups have gone through many, varied experiences, each in its own way. Upon both of them has been imposed the conclusion which is inescapable today for all forward-looking Marxian revolutionists: the need of a new party and a new International.

For almost a year now, the two organizations have been engaged in laying the foundations for a merger that will make possible the launching of a united party standing on the principles of Marxism, not merely as laid down in the last century, but as verified and confirmed by the great events of the last twenty years. According to all indications, the conventions of the two organizations will fix the seal of approval upon the negotiations carried on in the past and climax them with a fusion of the two streams.

In the convention calls of both groups is contained an identic section which declares that, subject to the approval of the respective delegations, the two conventions shall merge into a unity convention on November 30, to last three days, at which the united revolutionary party will be formally established. The intensive discussions which have taken place in both

groups up to now have brought about a gratifying clarification not only as to the need of the unity but as to the basis in principle upon which it is to be built. There is every reason, therefore, to believe that no serious obstacles will be encountered in consummating the unification.

The formation of the new party in the United States will be a step forward in the revolutionary movements whose far-reaching consequences can hardly be over-stated. The two old parties of labor—socialist and Stalinist—have displayed their bankruptcy in the crassest and most conclusive manner. The new party will seek to establish its claim to leadership of the working class in its daily struggles against the capitalist enemy and in its final struggle to liberate itself from capitalist enslavement. The principles at the base of the new party, and the struggles which its component parts have already engaged in so effectively, are an earnest of their ability to forge ahead in the ranks of the American proletariat.

But not only in this country will its formation prove an impulsion to the revolutionary movement. The new party in the United States will play a great part in advancing the movement for new parties and a new International throughout the world. Its example will inspire like-minded revolutionists in other lands and hasten the day of the establishment of the Fourth International.

Hail the new revolutionary party in the United States!

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The Russian Revolution 17 Years After

SEVENTEEN years of existence were far more than a carefully prepared public opinion imagined that the Russian revolution would have after the seizure of power by the Bolsheviks. That even the attempt should be made to replace capitalism by a new social order and in so backward a country as czarist Russia, was utopian and fantastic enough in the mind of the average person in 1917. That the Soviet government could last for any length of time, however, was definitely considered the sheerest absurdity. The daily reports of that time concerning the imminent collapse of the new régime were read by millions without the slightest surprise.

A similar skepticism prevailed in the minds of the Bolshevik leaders themselves, with one fundamental difference. They too were of the opinion that, however prodigious, the efforts of the Russian masses alone would not suffice to establish the new society. But this knowledge was tempered with the conviction that the Russians would not remain alone for very long, that the acute crisis into which the war had flung European capitalism, would generate the revolutionary force capable of smashing the old order and thereby rescuing Soviet Russia from its isolation. If the proletariat in western Europe did not succeed in seizing power, wrote Trotsky at one time, expressing the prevailing Bolshevik view, "it is hopeless to think (this is borne out by history and by theoretical thought) that for instance, revolutionary Russia would be able to hold out in face of conservative Europe".

The revolutionary risings which followed the World War were not crowned with the triumph of the working class. After the first violent convulsions, European capitalism regained its balance. It has maintained it in varying degrees to the present day. Soviet rule remains confined to its old frontiers. Do the seventeen years of isolated existence of the Soviet republic therefore refute the prognostications of the communist leaders in its early period? Such a conclusion is superficial and unwarranted.

For the greater part of its existence, the Soviet state has not had to hold out against a conservative Europe as it existed at the time Trotsky, for example, set down his views. The spontaneous post-war revolutionary wave was not powerful enough to shatter the cliffs of capitalism itself. The social democracy proved to be too sturdy a breakwater of the old order. But the storm of discontentment and rebellion was fierce enough to deal the final blow to the strongest pillars of European reaction. The Hohenzollern dynasty and the dual monarchy of the Austrian Hapsburgs were alike swept out of power. In the two principal Allied powers, England and France, arch-conservatism had to make way under popular pressure for the banner-bearers of the democratic and pacifist era, MacDonald and Herriot. In this interregnum between two periods of vicious imperialist reaction, the Soviet Union had a breathing space which prolonged its existence despite the absence of revolutionary victories in the West.

Another factor, which could not be foreseen in the first years of the revolution, has contributed to making it appear that an isolated workers' state could be maintained indefinitely. Lenin's dictum in 1919 that "the existence of the Soviet republic side by side with imperialist states for any length of time is inconceivable", must now be revised to read: "inconceivable without a corresponding internal disintegration of the proletarian power and the progress of reaction in its midst". Such an amendment is required to eliminate the apparent contradiction between the revolutionary hopes and prognoses of the Bolshevik leaders and the continued isolated existence of the Soviet Union. All those theories and practises which are proper to Stalinism in contradistinction to revolutionary Marxism, represent the growth of reaction in the

workers' state. Reaction: because under the conditions of a dynamic development of international class relations, a passive adaptation to the status quo, which is tantamount to acceptance of it, cannot signify merely marking time, but moving backward. The idea that a classless society, which Lenin believed possible of attainment only by the grandchildren of his generation, will be established in Russia without a proletarian revolution in other countries—and this is the idea implicit in the Stalinist theory of "socialism in a single country" and explicit in the Stalinist contention that a classless socialist society will exist in Russia in another two years—definitely presupposes the acceptance of present relationships, postpones the world revolution to the Greek Kalends, and delusively rationalizes the hermetic capitalist encirclement of the Soviet Union.

The deceptively idyllic notion of Russia's economic, and consequently political self-sufficiency, nurtured for years by a unique combination of circumstances, is now receiving some rude blows. The "conservative Europe" of the war period is now being restored in a more reactionary and, from a class standpoint, more belligerent form than ever before. The continent is changing its political complexion under our very eyes. Almost every other month now the reaction registers a new triumph—the working class a new defeat. The Soviets are faced by a decreasing number of "democratic" bourgeois governments in Europe and an increased number of outspokenly antagonistic Fascist régimes. The fundamental hostility of *all* bourgeois governments to the workers' government, which is neither greater nor less than the fundamental solidarity of the international proletariat, is most openly expressed by the new Fascist states. The difference lies only in the fact that whereas the Fascist countries have a far freer hand in preparing for open warfare against the fortress of Bolshevism, the proletariat in those lands is bleeding from a thousand wounds, is atomized and disoriented, and is unable to engage in an organized defense of the Soviet Union. The nationalist degeneration of the Third International, which so greatly facilitated the easy triumphs of Fascism and reaction, first in Poland, then in China, and finally in rapid succession in Germany, Austria and Spain, has revealed that it is not only incapable of leading the proletariat to victory in the capitalist world, but that it cannot assume the responsibility for the defense of the Soviet republic itself. As the hour approaches when the Fascist barbarians plan to plunge into an armed attack upon the Soviet Union, the impotence of both the old Internationals stands out with alarming crassness. And not since the earliest years of the Soviet republic has the danger of a military attack upon it been so acute as it is today.

Who will organize the world proletariat for the defense of the Soviet Union? The steady shift in emphasis from reliance upon the international working class to pathetic manoeuvres and alliances with one imperialist power or another, reflects the significant changes that have taken place in Soviet policy under the direction of Stalinism. Nevertheless, in spite of the latest revelations about the division of the world into two classes—the peace-loving capitalist nations and the war-loving capitalist nations—it would be little less than fatal to look to the League of Nations, be Russia or Germany or Japan a member of it or not, as a bulwark against imperialist war in general or aggression against the Soviet Union in particular. Nor should it be expected that the Second International will organize and lead the struggle for the defense of the Soviets. The reformists who could not even save themselves, much less the working class as a whole, from defeat at the hands of Fascism, will not show themselves to be made of sterner stuff when the life of the Soviet republic is at stake. No greater valua-

tion can be placed on the organizing and revolutionary capacities of the Third International. Its disgraceful capitulation without a struggle in Germany in 1933 does not inspire one with the slightest confidence that it will prove to be superior at an even more crucial moment. As for the fighting qualities of those gray ectoplasmic figures who hover impalpably over the stage of various seances "against war and Fascism" or lend their highly respectable names to the letterheads of the "friends" of the Soviet Union—the less said about the painful subject the better.

Every important problem that rises to confront the working class immediately reveals its inseparable relationship with the central problem of rebuilding the wrecked revolutionary movement by organizing the new parties and the new International. The Russian proletariat alone cannot defend itself successfully from the assault of world reaction. More than ever after it has come to power does it require a revolutionary vanguard, an organized, conscious leadership, a communist party. It is in this realm that Stalinism has wrought the greatest havoc. The warm, living organism that was once the Bolshevik party, has been petrified by the bureaucratic apparatus which usurped its place. The elimination of the party removes an imperatively necessary pillar upholding the dictatorship of the proletariat. If the workers' state is not to crumble, if it is to be rendered fit to the maximum to deal with its enemies at home and abroad, the revolutionary party must be revived in the Soviet Union.

Under the conditions of bureaucratic sway in the Soviet republic at the present time, this is a task which the Russian proletariat is unable to perform by its own efforts, or even primarily by its own efforts. It is a task which falls upon the shoulders of the revolutionary Marxists throughout the capitalist world. This task coincides and is identical with setting to work immediately to build the new parties and the Fourth International in every country for the overthrow of the ruling bourgeoisie. The Marxian vanguard in the capitalist world cannot, of course, directly build the new party in the Soviet Union; this is primarily the work of the revolutionists of that land. But the Marxists outside the Soviet Union can and must create the conditions throughout the capitalist countries that will make possible and facilitate not only the triumphant struggle against the world bourgeoisie, but also the revival of the revolutionary party in Russia. In the resolving of this problem as of all others, Marxian internationalism coincides at every point with the interests of the revolutionary struggle against the capitalist class at home. The emergence of the Russian revolution from the isolation which undermines it is an indivisible part of the struggle for the world revolution. The success of the one is conditioned by the victory of the other.

Whatever the immediate outcome of the struggle may be, the historical judgment of the Russian revolution has already been pronounced. The fundamental social contributions made by the revolution are of a permanent nature. The Bolshevik revolution was the decisive factor in taking the disputes between the Left and Right wings in the labor movement out of the realm of academic discussion and bringing them down to the solid soil of practical reality. If it is true that the establishment of the first successful workers' state revived and reinforced the undistorted

doctrines of Marx and Engels, then only because it demonstrated in life that far from being obsolete and applicable only to the middle of the last century, they were the indispensable weapons of the modern proletarian struggle for emancipation from wage slavery. The revolution, taking place as it did in a backward agricultural country, underscored the fact that the only consistently progressive class in modern world society is the proletariat. By what the latter accomplished for formerly oppressed racial and national minorities, and for the peasant millions—freedom and development immeasurably greater than that ever effected for similar groups by the bourgeoisie even in its most revolutionary period—it confirmed all previous theoretical affirmation that no section of the population can free itself and be guaranteed a progressive evolution save under the leadership of the working class. The October victory brought forward sharply the tremendous importance of the revolutionary party as the leader of the working class, without which it is a headless, inchoate mass, condemned to spontaneous but finally futile assaults upon its class enemy.

In the broader social sense, the contributions of the Bolshevik revolution are equally deathless. Under a thousand handicaps, it nevertheless refuted the bourgeois canard that the working class is unable to manage the affairs of society, that the scrubwoman must wash floors and the banker direct the government because of qualities inherent in each of them. The veritable torrent of initiative, resourcefulness, talent released from the midst of the "dark masses" when the revolution broke down even the first few barriers of traditional class repression, shows that a new Golden Age undreamed of by Pericles is held in store for humanity under communism. Shut off from the advantages of world intercourse enjoyed by capitalism, the Soviet state nevertheless established the fact that only in a socialist order is security and plenty possible for all; that even in the transitional period leading to socialism, crises and economic difficulties are due not to a plethora, to an overproduction of the means of life and comfort which the masses cannot share—a condition which is the distinguishing mark of capitalism—but to a shortage in production attendant upon the growing pains of a new order hemmed in by stifling capitalist walls. With all the vast technical superiority and advantages of experience on its side, capitalism still is unable to produce in any way but anarchically, whereas only the working class in power has been able to undertake and carry through planning in economic life with a success which is grudgingly acknowledged even by its astonished foes.

Neither a social nor a natural catastrophe can ever erase from the mind of man these profound historical contributions. But man can extend these contributions to the rest of the world. It is given to the present generation to witness and participate in the mortal struggle between two social orders. The one represented by the rule of the bourgeoisie is dragging the masses of mankind back to the Middle Ages, to barbarism, to all that Fascist sovereignty implies. The one represented by the rule of the proletariat leads to socialism and the fulfillment of human development.

One or the other must triumph, for they cannot live side by side. The proletarian revolution won its first great battle in Russia. It can win the war only as a world victory.

What Next in the Socialist Party

BY A VOTE of 5,993 to 4,872, the declaration of principles adopted at the Detroit convention of the socialist party has been ratified by its membership in a national referendum. By this fact, the socialist party has arrived at a new stage in its evolution. The extreme Right wing has been formally defeated, and official approbation has been accorded the Militant group now in the party saddle.

It is instructive to examine more closely the results of the general referendum. Its outstanding feature is the astonishingly small number of members who cast a vote one way or the other. The official Party Press Service (October 19, 1934) observes: "The vote cast represents about one-third of the party's membership." In other words, sixty-six percent of the membership—two

out of every three—did not evince sufficient interest in the discussion which both wings claimed would decide the party's fate, to participate in the voting. Although vital issues were involved—however much they were obscured and smeared over by the disputants—the great bulk of the membership remained surprisingly indifferent towards the outcome. Even if allowance is made for the claim that many of the newer members were ineligible to vote, the fact still remains that a tremendous section of the party which is now being proclaimed in certain quarters as the truly revolutionary organization in the United States, has not yet reached the stage of active socialist consciousness. At any rate, thousands of party members did not display any in the present discussion.

The victory of the Declaration supporters, furthermore, was

gained mainly in those states where the working class, the labor movement and the socialist party itself are comparatively insignificant. A defeat was sustained by the Militants in most of the decisive proletarian and political centers of the country. It would be fatuous to conclude from this that the proletarian section of the party is for the Right wing position. Quite the contrary: whatever real strength the Militants enjoy is largely traceable to the fact that the socialist party has succeeded in the past few years in drawing new working class elements into its ranks. The results do show, however, that in the principal centers the Right wing bureaucracy and its petty bourgeois adherents are far stronger than many would like to believe. Nor was its strength properly challenged in view of the fact that the Militants at all times pursued a pusillanimous course where a bold one was required, opposed a policy of confusion to the clear-cut Right wing policy of its opponents, and gave every indication of its readiness to capitulate under vigorous pressure. If we tabulate the results from the main states, counting among them only those where 200 votes or more were cast, we get the following interesting picture:

	For	Against		For	Against
California	109	114	New Jersey	330	251
Connecticut	164	189	New York	1,189	1,537
Illinois	454	181	Ohio	228	255
Indiana	100	221	Pennsylvania	546	771
Massachusetts	257	450	Wisconsin	1,032	169
Michigan	316	130			
Missouri	224	40	Total:	4,949	4,308

Our position towards that masterpiece of ambiguous verbiage and Centrist befuddlement which is being palmed off as a "revolutionary" declaration of principles is too well known to require detailed exposition here. Our view of the illusory character of the document is only emphasized by the fact that the principal citadel of the worst Right wing *practises*, Wisconsin, found no difficulty in flying the banner of the Militants. The classic bailiwick of Bergerism, which conducted such a stirring revolutionary struggle at the Milwaukee convention in 1932 in favor of Daniel Hoan as party chairman instead of Morris Hillquit on the grounds that the latter had come to the United States several boats later than the ancestors of Daniel Hoan or Norman Thomas, voted "Militant". Proof that such a vote does not necessarily signify that reformism has been defeated in the party, but only that it is possible to vote "Militant" without batting a reformist eyelash. In the main centers, Wisconsin certainly not excluded, the Right wing, if it is not in substantial control, is at least a most powerful factor. The Leftward movement in the socialist party has not proved strong enough as yet to deal a decisive blow at reformism, much less to produce a leadership capable of delivering it.

A vote cast in an obscure state counts for as much as a vote delivered anywhere else, and notwithstanding the above facts, the Detroit declaration stands approved. What next? Were the document a truly revolutionary statement of principles, and were its proponents a coherent group of consistent and resolute Marxists, the official support given them by the membership would be a mandate to proceed further with determination. It would impose upon them certain logical and inescapable consequences. It would mean taking certain elementary measures, for example, to dissociate the party from such impudent social patriots as Joseph Sharts, incorrigible petty bourgeois liberals like Louis Waldman and his New York clique, biological anti-revolutionists like Abraham Cahan, and countless others in the same fraternity. But the very premise is preposterous. Neither the document nor its advocates merit the adjective "revolutionary". But timid and muddled as it is, it might be imagined that it is meant seriously. Far from it. The very first act of the new leadership of the party, following the announcement of its victory, was to rush into print with an abject exhortation to the Right wingers to remain inside the party with full rights to propagate their anti-socialist doctrines. Those who did not even have the courage to vote in favor of a united front with the Stalinist party at their National Committee meeting for fear of what Cahan and Waldman might say and do, have hastened to assure the latter that they are not only willing but anxious to remain under a common roof.

"Whatever it [the vote] is," pleads Norman Thomas, "the one thing we socialists cannot afford to do is to allow it to break up

our unity, destroy our discipline, or continue to distract our energy. We have too much to do and too much depends on how we do it. There is room within the socialist party for considerable divergence of view on certain points if only we will work for socialism. For reasons that I have often stated I am for the Declaration of Principles and believe that in general it will strengthen our socialist position. But neither the adoption or the rejection of the Declaration will of itself win America for socialism, and that is our job." (*New Leader*, October 10, 1934.)

Vacillation, unprincipledness, timidity, spinelessness, equivocation, readiness (and at the proper moment, anxiety) to capitulate—that is, all those qualities which are proper to Centrist as distinct from revolutionary Marxism—are perfectly condensed into these five sentences. The growing desire of the militant (without the capital M!) workers in the party for a break with bankrupt reformism, a desire enhanced by the tragic defeats in Europe, had to be satisfied before it developed to a logical and consistent conclusion. The Militant leaders, most of whom had lived in perfect ease and harmony with Waldman and Co. up to yesterday, threw these workers a sop in the form of the Detroit Declaration. But they do not want to burn any bridges behind them, to break even with those who outspokenly flout the Declaration and the party's decisions and who defy the new leaders to carry them out. The Right wing takes the offensive all along the line. The pseudo-Left wing grovels.

We do not intend to make a living reality even out of the waterlogged Declaration—the Militants declaim. It does not really mean a serious struggle against you—they reassure the Right wing. Do not leave us, we beseech you; there is room in the party "for considerable divergence of "view". Sharts' view is that we must defend American capitalism in the next imperialist war, others have the view that we should not; Cahan's view is that Bolshevism and Fascism are the same thing, others have the view that they are antipodes; Waldman's view is that our economic and social problems can be solved by peaceful and democratic means, others have the opposite view; Oneal's view is that the Declaration is the cloven hoof of anarcho-communism, others have the view that it is good social democratism; Thomas' view is that "workers' democracy" is *not* the dictatorship of the proletariat, others have the view that they are one and the same thing—but should that prevent us from working "for socialism"? or cause us to "continue to distract our energy" over such questions? or get us all wrought up over whether the Declaration is adopted or not? Principles are all very well and good in their way and in their proper time, but is there any reason why we should part company just because we think that we have differences over principles? Perish the blasphemous thought!

Will the intransigence of the Right wing be moderated by these solicitous assurances? Will it accept the tearful invitation? Most unlikely. The Right wing has not yet played all its cards, nor even its strongest ones. It knows its own strength, which lies not only in the firmness, audacity and determination which it has revealed in contrast to exactly the opposite qualities in the ranks of its leading adversaries, but in the great power that it still wields by virtue of its control of all the wealthy, puissant and "respectable" institutions in and around the party. It is only waiting for the November elections to pass in order to take decisive action and carry the war into the enemy camp. In the Forward Association, it has already jammed through a revision of the by-laws, so that it is no longer necessary for a member of the Association to be a member or supporter of the socialist party, but only a supporter of . . . the Second International. This is tantamount to announcing its intention to split away and to establish an independent party. And in fact it is nobody's secret that the leaders of the Right wing have now decided to split the party and have whipped into line all those who hesitated. To the director of the Rand School it has been insinuatingly suggested that the perquisites of his present office are not lightly to be surrendered. Similar intimations have been made to the noted scholar and historian who occupies the editorial chair of the *New Leader*.

Whether or not the conflict will develop to the point of an actual split, however, is not yet settled. It is unsettled not because there remains any doubt about the position of the Right wing, but because nothing certain can yet be said about the agglomeration

which is timorously huddled under the never fully hoisted banner of the Militant group. That is to say, while one may count upon the vertebral firmness of the Right wing, the same cannot be said of its opponents. Properly speaking, the question is not so much "Will the Right wing split?" as it is "Will the Militants retreat before the Right wing threat of split?" The coming weeks will supply, it would appear, one of two replies.

The Right wing begins to reorganize the party in the states where it controls, as the step preliminary to split. It threatens to take along with it not only such institutions and connections as the *Forward*, the Rand School, the *New Leader*, the Workmen's Circle, but also the "prominent" party spokesmen, the socialist union leaders, the party apparatus, its standing on the ballot, its financial resources. This action is sufficient to throw the Militants or a section of them into consternation. Desperate efforts are made to conciliate the Right wing; concessions of an acceptable nature are made; the Militants yield on one question after another, possibly even to the point of calling an extraordinary party convention at which the Right wing either regains control or imposes a Declaration and a leadership more to its liking.

Or this: the Right wing actually splits away. Pressure in the ranks of the Militants, from the Left wing, is strong enough to prevent the leaders from capitulating to the splitters. Two reactions are then produced by the departure of the Right wing. The flabby-shabby elements in the Militant group crystallize more clearly, weep terrifiedly at the loss of their brothers-under-the-skin and the Oh-so-covetable institutions and connections, and cry out for "re-uniting the party" in which "there is room for considerable divergence of view". The revolutionary elements in the Militant group, who mean it seriously and who strive for a clean break with decrepit reformism, crystallize as a genuine Left wing, decreasingly encumbered by Centrist rubbish.

In either case, a regrouping in the socialist party is on the order of the day, out of which a Marxian wing will emerge, with its own program and its authentic voice. From the revolutionary standpoint, this is the most serious and gratifying prospect in the coming development of the socialist party.

What position does this perspective dictate to the communist forces outside the socialist party, specifically, to those who are working to lay the foundations on which the new revolutionary party will be built in the United States? It would be an error, in our opinion, to summon the revolutionists inside the socialist party to quit it at the present time. It would be an even grosser error to call upon revolutionists who are not in the S.P. to join its ranks. The socialist National Committee has adopted a statement proposed by Norman Thomas in which an "invitation" is extended to all workers to join the party, with an eye especially to those formerly members of the communist party.

"Some of you [it reads] have been members of various parties which you have been compelled to leave because their tactics have been so badly adapted to the achievement of the great end you seek. Some of you have not in recent years been members of any party. You have been homeless. To you the socialist party offers a welcome, not as groups or as potential factions, but as loyal comrades in the great cause of achieving socialism in our time. It welcomes you into a fellowship where free discussion and criticism of differences of opinion and viewpoints are encouraged with the expectation that discussion will be carried on within the limits of party discipline." (*New Leader*, October 27, 1934.)

The invitation, which obviously appeals to ex-members of the C.P., is at the same time an admonition. Whereas not a finger is lifted against the Right wing when it takes its attacks upon the party, the convention and its decisions, into the capitalist press and openly declares its readiness to violate party discipline, the Militant leaders have every intention of enforcing their conception of discipline against any communist who is misguided enough to accept the invitation. Again, while the Right wing is permitted to organize its factional group with impunity, while the Militants too have their own faction, with its own caucus meetings and internal discipline, the unaffiliated communists who are so magnanimously invited to come into the party are prohibited in advance from propagating their views in an organized manner. This is, so to say, the "technical" aspect of the invitation to join the new home for the politically homeless, although it is entirely characteristic of

the difference between the Centrist attitude towards the Right wing and the Left. From the political standpoint, the matter stands in an even worse light.

As is known, the invitation has been eagerly accepted by Ben Gitlow and a handful of his followers; his course has also been adopted by the expelled "Trotskyist", Albert Goldman. Gitlow, it will be remembered, led the inglorious but short-lived "Organization Committee for a New Revolutionary Party" whose principal stock-in-trade seemed to be a criticism of the "Trotskyists" because they didn't form the new party quickly enough to suit him. Gitlow's announcement is nothing less than a cringing capitulation to the socialist party, which he is ready to enter without a program, without a banner, without a group. Ready to enter—because despite their "revolutionary" Declaration of Principles, the "revolutionary" Militant leaders are too scared of the scowling Right wing to allow Gitlow to apply for membership in New York. Gitlow and the other known "communists" are to get Lesson No. 1 in the real significance of the Thomas invitation by being compelled to join the S. P. in New Jersey, where they will have to take up residence for the purpose, with the hope of "establishing" contact with the socialist masses of New York City through the Holland Tunnel. Moreover, it is by no means unlikely that under pressure of the Right wing, which has publicly announced that it will fight tooth and nail against the admission of "communists", the Militants may demand even more guarantees of good behavior from Gitlow than he has already given. Those who do not stand erect on their feet but move on their knees, by their very position present their posteriors as a target for the boots for all and sundry.

The urgent task of the revolutionary Marxists at the present moment is the building of the new party and the Fourth International. It is possible to accomplish this task in the United States directly and immediately. The impending fusion of the forces of the Communist League of America and the American Workers Party will mean that the new party has been established in this country, that is, that its main foundation stone has been laid. In the face of this prospect for the immediate launching of the new party, it is tantamount to desertion of the new movement and capitulation to reformism for a revolutionist who declares himself in favor of a new party to join the S. P. The duty of every revolutionist is to build up the new party, strengthen it, increase its capacity to participate actively in the class struggle in the United States as an independent force and to draw into its ranks the thousands of American workers who are moving to the Left. Even from the standpoint of the evolution of the genuine militants in the S.P., the formation and building of the new party will be one of the most effective factors in promoting clarity and resoluteness in their ranks. The objective effect of deserting the new party movement in order to enter the socialist party is to obscure and obstruct the development of its revolutionary elements in a consistent and logical direction, to sow new illusions in their minds and to disseminate more confusion. Fortunately, the capitulators are too few in number and too feeble in influence to constitute a serious impediment to the progressive movement for the new party and the new International, be it inside the S. P. or outside.

The forces which are joining to launch the new party can look forward confidently to the future developments inside the socialist party. The tremendous discredit which reformism and its Centrist shadow have suffered internationally has not left their American counterpart unscathed. Today hundreds, tomorrow thousands of American socialist workers are throwing off the shackles that have bound them to social democracy. They are striving towards revolutionary struggle on the basis of a revolutionary program. To an increasing degree, it is being seen that this aspiration can be realized only by way of a radical rupture with all varieties of reformism, as the prerequisite for the establishment of true proletarian unity under the banner of a united revolutionary party. If not today, then tomorrow—if not tomorrow then the next day, the genuine socialist militants will see clearly that which is already understood by the Marxists who are now preparing to found the new party. It is the task of the latter to facilitate the evolution of the Left wing socialists in this direction.

On the Eve of the Spanish Uprising*

AUTUMN commences, and the struggle which is always somewhat slowed down during the summer months, becomes once more intensified. The balance sheet for the summer period was not as favorable for it as the reaction had hoped it would be. The parliamentary sessions were adjourned in the most ordinary fashion, so that the Samper government, that renowned *unburied corpse*, might liquidate the Catalanian affair freed of the obstacles that the parliamentary hubbub would have created. But, even with its hands thus untied, the government, conscious of its own weakness, did not pursue a violent course, rather preferring to sneak out through the side door of the *juridical formula* of capitulation. In view of the policy followed by the Samper government in Catalonia, some of the chiefs of the Right wing have been defrauded while the remainder pretend to be in order to reconcile themselves with their following. It is however clear that when the government had secured for itself freedom of movement, this was hardly for the purpose of plunging into civil war. The conflict of the Basque municipalities was added to that of Catalonia and almost immediately assumed unsuspected proportions. With the childishness natural in those who lack a sane objective outlook, the government assumed a hare-brained intransigence that was translated into terrifying police and warlike preparations. Thus it hoped to revindicate itself before centralist and in the last analysis monarchist reaction, thus contradicting the weaknesses with which it had been charged on account of the Catalanian conflict. In spite of everything, the regiments in readiness, the airplanes in waiting, the conflict of the Basque municipalities follows its natural course: daily aggravation. With the parliamentary vacations drawing to a close, the reaction finds itself in open struggle with the petty bourgeois government of Catalonia, in open struggle with the ultramontane Basque reaction, and with the whole proletariat of the country. The situation is neither easy nor comfortable.

The Rights are convinced that their future lies in these very weeks. They most certainly have a clearer idea of their own weaknesses than have we, their enemies. The sad spectacles presented by Gil Robles' "youth" concentrations will go down in history, never to be forgotten. After the proletariat proved its strength by disorganizing the dirty comedy of April 22, we thought that Gil Robles had definitely given up the concentrations, in order to dedicate his political activity to back-stage intrigues. The two last concentrations, that of the Catalonians and that of Covadonga, which were initiated under visible signs of demoralization, can be considered nothing but desperate efforts of the bourgeoisie, heroically disposed to derive strength from its own weakness. The decision of the Catalanian landowners, swept away by popular sentiment, to come to Madrid in order to ask for the annulment of the Cultivation Laws and of the Catalanian Statute, was certainly a desperate step, as this would have also meant the recouping by the Central power of the public order services. On the other hand, Gil Robles was not filled with the same illusions as he had been on April 22, when life was easy for him. And it was clearly seen that instead of playing the rôle of Don Pelayo, he came very near playing that of the Moor; it was not without difficulty that he was able to reach the mountains of Covadonga.

The present is a critical moment for everyone; for the reaction and also for the proletariat. The Rights know very well that they cannot long continue playing around. But neither do they feel sufficiently strong to take over power completely. In any event, the problem is urgently posed of the need to take another step forward in order to prevent the breaking-up of their own ranks; this means an *energetic* policy towards the proletariat, the Catalonians and the Basques. Such a policy is not possible, except by working on the confusion of the enemy, utilizing, for example, Lerroux, whose reappearance at the head of the government, it is understood, would not provoke the same reaction as would be the case were a majority government to be formed. It would not be

*The author of this article, written before the Spanish uprising, is one of Spain's leading Bolshevik-Leninists and, it is

strange, if in order to prolong the confusion of the masses, these cliques should decide that the CEDA have no representation in the government. But this would matter little, as the CEDA at the present moment, is called Lerroux or Salazar Alonso.

The crack that separates what remains of the Radical party and the CEDA has entirely disappeared. The dream of the Radical party was to convert itself into the expression of the consolidated bourgeois republic. But today it has resigned itself to be but the link of a chain moving towards an undetermined point. Nor does it want to know where it is going. The clashes between the political fringes of the Radical Party—always very elastic—and the CEDA, have provoked the split with Martinez Barrio, and today these clashes are reduced to a weak resistance on the part of a few individuals, clashes which are daily of less importance. The tendency, within the Radical party, to total subordination to the CEDA is represented especially by Salazar Alonso and Lerroux. This subordination does not grow out of any political criteria, but rather out of the complete absence of any criteria which is the distinguishing feature of the Radical chief and his most faithful mimics. The latter only know that they are in a big fight and they do not want to give in until they win.

The symbol of the Lerroux governments has been an ever increasing subordination to the directives of the CEDA. If Gil Robles decides in favor of another Lerroux government, it will be in order to carry forward more intensively a policy which he does not yet dare to commence openly.

The labor movement, fortunately, has a growing assurance of its own strength. The disillusionment and the depression which dominate the proletariat of other countries in similar moments of recent periods, has almost disappeared from the Spanish working class. With the increasing gravity of the situation—it must not be forgotten that the present days are decisive for all—distances are erased and, what is more important, in a sense favorable for the proletariat. We must say that unity in itself is insufficient, and may even be as fatal as division. It is one thing to say, for example, that Fascism in Germany penetrated through the open breach between communism and social democracy. Let us suppose that the proletariat had been unified as is almost the case today in Spain in the socialist ranks; the downfall would have been the same. When we called for the united front in Germany it was not only to present a compact front in partial struggles, but also in order that the revolutionary wing might be able to exert pressure over the entire working class.

If, with us in Spain, the unification which is being achieved predominantly around the socialist party, has a progressive value, this is due to the present attitude of the S. P., which is inspiring increasing confidence. We do not mean blind confidence because this cannot be inspired by anyone and much less by an organization with as heterogenous a composition as the S. P. But the most that can be expected of the social democracy, an energetic defensive attitude, an unbreakable decision not to sink—this the socialist party most certainly has. The sectarians and doctrinaires who, using as a point of departure the "general theory"—you cannot know how to struggle—could learn much in these cases concerning a social democracy, to which they refuse to attribute any defensive capacity, having even gone so far as to deny the opposition between socialism and Fascism, inventing the term "social Fascism" which has been so overworked at certain times. The Austrian insurrection has already given the first denial to such pseudo-revolutionary stupidity.

There are in the socialist ranks more or less confused revolutionary currents. For this very reason the socialist party cannot be considered as the definitive expression of a revolutionary party, as this latter requires a certain unity of thought and homogeneity in the cadres. There is no doubt that if the situation should move towards the Left, towards an Azafist government, or towards a soft-boiled Left government, that is of a republican coalition, the revolutionism of the socialists would be weakened, giving way to more or less stirring up between the different tendencies that exist

reported, is now being held by the government for his activity in the revolution.—ED.

inside of the party. Every loophole which is opened by democratic means weakens socialist extremism, which on the other hand does not know what it wants or what it would do were it to find itself in power. This is essentially different from a revolutionary party for which a democratic period inasmuch as it opens greater possibilities of movement towards the final objectives, is always desirable.

But without deluding ourselves as to what a party with such a composition and ideals can do, neither is it permissible to fall into the coarse negativism in which the adversaries of the social democracy have been enmeshed. The problem resides in knowing whether the S. P. will be willing to defend its existence and not yield to Fascism at the decisive moment. The Austrian socialists have already demonstrated this willingness and the Spanish Socialist party is demonstrating it in a much better form, to the point of being the only party which under the present circumstances offers a few guarantees. The willingness is insufficient unless it is accompanied by seriousness. The anarchists are tenacious revolutionists, but they are dangerously foolish people. For the Stalinists not even this can be said, because the C.P. is an organization that does not really think politically, but only in inter-organizational plays (sleight-of-hand); if it is ordered to fight against any given party, it does so even in the most non-essential matters, and if the slogan is of capitulation to the same party one cannot keep up with them on this route either. At the present moment which may be decisive, the socialist party is the only one that offers some guarantees, not only of willingness, but of seriousness as well.

Experience itself is forcing the S.P. to abandon its mistakes in the field of partial struggles. The discussion around this point is now almost needless. Whatever advances have been made against reaction are due to the partial struggles. April 22 (El Escorial), September 8 (Covadonga) were struggles that were forced upon the proletariat, which resolved them into very severe blows against reaction. Only illiterate liberals can deny the necessity of these struggles. To have been able to carry out successfully either one of these demonstrations would most certainly have translated itself into a considerable step forward for reaction, and what is more serious, into a deep depression for the proletariat. If the worker had seen the Escorial and Covadonga affairs carried through with impunity, he would have asked: "What are the organizations doing?" The effects of the strike in Madrid on September 8 have been tremendous. The Catalonian "concentration" was turned into a sorrowful and insignificant affair compared with the immensity of the proletarian reply. Enthused by the Madrid strike, the Asturian workers felt themselves enthusiastically of the same chain, and the verve of their movement was redoubled. All of the proletarian forces of Catalonia, forces in struggle with reaction, responded emphatically to the struggle in Madrid. On the other hand, the consequences that the bourgeoisie has tried to draw concerning the government's means for breaking up the strikes are certainly out of place.

The labor organizations did nothing but issue the strike order without attempting any violence, for they knew that the tie-up in itself would be sufficient to reach the objective. The working class responded with absolute unanimity, giving an admirable example of its will and its discipline. If the working class had persisted in preventing it, would the street lamps have been lit? Would the few automobiles of the bourgeoisie which did circulate, have done so? And would certain lizards have basked in the sun, as they did? Of course not. The movement was voluntarily peaceful, and this being the case, the slight circulation did not represent any danger to it. If the street presents a bad aspect, the bourgeoisie in general will not go out for its stroll. The governmental steps taken to counteract the strike were successful only in producing an artificial circulation which was far removed, even in its outward appearances, from the normal traffic. The bourgeoisie does not believe itself when it speaks of having dulled the weapon of the strikes. The strike continues to be the most powerful instrument of the proletariat to make known its will and its strength.

It is evident that partial struggles do not signify that the proletariat should submerge itself in a game of strikes. The over-use of strikes would lead to the destruction of the labor movement or else force it to go further. But situations must be faced when the circumstances impose them. Furthermore, it is understood that

not all partial struggles are strikes. The problem consists in mobilizing the forces, in making known their existence, in not allowing the enemy to move with impunity.

The working class should recognize its superior strength over reaction. But not in order to rest on its laurels, but rather so as not to take a single further backward step, indicating its willingness to deal a death-blow to reaction, if the latter, by artful proceedings, manipulating marionettes, or by direct aggression, attempts to annul its rights and liquidate its organizations. One should never fail to recognize the danger of an enemy who fights with desperation; and this is the case of the Rights. It must not be thought that they are going to give up without a struggle. That which is clear is that they have entered into a period of visible unrest. For the moment they see that their power is cracking under the strain of the deepening of the revolution. This obliges them to demand draconic measures. On the other hand, those closest to the pulse of the situation are becoming panicky; this was given away in Gil Robles' speech at Covadonga. The labor movement certainly has no reason for losing its head.

The currents towards unity of action are making their way. The Workers' Alliances which are still in a plastic state, are hardening daily. The attempts to destroy them—and these have not been few—are condemned to failure. The Alliances are imposing themselves against the mutual divergences, over the rivalries of the parties. If a new impetus is given to them, their national action coördinated, it will then be impossible to ignore them; even the most important rivals will be obliged to rotate about them as in an orbit. Having all of the organizations either bound or influenced by a common discipline is a very essential factor for victory.

MADRID, September 1934.

L. FERSEN.

The First Letter from Spain

IN ASTURIAS, the Workers' Alliances have been functioning for a year. Supplied from the arms smuggled in by the steamer *Turquesa*, all the workers' organizations succeeded in arming themselves. Thence the splendid results obtained in the first forty-eight hours. In addition, there were no disagreements in the objectives pursued by the organizations, in view of the fact that there existed the Alliances, instruments of the insurrection in Asturias, which oriented, defined and led the movement. Later on, when the governmental repression will have ended, a clearer idea will be had of the rôle of the Alliances and the fate of each organization in it. Up to the moment that it finally entered them, the communist party in Asturias dragged along at the tail-end of the Alliances.

The prevailing impression among the enemy forces, and especially among the Fascists, was that if the insurgents had begun the armed struggle on the Friday night, the victory of the revolutionists would have been guaranteed. It was asserted that had there been three Asturiases in Spain, the triumph of the revolutionists would have been a crushing one.

On Friday night it would have been possible to get the forces of the army to rise, for the fate of the official power seemed to hang in the balance. On Saturday morning, however, it was already impossible because the suspected soldiers had been arrested and the spirit of the troops had completely changed.

It was shown that the transport strike is the backbone of the general strike. From the moment when the railroad workers' union refused to paralyze railway traffic, the insurrection could have been considered as lost.

Arms existed in abundance, and an ample supply of bombs was stored in depots. As soon as the movement appeared to be heading towards a collapse, these depots were discovered by the police as if by magic.

With the exception of Asturias, the Spanish proletariat was lacking in the consciousness of the necessity of the conquest of power for the purpose of shattering every counter-revolutionary attempt and of beginning to build up a new order wherever the socialist party enjoyed the greatest influence, which was the case throughout Spain, save in Catalonia. The working class had not received the lessons that the revolutionary party of the proletariat

is duty-bound to inculcate in the minds of the popular masses. The socialist party interpreted in a vague and diffused manner the desires and aspirations of the working class. The latter wanted to get out of its difficult position, and it had no other way out except the revolution. But it had not been told what this revolution consists of, what means must be employed in order to achieve it. A cheap literary campaign was made around the question of revolution: "Attention, comrades! This October will be our October!" Appeals were launched for the armed struggle without an appropriate organization for it, without having propagated the necessity of the insurrection. When one recalls the insistence with which Lenin proclaimed this necessity from the July days onward, he sees the error into which the October Spanish revolution fell.

* * *

Saturday morning, at six, the Workers' Alliance marched along *Las Ramblas* [main boulevard of Barcelona] in triple file. They gave the impression of a disciplined army, imposing by the very order in which they marched. Their number was about 4,000. . . . They turned towards the Generality to ask to be armed in order to defend the Catalonian republic.

Deucas urged them to disperse in the same order because it was not necessary to arm and all the measures had already been taken.

The members of the *Esquerra Catalan* and the *Estat Catalan* had confidence in General Baret who was meanwhile taking all the necessary steps to break up the movement.

The three hundred socialists who belonged to the Workers' Alliance had asked of Joaquin Maurin, of the Workers' and Peasants' Bloc, and our comrade Andres Nin, of the Communist Left, that the Workers' Alliance should take the leadership of the movement led to defeat by Deucas and Badia.

At eleven o'clock in the evening, when all the strategic points

had been occupied by the forces of the central government, Deucas telephoned the Workers' Alliance to ask for its support and that it send its militants to the Generality where they would be armed. At that hour, the militants were at home, demoralized by the treason which they suspected on the part of the Catalanist leaders. In addition, it was impossible for them to respond to this appeal without being assassinated in little groups in the streets militarily occupied by the repressive Central forces.

At Lerida, it was the radical-socialists who launched the movement, throwing up barricades in the hope that they would be occupied by troops coming over to the side of the revolutionists. But when they perceived that the great majority of the troops remained in the camp of the counter-revolution, they abandoned the barricades to the governmental forces.

On all hands one could see the incapacity of the petty bourgeoisie to prepare, guide, organize and lead a revolutionary movement to a successful conclusion.

The most remarkable thing about the repressive forces of the state was their ability to shift rapidly from one place to another, and also the fact that the most warmly defended strategic points were the bridges.

The morale of the troops in the first forty-eight hours was low. Their demoralization came from their indecision as to the nature of the movement and of those who were directing it.

In Asturias, it is said, there are 10,000 dead. It is a veritable catastrophe, but what glorious and fruitful lessons to be learned!

In Viscaya, there were some thirty dead and 500 prisoners. No street fighting took place, but there were nocturnal fusillades. At Bilbao, an extraordinary enthusiasm prevailed among the combatants, armed with knives, carbines, rifles and revolvers.

BARCELONA, October 1934.

X.

The A. F. of L. at San Francisco

A SUDDEN perceptible trembling passing through the earth and communicated to the immense walls and ceilings of the San Francisco Civic Auditorium excited the delegates at one of the initial American Federation of Labor convention sessions. An earthquake—a purely natural phenomenon—but if transmutations from nature to the field of convention debates were possible, they would be recorded, at later sessions, in the reverberations, heard even amidst this motley gathering, from the gigantic labor struggles that had taken place during the preceding months. "Coming events cast their shadows before," says the proverb; and truly, in these tremors are indicated the approach of new eruptions.

They are also the first external signs pointing to the crossroads that the A. F. of L. is about to reach, and in view of which the actions of this convention assume unusual significance. The attentive observer, and much more so the active participant in the labor movement, can easily anticipate the future course, filled with far more intense struggles growing out of the rapid changes in class relationships in the present epoch. No matter how vociferously the official A. F. of L. leaders seek to deny the existence of the class struggle and no matter how stubbornly they reject the conclusions flowing from it, its realities and problems are pressed to the fore in every question of organization, of policy and of tactics. For them also the alternatives arise: to accept progressive changes in order to make further advance, or to resist, on the penalty of splits and débâcle, giving rise to the new rival unions.

At the convention the realities of the class struggle found their reflection most outstandingly in such issues as the question of industrial unionism and the enlargement of the Executive Council. On the surface, the changes accomplished, and accomplished only after much hesitation and with numerous obstacles remaining, may appear very small. Nevertheless the effect and inevitable further development of the actions taken will be of considerable importance for the future course of the A. F. of L. An industrial basis of union organization is accepted for certain mass production industries—automobile, aluminum and cement. The Executive Council is enlarged by the addition of seven new members. They do not differ in political outlook or in other respects from the

relected incumbents who usually remain on the council until they die off. They were added in an effort to present something new and more effective. Far more fundamental, however, is the fact that these changes were brought about by the pressure of changing objective conditions. A considerably strengthened monopoly capitalism is seeking its way out of the crisis at the expense of the workers and has accepted the revamped New Deal policies as their vehicle, agreeing to "collective bargaining" but throwing down the gauntlet to the trade unions. In every important issue the menace of company unions is looming more seriously while the powerful monopoly concerns tighten their grip on the means of exploitation and on the government in preparation for new world conquests to be accomplished by military means. But on the other side is a powerful rank and file membership, strengthened by hundreds of thousands of new recruits, tempered in several severe battles, face to face with the menace of a permanent army of unemployed, chafing under the economic pressure of a rising cost of living and intensified exploitation, and struggling to get an organized foothold in the basic industries as a means of making further advances. The lines are drawn for bigger battles and the rank and file presses onward. It is not yet conscious of its direction but its being set into motion imposes new demands upon the union leadership. The rank and file has also thrown down its gauntlet. By virtue of these conditions the real issue in the American Federation of Labor is the question of the conservative leadership versus the militant rank and file.

The A. F. of L., like any other living organism, is a product of its environment. It is composed of human material, the essence and the actions of which are not summed up in the abstraction of each separate individual, no matter how low or how exalted his position. On the contrary, it is summed up in the ensemble of its social relation, i.e., of class relations. The antagonisms of class relations flowing from the contradictions of capitalist society shape the course in each historical period of this living organism as a whole, including the human material of which it is made up. But this course is not shaped by a mechanical process that disregards the actions of the participants in it. While the mode of production is

the basic factor determining all change in the A. F. of L., as in society as a whole, in its interaction with other social forces and institutions, the efforts of the human material play their important part. Out of the objective conditions of each historical stage arise the new needs and the new possibilities by which the human participants are led to work out a course of action designed to fulfill these needs. Within the A. F. of L. this will be expressed in corresponding changes of outlook, methods, structure, etc. Out of the changes in environment, the state of mind and actions of the membership change and influence its future course. The militants produced by these circumstances, not chosen by themselves, and who still have to work with the material handed down by the past will be able to make history as the active participants in the shaping of the future course.

Leadership is an enormous factor in the historic process and cannot be considered a merely accidental element. Leadership emerges and enters into a whole chain of objective forces and the link it constitutes in this chain is strong or weak according to its position at each stage of development. The almost uninterrupted and unchallenged sway of the reactionary leadership under the rein of the late Samuel Gompers, rested on a foundation of limiting the union within the narrow and exclusive craft groove; it was kept entirely subservient to capitalism. The leadership solidified its position on that foundation and succeeded in frustrating or annihilating all opposition. In turn this led to its degeneration and corruption. In this sense, the leadership, developed over a long period of time, reflected the political backwardness of the American working class, its permeation by bourgeois ideology and its lack of consciousness. The concessions that capitalism could afford to give the workers in the form of higher standards, particularly to the privileged sections of the craft unions, facilitated the development and solidification of this leadership. Nor was it ever effectively challenged by a revolutionary party. Today, however, in the conditions of deep-going changes in national economy, the A. F. of L. leadership, which is still the same in theory and practise as that presided over by Gompers, is appearing as the weak link in the chain. This is the explanation of its present paradoxical position. Reactionary defenders of capitalism, these leaders, nevertheless, find themselves compelled to give way to the enormous pressure from below and to give formal heed, at least to an extent, to the demands of the rank and file workers.

When they entered the labor boards established by the government during the initial period of the New Deal policies, they hoped for the approach of a new and stable equilibrium. But no sooner had the working masses come into motion to realize the aspirations for union organization, and no sooner had the government showed its true character by mobilizing the armed state forces against strikes and trade unions in action, than these conflicts found their reflection within the unions. The masses in action began pressing for more militant policies and for more effective methods of organization. Expressive of this conflict was the action of delegates from eighty automobile workers local unions meeting last summer to discuss merger into one big union. By resolution they ordered all A. F. of L. organizers to leave the floor and take seats on the platform, or to walk out of the conference. These delegates said in no uncertain terms: "We want to run our own show." One could mention also, among many other examples, the action of the delegates to the textile workers' union convention overruling their officials and declaring for a nationwide strike; the long struggle of the more progressive section of the steel workers' union for an aggressive policy of organization and for a nationwide strike; as well as the demands of the conference of federal unions for industrial unionism.

This conflict was at the bottom of all the issues before the A. F. of L. convention. The suspicion and distrust between leadership and the rank and file is certainly mutual. And the healthy respect and the tormenting fear exhibited by the former in all the actions they took with an eye to a rebellious constituency, is unquestionably genuine. Hence many of the most reactionary elements among the leadership supported progressive measures and demagogically invoked, without blush or shame, the threats of the rebellion that would ensue should the convention fail. John L. Lewis—became the spokesman for the idea of a more militant organization policy!

He became the particular sponsor of the industrial union project and the proposal to enlarge the Executive Council. But then, let us not forget that he has had particularly sad experiences (sad for him) with rank and file revolts and he knows what they mean. John L. Lewis was seconded on the industrial union project by Chas. P. Howard of the typographical union, and by Dan Tobin of the teamsters union and Wm. F. Hutcheson of the carpenters union on the council measure. It was Dan Tobin who at last year's convention nearly came to blows with Lewis on this same issue and who at this convention referred to the hundreds of thousands of new A. F. of L. recruits as "rubbish". But he has also had some sad experiences. The rank and file members of his own union, under new leadership, have been taking matters into their own hands. Witness Minneapolis. Truly, history sometimes creates "circumstances and relationships that enable grotesque mediocrities to strut about in hero's garb". These labor agents of capitalism for the moment covered their odious record with the progressive mantle.

They knew that they had to yield something. The rank and file is moving forward in leaps; the leaders, conscious of their rôle to obstruct this process but fearful of tearing themselves away from the masses, are compelled to take one or two steps forward. At the same time they prepare to aim a blow from another direction. Coupled with the progressive measures adopted comes the campaign to drive communism and the communists out of the trade unions. It must be admitted that their task is greatly facilitated by the suicidal policy of the Stalinists. So much so that to the average trade unionist communism appears today in its revised Stalinist edition of fostering rival unions artificially nourished, of fostering division and splits in the workers' ranks that paralyze their striking ability. The result is that while the trade union bureaucrats are in mortal fear of the ideas of communism they are in an easier position to use the name as a label of disrepute with which to brand the rebellious rank and file workers in an effort to crush their opposition. We do not mean by this the artificial rank and file creations of the Stalinists, that is, the network of paper committees arbitrarily chosen by them, representing nobody and upon whom they confer the title "rank and file leadership". But the Stalinists have made efforts to meet the anti-communist campaign in their own fashion; not by warning the genuine rank and file unionists that it is aimed against them but by modestly informing all and sundry that the official communist party is the . . . best fighter for the working class interests. At one of its meetings held recently to consider ways and means of facing the attack, one of the members present asked if the workers know that the C. P. is the best fighter for their interests, if they accept that as a fact. The little bureaucrat who was in charge of the meeting answered: "No, they do not, but that is why we must tell them." The *Daily Worker* has been busily engaged in telling them, day in and day out. By the actions of the Stalinists, it would not be known. . . .

On a whole the anti-communist drive did not get off to a good start at the A. F. of L. convention. The shadow of the powerful rank and file, against whom it was directed, haunted the bureaucrats and stayed their hand. This had a great deal to do also with the fact that the strike truce offered by President Roosevelt just in time for the convention, did not receive the warm reception which might otherwise have been expected. But there need be no illusions that any reversal has taken place in A. F. of L. policy on relations of government, capital and labor. Its forgotten preamble still reads, "a struggle is going on in all the nations of the civilized world between the oppressors and the oppressed of all countries, a struggle between the capitalist and the laborer, and will work disastrous results to the toiling millions if they are not combined for mutual protection". But its official policy over a long period of time has been based essentially on cooperation of capital and labor, formerly under the slogans of an increasing share in prosperity, the improving of the methods of production and the elimination of waste in industry by accepting the trade union as "custodians of skill and craft". Since the aggravation of technological unemployment, and more so, since the beginning of the crisis, the emphasis has of necessity shifted in the direction of demands for reduction of working hours, the six-hour day and five-day week, together with the demand for increasing the purchasing power of

the masses. This also, according to the philosophy of the A. F. of L. leadership, is to be attained by collaboration with capitalism and with its government. In 1919-20 it was committed to the Plumb plan of nationalization, but such ideas have since been dropped altogether. Today it attempts to reach essentially the same goal by a somewhat different route. One of its main platform planks is the demand for greater governmental supervision of industry and of social relations, designed to strengthen further its ties with the government. It is a notorious fact that the international orientation of the A. F. of L. has always followed, if not officially then at least in reality, the direction given by the Department of State. When American imperialism began pressing its policy of broader expansion in Latin America, the A. F. of L. created the Pan-American Federation of Labor as its own vehicle to do its part, and so long as the administration opposed all ideas of recognition of the Soviet Union it could count on the whole trade union bureaucracy as its advance agents. From this interlocking partnership the Stalinists drew "evidence" to support their specious theory of social-Fascism, yes, and even to paint the A. F. of L. in their own imagination as the very incarnation of Fascism. However, at this particular time, when the participation of labor leaders in the machinery of government is being extended through the various code authorities and labor relations boards, the A. F. of L. is obliged to make a formal condemnation of Fascism. Naturally so. Let it not be forgotten that a Fascist movement developing and aiming for power anywhere, will involve a life-and-death struggle with the labor movement. Only on the ruins of the demolished trade unions could a Fascist dictatorship be realized in actuality. Approaching the question in its reverse sense will also mean that the A. F. of L. with all its conservatism must be made a link in the united front struggle against Fascism.

At the San Francisco convention the A. F. of L. advanced its own economic program, embodying demands for the extension and strengthening of the N.R.A., enforcement of industrial code provisions, strengthening of the compliance boards, assurance of the right of collective bargaining and the right of labor to become an "active participant in the supposed partnership of government,

industry and labor". The leadership makes it perfectly clear that this also implies the strengthening of the A. F. of L. as a bulwark against communism. At first glance this program may appear as tending to harmonize with the aim of the general body of American trade unionists for union control of the conditions of work. In reality the aims are not at all synonymous. The mere objective of union recognition has led to fierce struggles throughout the country. They are only the beginning of their expansion on a much larger scale, out of which the workers will rapidly learn to set their aim for workers' control of production. Meanwhile this aim of today, of union control of conditions of work, is translated by the leadership into the attainment of a peacefully existing partnership of exploiters and exploited on the basis of guaranteed "reasonable profits". It envisages a stable equilibrium with the conditions of exploitation securely maintained and the government functioning as the stabilizing factor. However, in every one of the great strike struggles that has taken place are already indicated in concrete form the acutely intensified contradictions of capitalism tearing away at the very foundation of this equilibrium. The government shifts its emphasis ever more to its real and authoritative expression as a machinery of armed forces for the defense of the private ownership of the means of production and for the maintenance of the bourgeois right of exploitation. Changes of relationship of forces within the A. F. of L.—essentially between the Right and the Left—will follow.

The ground is being prepared for a genuine nationwide progressive movement firmly linked with the militant body of rank and file trade unionists. Its possibilities for success are excellent indeed and await only the guiding hand of those who are able to build—the politically conscious elements. Objective conditions at the present stage have made it a most imperative need, and the conscious elements cannot shirk their task. They are obliged to take the lead in working out a course of action to meet this imperative need. The Workers Party of the United States which is now in the process of formation through the merger of the Communist League of America and the American Workers Party will consider this one of its foremost duties.

Arne SWABECK

Power and the Russian Workers

Dear Comrade Valentinov:

IN YOUR "Meditations on the Masses", dated July 8, you deal, by raising the question of the "activism" of the working class, with a fundamental question, that of the maintenance by the proletariat of its rôle of hegemony in our state. Although all the demands of the Opposition strive towards this goal, I agree with you that not everything has been said on this question. Up to the present, we have always examined it in connection with the totality of the problem of the conquest and preservation of the political power; whereas to throw a better light on it, it ought to be dealt with separately, as a special question having a value of its own. At bottom, the events themselves have already brought it into prominence.

The Opposition will always retain as one of its merits towards the party, which nothing can deprive it of, the fact that at the proper time it sounded the alarm about the frightful decline in the spirit of activity of the working masses and about its ever growing indifference towards the destiny of the dictatorship of the proletariat and the Soviet state.

What characterizes the flood of scandals that have just been exposed, what is most dangerous in it, is precisely this passivity of the masses (a passivity which is still greater in the communist mass than among

those not in the party) towards the unprecedented manifestations of despotism which have taken place. Workers witnessed them, but passed them off without protesting, or contented themselves with grumbling a little out of fear of those who were in power or simply out of political indifference. From the time of the Chubarovsk deadlock (not to go back to remoter times) down to the abuses of Smolensk, of Artiemovsk, etc., you always hear the same refrain: "We've known about it for some time now. . . ."

Thievery, prevarication, violence, graft, unheard-of abuse of power, boundless despotism, drunkenness, debauchery: all this is spoken of as of facts already known not for months but for years, but also something which everybody tolerated without knowing why.

I do not need to explain that when the world bourgeoisie clamors about the vices of the Soviet state, we can ignore them with tranquil contempt. Too well do we know the moral purity of the bourgeois governments and parliaments of the whole world. But it is not after them that we should model ourselves: with us it is a question of a workers' state. Today nobody can deny the frightful ravages of political indifference within the working class.

In addition, the question of the causes of this indifference and the means calculated to eliminate it, proves to be essential.

Although written more than six years ago, Rakovsky's letter is even more pertinent today. It deals with an aspect of the Russian revolution which no-one, to our knowledge, has yet attempted to submit to a detailed Marxian analysis: the effects of power as such upon a class and a party which have never exercised it before and which are handicapped by the additional disadvantages of a protracted isolation from governmental coöperation by culturally more developed nations and of a bureaucratic régime at home which deforms the proletarian character of the state. It is interesting to record, also, that Rakovsky himself capitulated recently to the régime and the morals which he so pitilessly lays bare in his letter. To its intrinsic value is thus added its interest as a self-condemnation! Rakovsky wrote it shortly after his expulsion from the Russian Communist party, together with thousands of other Oppositionists, and his exile to Astrakhan. It is addressed to another Oppositionist, Valentinov, who, prior to his own expulsion and exile, was the editor of Trud, the official daily newspaper of the All-Russian Council of Trade Unions.—ED.

But this imposes upon us the obligation of dealing with it fundamentally, scientifically, by subjecting it to a thorough analysis. Such a phenomenon deserves that we accord it our most concentrated attention.

The explanations which you give of this fact are, without a doubt, correct: every one of us has already presented them in his speeches; they have, in part, already found their reflection in our platform. Nevertheless, these interpretations and the remedies proposed for getting out of this painful situation, have had and still have an empirical character; they relate to each particular case and do not settle the essence of the question.

In my opinion, this has happened because the question in itself is a new one. Up to now, we have witnessed plenty of examples of the spirit of activity of the working class sinking and declining until it even reached the point of political reaction. But these examples appeared to us, both here and abroad, during a period when the proletariat was still fighting for the conquest of political power.

We could not have an example of the spirit of decline in the proletariat at a time when it had power in its hands, for the simple reason that ours is the first case in history where the working class has held the power for so long a time.

Up to now we have known what could happen to the proletariat, that is, what oscillations could take place in its state of mind, when it is an oppressed and exploited class; but it is only now that we can evaluate on the basis of facts the changes occurring in the state of mind of the working class when it takes over *the leadership*.

This political position (of ruling class) is not devoid of dangers; they are, on the contrary, quite great. I do not have in mind here the objective difficulties due to the whole ensemble of historical circumstances: capitalist encirclement outside and petty bourgeois encirclement inside the country. No, it is a question of the difficulties inherent in every new ruling class, which are the consequence of the conquest and the exercise of the power itself, of the aptitude or the inaptitude to utilize it.

You understand that these difficulties would continue to exist up to a certain point even if we were to suppose for a moment that the country was populated only by proletarian masses and if, on the outside, only proletarian states existed. These difficulties might be called "the professional risks" of power.

Indeed, the position of a class fighting for the conquest of power and that of a class which holds it in its hands, are different. I repeat that in speaking of dangers I do not have in mind the relationships which exist with the other classes, but rather those which are created in the ranks of the triumphant class.

What does a class taking the offensive represent? A maximum of unity and of cohesion. All craft and group, to say nothing of individual interests, retire to the background. All the initiative is in the hands of the militant mass itself and of its revolutionary vanguard, connected with this mass in the most intimately organic fashion.

When a class seizes power, one of its sections becomes the agent of this power. Thus the bureaucracy comes forward. In a socialist state, where capitalist accumulation is forbidden by the members of the ruling party, this differentiation commences by being functional; then it becomes social. I am thinking here of the social position of a communist who has at his disposal an automobile, a good apartment, a regular vacation, who receives the maximum wage authorized by the party—a position which differs from that of the communist working in the coal mines and receiving from 50 to 60 rubles a month. As to the workers and employees, you know that they are divided into eighteen different categories. . . .

Another consequence is that part of the functions formerly performed by the whole party, by the whole class, now become attributes of power, that is, only of a certain quantity of persons in this party and in this class.

The unity and the cohesion which were formerly the natural consequence of the revolutionary class struggle can now be maintained only thanks to a whole system of measures having as their aim the preservation of the equilibrium between the various groupings of this class and party, their subordination to the fundamental goal.

But that is a long and delicate process. It consists in politically educating the dominant class to the skill which it must acquire in order to keep hold of the state apparatus, the party, and the trade unions, to control and direct them.

I repeat: it is a matter of education. No class ever came into the world possessing the art of administration. It is acquired only thanks to experience, to mistakes committed, that is, by drawing the lessons from the mistakes one commits himself. A Soviet constitution, however ideal, cannot assure the working class the application, without obstacles, of its dictatorship and its governmental control, if the proletariat does not know how to utilize the rights which the constitution accords it. The lack of harmony existing between the political capacities of a given class, its administrative skill, and the constitutional, juridical forms which it works out for its use when it conquers power, is an historical fact. It can be observed in the evolution of all classes, in part also in the history of the bourgeoisie. The English bourgeoisie, for example, fought a good many battles not only to recast the constitution after its own interests, but also in order to be able to profit by its rights and, in particular, by its right to vote, fully and without obstacles. The novel by Charles Dickens, *Pickwick Papers*, contains many of those scenes of the epoch of English Constitutionalism, when the ruling group, assisted by the administrative apparatus, overturned into the ditches the coaches bearing opposition voters, so that they would not arrive in time to the ballot boxes.

This process of differentiation is perfectly natural with the bourgeoisie which has triumphed or which is about to triumph. Indeed, taken in the broadest sense of the term, it constitutes a series of economic and even of class groupings. We know the existence of the big, the middle and the petty bourgeoisie; we know that there are financial, commercial, industrial and agrarian bourgeoisies. As a result of certain events, like wars and revolutions, regroupings occur within the ranks of the bourgeoisie itself; new strata appear, beginning to play a rôle proper to them, as for example proprietors, purchasers of national wealth or the *nouveaux riches*, as they are called, who come forward after every war that lasts for any length of time. During the French Revolution, at the period of the Directory, these *nouveaux riches* constituted one of the factors of the reaction.

In general, the history of the Third Estate triumphing in France in 1789 is extremely instructive. In the first place, this Third Estate was itself extremely variegated. It extended over everybody who was not a part of the nobility or the clergy; thus, it comprised not only all the varieties of the bourgeoisie, but also the workers and the poverty-stricken peasants. It is only gradually, after a long fight, after armed interventions, repeated on numerous occasions, that the legal possibility for the whole of the Third Estate to participate in the administration of the country was realized in 1792. The political reaction which began even before Thermidor, consists in that *the power began to pass, both formally and in fact, into the hands of an increasingly restricted number of citizens*. Little by little, first by the fact of the situation and then by law, the masses of the people were eliminated from the government of the country.

It is true that here the pressure of the reaction made itself felt primarily along the seams and edges, joining together the scraps of classes which comprised the Third Estate. It is also true that if one examines a distinct grouping of the bourgeoisie, it does not present class contours as clearcut as those which, for example, separate the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, that is, two classes playing an entirely different rôle in production.

Furthermore, in the course of the French Revolution, during the period of its decline, the power not only acted to eliminate, following the lines of the seams and edges, social groups which only yesterday marched together by agreement and were united by the same revolutionary aim, but it also disintegrated more or less homogeneous social masses. Functional specialization, the given class bringing forth out of its ranks the upper circles of functionaries—that is the result of the fissures which were converted, thanks to the pressure of the counter-revolution, into yawning gaps. It is as a result of this that the dominant class itself produced the contradictions during the struggle.

The contemporaries of the French Revolution, those who partic-

ipated in it, and even more so the historians of the epoch that followed, occupied themselves with the question of the causes that promoted the degeneration of the Jacobin party.

On more than one occasion, Robespierre put his supporters on guard against the consequences that the *intoxication of power* might involve. He warned them that, having it in their hands, they ought not be *too self-presumptive*, "get puffed up", he said, or as we would say now, not allow oneself to be infected by "Jacobin vanity". But as we shall see later, Robespierre himself contributed a good deal to letting the power slip out of the hands of the petty bourgeoisie leaning upon the Parisian workers.

We shall not quote here the indications supplied by the contemporaries concerning the various causes for the decomposition of the Jacobins, as for example the tendency to enrich themselves, the participation in contract awards, supplies, etc. Rather let us point to a strange and well-known fact: the opinion of Babeuf that the fall of the Jacobins was greatly facilitated by the noble dames by whom they were so deeply smitten. He addressed himself to the Jacobins in these terms: "What are you doing, pusillanimous plebeians? Today they hold you in their arms, tomorrow they will strangle you!" (If automobiles had existed at the time of the French Revolution, we would have had the factor of the "automobile harem", pointed to by comrade Sosnovsky as having played a fairly important rôle in shaping the ideology of our Soviet and party bureaucracy.)

But what played the most important rôle in the isolation of Robespierre and the Jacobin Club, what separated them sharply from the masses (workers and petty bourgeoisie), was, besides the liquidation of all the elements of the Left, beginning with the Enragés, the Hébertists and the Chaumists (in general, the whole Paris Commune), the gradual elimination of the elective principle and its replacement by the principle of APPOINTMENTS.

The dispatch of commissioners to the armies or to the towns where the counter-revolution was raising its head, was not only a legitimate but an indispensable job. But when, little by little, Robespierre began to replace the judges and the commissioners of the various sections of Paris who, up to then, had been elected in the same way as the judges; when he began to appoint the chairmen of the revolutionary committees and reached the point of substituting functionaries for the whole leadership of the Commune—he could thereby only reinforce the bureaucracy and kill off popular initiative.

Thus, the régime of Robespierre, instead of raising the spirit of activity of the masses, who were already oppressed by the economic crisis and above all by the provisions crisis, only aggravated the evil and facilitated the work of the anti-democratic forces.

Dumas, the chairman of the revolutionary tribunal, complained to Robespierre that he was unable to find any jurors for the tribunal, for nobody wanted to fill this function.

But Robespierre experienced this indifference of the Parisian masses in his own case when, on the 10th of Thermidor, he was marched through the streets of Paris, wounded and bleeding, without anyone fearing that the popular masses might intervene in behalf of the dictator of yesterday.

Obviously, it would be ridiculous to attribute the fall of Robespierre as well as the defeat of the revolutionary democracy to the *principle of appointments*.

But without a doubt, it accelerated the action of the other factors. Among them the decisive rôle was played by the difficulties of provisioning, caused in large part by two years of bad harvest (as well as by the disturbances connected with the passing of the large agrarian property of the nobility to the small scale cultivation of the land by the peasants), by the constant rise of the price of bread and meat, by the fact that the Jacobins did not, at the outset, want to resort to administrative measures to curb the avidity of the rich peasants and the speculators. When the Jacobins finally decided, under the violent pressure of the masses, to adopt the law on the maximum, this law, operating under conditions of a free market and capitalist production, could act inevitably only as a palliative.

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Let us now pass to the reality in which we live.

I believe that it is necessary first of all to point out that when

we use expressions like "party" and "masses", we should not lose sight of the content which the history of the last ten years has introduced into these terms.

The working class and the party—no longer *physically* but *morally*—are no longer what they were ten years ago. I am not exaggerating when I say that the militant of 1917 would hardly recognize himself in the person of the militant of 1928. A profound change has taken place in the anatomy and the physiology of the working class.

In my opinion, it is necessary to concentrate attention on the study of the changes in the tissues and in their functions. The analysis of the changes that have occurred will have to show us the way out of the situation that has been created. I do not claim to present this analysis here; I will confine myself only to a few observations.

In speaking of the working class it is necessary to find a reply to a whole series of questions, for example:

What is the percentage of workers now engaged in our industry who entered it after the revolution, and the percentage which worked there before it?

What is the proportion of those who formerly participated in the revolutionary movement, took part in strikes, were deported or imprisoned, took part in the civil war or the Red army?

What is the percentage of workers engaged in industry who work there without interruption? How many of them work there only occasionally?

What is the proportion in industry of semi-proletarian, semi-peasant elements, etc. . . .

If we go right down and penetrate to the very depths of the proletariat, semi-proletarian and in general the toiling masses, we will encounter whole sections of the population about whom very little is said among us. I do not have in mind here only the unemployed, who constitute an ever growing danger which was, however, clearly indicated by the Opposition. I am thinking of the mendicant or half-pauperized masses who, thanks to the tiny subsidies granted by the state, are encamped on the outskirts of pauperism, thievery and prostitution.

We cannot imagine how people sometimes live a bare few steps away from us. It occasionally happens that one collides with phenomena whose existence in a Soviet state could not even be suspected, and which leave the impression of a suddenly discovered abyss. It is not a question of pleading the cause of the Soviet power by invoking the fact that it has not yet been able to rid itself of the painful heritage left it by the czarist and capitalist régime. No, but in our epoch, under our régime, we record the existence in the body of the working class of crevices into which the bourgeoisie could drive a wedge.

At one time, under the bourgeois power, the conscious part of the working class drew this great mass, including the semi-vagabonds, behind it. The fall of the capitalist régime was to bring about the liberation of the *entire proletariat*. The semi-vagabond elements rendered the bourgeoisie and the capitalist state responsible for their situation; they looked to the revolution to bring about a change in their conditions. At the present time, these circles are not content: their position has not improved, or only barely. They begin to look with hostility upon the Soviet power as well as that part of the working class which labors in industry. They become particularly the enemies of the Soviet, party and trade union functionaries. Sometimes you hear them speak of the summits of the working class as the "new nobility".

I will now dwell here on the differentiation which the power has introduced into the proletariat, and which I designated above as "functional". The function has modified the organ itself, that is, the psychology of those who are charged with the various tasks of management in the administration and the economy of the state, has changed to such a point that not only objectively but subjectively, not only materially but morally, they have ceased to be a part of this same working class. Thus, for example, the manager of a factory playing at being a "satrap", in spite of the fact that he is a communist, despite his proletarian origin, despite the fact that he was still at the bench a few years ago, will not embody in the eyes of the workers the best qualities that the proletariat possesses. Molotov can, to his heart's content, put an equality sign

between the dictatorship of the proletariat and our state with its bureaucratic degenerations, and what is more, the brutes of Smolensk, the swindlers of Tashkent and the adventurers of Artimovsk. By this he only discredits the dictatorship without disarming the legitimate discontentment of the workers.

If we pass over to the party itself, in addition to all the nuances that we encounter in the working class, it is necessary to add the turncoats from other classes. The social structure of the party is much more heterogeneous than that of the proletariat. This was always the case, naturally with this difference, that while the party lived an intense ideological life, it fused this social amalgam into a single alloy, thanks to the struggle of the active revolutionary class.

But the power is a cause, in the party as well as in the working class, of the same differentiation which reveals the seams existing between the various social layers.

The bureaucracy of the Soviets and the party is a fact of a new order. It is not a question here of isolated cases, of hitches in the conduct of some comrade, but rather of a new social category to which a whole treatise ought to be devoted.

On the subject of the draft of the program of the Communist International, I wrote among other things the following to Leon Davidovitch [Trotsky]:

"In connection with Chapter IV (the transitional period). The manner in which the rôle of the communist parties in the period of the dictatorship of the proletariat is formulated, is pretty weak. To be sure, this vague manner of speaking of the rôle of the party towards the working class and the state is not due to chance. The antithesis existing between proletarian democracy and bourgeois democracy is pointed out; but not a single word is uttered to explain what the party must do in order to realize, in actuality, this proletarian democracy. 'Draw the masses into participation in the construction', 'reëducate its own nature' (Bukharin loves to speak of this last point, among others, and more particularly in connection with the question of the cultural revolution): these are true affirmations, from the point of view of history, and have long been known; but they are transformed into platitudes if one does not introduce into them the experience that has accumulated in the course of the ten years of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

"It is here that arises the question of the methods of leadership which have such an important rôle.

"But our leaders do not like to speak of it, for fear that it may appear that they themselves are still far from having 'reëducated their own nature'."

If I were charged with writing a draft of the program of the Communist International, I would have devoted not a little space in this chapter (the transitional period) to the theory of Lenin on the state during the dictatorship of the proletariat and on the rôle of the party and its leadership in the creation of a proletarian democracy, such as it should be and not a bureaucracy of the Soviets and the party, like the one now existing.

Comrade Preobrazhensky promises to devote a special chapter in his book, *The Conquests of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat in the Year XI of the Revolution*, to the Soviet bureaucracy. I hope that he will not forget the rôle of the party bureaucracy, either, which plays an even greater rôle in the Soviet state than its blood-sister of the Soviets. I have expressed the hope to him that he will study this specific sociological phenomenon in all its aspects. There is no communist brochure which, in relating the treason of the German social democratic party on August 4, 1914, does not at the same time point out the fatal rôle which the bureaucratic upper circles both of the party and the trade unions played in the history of the backsliding of this party. On the other hand, very little has been said, and that in very general terms, about the rôle played by our Soviet and party bureaucracy in the disaggregation of both the party and the Soviet state. This is a sociological phenomenon of the highest importance which cannot, however, be understood and grasped in its full scope without examining the consequences which it has involved in changing the ideology of the party and the working class.

You ask what has become of the spirit of activity of the party and of our proletariat? Where has their revolutionary initiative gone to? Where are their ideological interests, their revolutionary

valor, their proletarian pride? You are astonished at there being so much sluggishness, cowardice, pusillanimity, arrivism and so many other things that I would have added on my own account? How does it happen that men having a valorous revolutionary past, whose personal honesty is beyond question, who on more than one occasion gave examples of devotion to the revolution, should have been transformed into piteous bureaucrats? Where does this horrible *Smerdiakovstchina** come from of which Trotsky spoke in his letter on the declarations of Krestinsky and Antonov-Ovseienko?

But if one may look forward to turncoats coming from the bourgeoisie and the petty bourgeoisie, intellectuals, "individuals" in general, backsliding from the standpoint of ideas and ethics, how explain the same phenomenon when the working class is involved? Many comrades note the fact of its relative passivity, and they cannot dissemble their disillusionment.

It is true that other comrades have seen, in a certain campaign connected with the hoarding of grain, symptoms of revolutionary good health, a proof that the reflexes of the class still live in the party. Just recently, comrade Ischenko wrote me (or more exactly, wrote in theses which he will certainly have sent to other comrades as well) that the hoarding of grain and self-criticism are due to resistance by the proletarian section of the leadership and the party. Unfortunately, it must be said, this is not exact. The two facts result from a combination arranged in the upper circles which is not due to the pressure of workers' criticism; it is out of political, and sometimes out of group, or I should say, out of factional considerations that a section of the upper strata of the party pursued this line. One can speak only of one proletarian pressure: that which had the Opposition at its head. But it must be said plainly: this pressure did not suffice to keep the Opposition inside the party; even more, it did not succeed in changing its policy. I am in agreement with Leon Davidovitch who showed, by a series of indisputable examples, the revolutionary, genuine and positive rôle which certain revolutionary movements played by their defeat: the Paris Commune, the December 1905 insurrection in Moscow. The former assured the maintenance of the republican form of government in France; the latter opened up the road to constitutional reform in Russia. However, the effects of these triumphant defeats are of short duration if they are not reinforced by a new revolutionary wave.

Saddest of all is the fact that no reflex takes place on the part of the party and the mass. For two years, an especially bitter struggle developed between the Opposition and the upper circles of the party; in the course of the last two months events took place that ought to have opened the eyes of the blindest. Still, one does not yet feel that the party masses have intervened.

Also comprehensible is the pessimism displayed by certain comrades and which I feel peering out of your questions too.

Babeuf, after coming out of the prison of l'Abbaye and casting a glance about him, began to ask what had become of the people of Paris, the workers of the Saint-Antoine and Saint-Marceau suburbs, those who took the Bastille on July 14, 1789, the Tuileries Palace on August 10, 1792, who besieged the Convention on May 30, 1793—to say nothing of their numerous other armed actions. He summed up his observations in a single phrase, in which one feels the bitterness of the revolutionist: "It is harder to reëducate the people in an attachment to Liberty than to conquer it."

We have seen why the people of Paris forgot the allure of Liberty: the famine, unemployment, the suppression of the revolutionary cadres (many of the leaders had been guillotined), the removal of the masses from the management of the country. All this brought about such a great physical and moral exhaustion of the masses, that the people of Paris and the rest of France required thirty-seven years of respite before beginning a new revolution.

Babeuf formulated his program in two words (I speak here of his 1794 program): "Liberty and an elected Commune."

I must make a confession here: I have never let myself be swayed by the hope that it would suffice for the leaders to appear in the party meetings and the workers' gatherings for them to win over the masses to the side of the Opposition. I always con-

*Smerdiakov is the eternally *The Brothers Karamazov*, who whining figure in Dostoevsky's finally commits suicide.—ED.

sidered such hopes, which came from the side of the Leningrad leaders, as being a certain survival from the period when they took the official ovations and applause for the expression of the true sentiment of the masses, attributing them to their imaginary popularity.

I would go further: this is what explains for me the abrupt turn-about-face they undertook in their conduct.

They came over to the Opposition, hoping to gain power in a short lapse of time. Towards this end they joined with the 1923 Opposition. When somebody from the "group without leaders" reproached Zinoviev and Kamenev for having left their ally Trotsky in the lurch, Kamenev replied: "We needed Trotsky to govern; for getting back into the party, he is a dead weight."

However, the point of departure, the premise should have been that the job of educating the party and the working class is a difficult and long-term job, all the more so because the mind must first be cleared of all the impurities introduced into it by the practise of the Soviets and the party and the bureaucracy of these institutions.

It must not be lost sight of that the majority of the party members (to say nothing of the young communists) have the most erroneous conception of the tasks, the functions and the structure of the party, namely: the conception that the bureaucracy teaches them by its example, its practical conduct and its stereotyped formulæ. All the workers who joined the party after the civil war came in, in most cases, after 1923 (the Lenin enrollment); they have no idea of what the régime of the party once was. The majority of them is devoid of that revolutionary class education which is acquired in the struggle, in life, in conscious practise. At one time, this class consciousness was obtained in the struggle against capitalism; today, it must take shape in participating in the building up of socialism. But our bureaucracy, having made a hollow phrase of this participation, the workers nowhere acquire such an education. I exclude, of course—as being an abnormal means of educating the class—the fact that our bureaucracy, by reducing real wages, by aggravating the working conditions, by promoting the development of unemployment, provokes the workers to struggle and arouses class consciousness; but then, it is hostile to the socialist state.

In the conception of Lenin and of all of us, the task of the party leadership lies precisely in preserving the party and the working class from the corruptive influence of privileges, of favors and of tolerations inherent in the power by reason of its contact with the débris of the old nobility and the petty bourgeoisie; the perverse influence of the N.E.P., the temptation of bourgeois morals and ideology, should have been forestalled.

At the same time we had the hope that the party leadership would create a new apparatus, truly worker and peasant, new trade unions, truly proletarian, and new morals in daily life.

It should be said frankly, plainly and aloud: the party apparatus has not accomplished this task. It has displayed, in this double task of preservation and education, the most thorough incompetence; it is bankrupt; it is insolvent.

We were convinced long ago, and the last eight months should have proved it to everybody, that the party leadership was marching along the most perilous path. It still continues to march along this road.

The reproaches we address to it do not concern, so to speak, the *quantitative* side of its work, but rather the *qualitative* side. This point should be underlined, otherwise we shall again be inundated with figures about the infinite and integral successes obtained by the Soviet and party apparatuses. It is high time an end were put to this statistical charlatany.

Open the minutes of the fifteenth congress of the party. Read Kossior's report on the organization's activity. What do you find there? I quote literally: "Prodigious growth of democracy within the party. . . . The organizational activity of the party has vastly expanded" . . . etc.

And then of course, to reinforce it: figures, figures and more figures. And this was said at the moment when there were in the files of the Central Committee documents testifying to the frightful disintegration of the party and the Soviet apparatuses, to the stifling of all control by the masses, to a terrifying oppression,

persecutions, a terror playing with the life and existence of militants and workers.

Here is how *Pravda* of April 11 characterizes our bureaucracy: "The office-holding, hostile, lazy, incompetent and snooty elements are engaged in running all the best Soviet inventors beyond the frontiers of the U.S.S.R. unless we deal a final blow to these elements, with all our energy, our determination, our implacability. . . ."

Yet, knowing our bureaucracy, I should not be astonished to read or to hear somebody speak again of the "enormous" and the "prodigious" growth of the spirit of activity of the masses of the party, of the organizational work of the Central Committee in implanting democracy. . . .

I believe that the party and Soviet bureaucracy now existing, will continue with the same success to cultivate around itself suppurating abscesses, in spite of the noisy trials which have taken place in the last month. This bureaucracy will not change because of the fact that it is subjected to a purge. I do not of course deny the relative utility and the absolute necessity of such a purge. I simply want to emphasize that it is not merely a question of changing the personnel, but above all of changing the methods.

In my opinion, the first condition to enable our party leadership to exercise an educative rôle is to reduce the magnitude and the functions of this leadership. Three-fourths of the apparatus ought to be disbanded. The tasks of the remaining fourth ought to receive strictly determined limitations. This would also apply to the tasks, functions and rights of the central organs.

The party members must regain their rights, which have been trampled under foot, by having themselves accorded sure guarantees against the despotism to which the upper circles have accustomed us.

It is hard to imagine what is taking place in the lower ranks of the party. It is especially in the struggle against the Opposition that the ideological mediocrity of these cadres was manifested, as well as the corruptive influence which they exercise over the proletarian masses of the party. If at its summit there was still a certain ideological line, an erroneous and sophistic line, mixed, it is true, with a strong dose of bad faith—at the lower rungs, on the other hand, the most unrestrained demagoguery was employed against the Opposition. The agents of the party did not hesitate to exploit anti-Semitism, the phobia against foreigners, hatred of intellectuals, etc. I believe that any reform of the party that bases itself upon the party bureaucracy, will prove utopian.

* * * *

I sum up: while registering, as you do, the absence of the spirit of activity of the party masses, I see nothing astonishing in this phenomenon. It is the result of all the changes that have taken place in the party and in the proletariat itself. It is necessary to reëducate the working masses and the masses of the party within the framework of the party and the trade unions. This process is in itself a difficult one and of long duration: but it is inevitable, it has already begun. The struggle of the Opposition, the expulsion of hundreds upon hundreds of comrades, the prisons, the deportations, while they have not yet accomplished much for the communist education of our party, have in any case had more effect than the whole apparatus put together. At bottom, the two factors cannot even be compared: the apparatus has squandered the capital of the party left by Lenin, not only needlessly but in an injurious manner. It demolished, whereas the Opposition built up.

Up to this point, I have reasoned "by abstraction" from the facts of our economic and political life which have been analyzed in the platform of the Opposition. I have done it deliberately, for my task was to point out the changes that have taken place in the composition and the psychology of the proletariat and the party in connection with the conquest of power itself. They may have given a one-sided character to my exposition. But without making this preliminary analysis, it would be difficult to understand the origin of the economic and political mistakes committed by our leadership with regard to the peasants and in the labor questions of industrialization, of the internal régime of the party, and finally, of the administration of the state.

With communist greetings,

ASTRAKHAN, August 6, 1928.

Christian RAKOVSKY

A Letter on Russia by Karl Marx

IN THE second half of the period of 1870 to 1880, a rather lively polemic commenced in our literature on the subject of the ideas expounded by Marx in the first volume of *Capital*. With respect to one of these articles, notably the article of M. Zhukovsky, M. Mikhailovsky observed that in the last section of his work, Marx had in view only the historical outline of the first steps of the capitalist mode of production, but that he had given much more, namely, he had expounded a whole historico-philosophical theory.

This theory, adds M. Mikhailovsky, is of great interest for everybody; but for us Russians it is of still greater interest. For,

according to M. Mikhailovsky, if one acknowledges completely the philosophical system of Marx, according to which every nation, in its historical path, must inevitably pass through the phase of capitalist development, then every one of the Russian disciples of Marx, to be consistent, would have to take an active part in the process which separates the means of production and of labor, expropriates the peasants, mutilates the human organism, threatens the future of the human race, etc.; but on the other hand, the same disciple of Marx is obliged to regard as his ideal the harmony of labor and property, the ownership of the means of production and of land by the producers themselves.

This article furnished Marx with the occasion for writing a reply which was destined to be printed in the same review in which M. Mikhailovsky's article had been published. But the reply was not sent, and remained among Marx's papers where it was found after a translation of it had appeared in the *Juridical Monitor*. The reply was written in French, as follows:

* * *

I.—The author of the article: "Karl Marx Before the Tribunal of Zhukovsky" is evidently a man of parts, and had he found in my exposition of *primitive accumulation* a single passage to support his conclusions, he would have cited it. Failing such a passage, he found himself compelled to seize upon such an *hors-d'oeuvre* as a polemical sally against a Russian "belletriste" printed in the appendix of the first German edition of *Capital*. What do I reproach that writer for? For having discovered "Russian communism" not in Russia, but in the book by Haxthausen, counsellor of the Prussian government, and that in his hands the Russian commune only serves as an argument to prove that decaying old Europe must be regenerated by the victory of Panslavism. My appraisal of that writer may be right, it may be wrong, but in no case could it give the key to my views on the efforts "that the Russians are making to find for their fatherland a different path of development from that which western Europe has followed and is following".

In the postscript to the second German edition of *Capital*, I speak of a "great Russian savant and critic" with the high consideration which he deserves. In a number of remarkable articles, he dealt with the question: must Russia begin by destroying, as the liberal economists would have it, the rural commune in order to pass over to the capitalist régime, or on the contrary, can she, without experiencing the tortures of this régime, appropriate to herself all its fruits while developing her own historical gifts. He pronounces himself in the spirit of the latter solution. And my honorable critic would have had at least as much right to infer from my consideration for this "great Russian" that I shared his

views on this question, as to conclude from my polemic against the Russian "belletriste" and Panslavist that I rejected them.

Finally, as I do not like to leave "something to be guessed at", I shall speak without idle circumlocution. In order to be able to judge the economic development of contemporary Russia on the basis of a thorough knowledge, I learned the Russian language, and then studied for many years the publications, official and otherwise, relating to this subject.

I arrived at this result: If Russia continues to proceed along the path followed up to 1861, she will lose the finest opportunity that history has ever offered to a people, only to succumb to all the vicissitudes of the capitalist régime.

Marx' letter on Russia is of singular significance. Many socialist theoreticians have sought to contest the "legitimacy" of the Russian revolution on the basis of a pedantic construction placed up on the classic Marxian formula: "No social order ever disappears before all the productive forces for which there is room in it have been developed; and new higher relations of production never appear before the material conditions of their existence have matured in the womb of the old society." Marx' letter explicitly denies the "supra-historical" validity of this fundamental law of social evolution. That "leap over" bourgeois democracy and into proletarian democracy which Lenin spoke of in 1919, is of a piece with the thoughts expressed in Marx' letter. The letter, apparently written in 1877, was addressed to Nikolai-On (N. F. Danielson), prominent spokesman of the Russian Populists (Narodniki), economist and publisher of the first Russian translation of Capital. The polemic was directed at N. K. Mikhailovsky, the leading theorist of Russian Populism, who remained a staunch anti-Marxist till his death in 1904. Very little known in Marxian circles, the letter was reproduced in the appendix to the French translation of Nikolai-On's book on Russian economic development, published in 1902. The three explanatory paragraphs preceding the letter itself are from the pen of the Russian author. The letter is published here for the first time in English, translated from the French in which it was originally written by Marx.

—ED.

II.—In the chapter on *primitive accumulation*, my sole aim is to trace the path by which the capitalist economic order in western Europe emerged out of the womb of the feudal economic order. Hence it follows the movement which divorced the producer from his means of production, transforming the former into a wage-earner (a proletarian, in the modern sense of the word) and the latter into capital. In this history, "every revolution marks an era which serves as a lever in the advancement of the capitalist class in the process of its formation. But the basis of the evolution is the expropriation of the tiller of the soil". At the end of the chapter, I deal with the historical tendency of accumulation and I assert that its last word is the transformation of capitalist property into social property. I supply no proof of this at that point for the good reason that this assertion itself is nothing but the succinct summary of prolonged developments previously presented in the chapters on capitalist production.

Now, what application to Russia could my critic draw from my historical outline? Only this: if Russia tries to become a capitalist nation, in imitation of the nations of western Europe, and in recent years she has taken a great deal of pains in this respect, she will not succeed without first having transformed a good part of her peasants into proletarians; and after that, once brought into the lap of the capitalist régime, she will be subject to its inexorable laws, like other profane nations. That is all. But this is too much for my critic. He absolutely must needs metamorphose my outline of the genesis of capitalism in western Europe into a historico-philosophical theory of the general course, fatally imposed upon all peoples, regardless of the historical circumstances in which they find themselves placed, in order to arrive finally at that economic formation which insures with the greatest amount of productive power of social labor the most complete development of man. But I beg his pardon. He does me too much honor and too much shame at the same time. Let us take one example. In different passages of *Capital*, I have made allusion to the fate which overtook the plebeians of ancient Rome.

Originally, they were free peasants tilling, every man for himself, their own piece of land. In the course of Roman history, they were expropriated. The same movement which separated them from their means of production and of subsistence, implied not only the formation of large landed properties but also the formation of large monetary capitals. Thus, one fine day, there were on the one hand free men stripped of everything save their labor power, and on the other, for exploiting this labor, the holders of all acquired wealth. What happened? The Roman proletarian

became not a wage-earning worker, but an indolent mob, more abject than the former "poor whites" in the southern lands of the United States; and by their side was unfolded not a capitalist but a slave mode of production. Hence, strikingly analogical events, occurring, however, in different historical environments, led to entirely dissimilar results.

By studying each of these evolutions separately, and then comparing them, one will easily find the key to these phenomena, but one will never succeed with the master-key of a historico-philosophical theory whose supreme virtue consists in being supra-historical.

Karl MARX

Storm Clouds Over Europe

IT TOOK many years, and an exhaustive examination of documents not previously available before the details of the intrigues and machinations leading up to the assassination of the Austrian Archduke Ferdinand by Gavrill Princip were laid bare. It cannot be said in advance how long it will be before the full story can be told of exactly what forces stood behind Petrus Kalemén when he fired the shots in Marseilles which put an end to one of Europe's most detestable tyrants, Alexander Karageorgevitch. The death of the Yugoslavian monarch did not set off the powder-keg of war in Europe, as it was set off in Sarajevo almost exactly twenty years ago. But it did thrust into the limelight the most acute of those antagonisms, conflicts and re-arrangements of forces which are combining to plunge Europe, teetering on the brink, into the abyss of a new imperialist shambles.

The last world war was preceded by years of frenzied making and unmaking of alliances. Each of the then big powers anticipated the military war by an intensive diplomatic warfare. When the armed struggle began, both sides felt adequately fortified by alliances previously arrived at. The preparations for the next war are proceeding in accordance with the same formula. For the big powers, hegemony in Europe is the springboard for a stronger position in world politics. And now, as a generation ago, the Balkans constitute one of the most important—if not the most important—axis around which European politics revolves. A eastern corner of the Old World. In any case, it is there that the mystic could easily say that there is a fatality about the south-witches' cauldron seethes and boils and threatens to bubble over onto the whole continent.

The treaties of Versailles, St. Germain and Neuilly changed the map of Europe. Numerous peoples and nationalities which had previously groaned under the yoke of the old empires, were herded together within national frontiers, for the most part carved out of the hide of the defeated Central powers. After the first flush of bewildered enthusiasm at the change of their status, the "liberated" peoples began to settle down to the realization that they had exchanged one lash for another. Most of the new states created in eastern Europe after the war proved to be the vassals of France, the guarantors of her domination on the continent, and her pawns in the fight to maintain a rather satisfactory *status quo*. A disaffected Italy might continue to protest the meagerness of her share of the spoils. Germany might whimper and bleat for recognition in the comity of imperialist highwaymen. England might look askance at the fierceness of France's determination to have the final word on the mainland. But so long as France was faced by a paralyzed opponent across the Rhine, and was supported by Poland, Czechoslovakia, Rumania, and Yugoslavia, its continental hegemony was sufficiently assured, even if very delicate adjustments and concessions were required at particularly perilous moments.

The triumph of Fascism in Germany has introduced a new element into this situation. The new German imperialism is not content to supplicate. It roars where once it whispered. It stalks menacingly out of the League of Nations into which it begged to be admitted not so many years ago. It demands again a place in the sun, a revision of Europe's frontiers, and the right to the armaments necessary to obtain it. With increasing insolence, it flaunts in the face of those who refuse it more military strength than permitted it by the Versailles treaty. With poorly concealed insolence, it flagrantly violates the provisions of the treaty which drastically curtail its military preparations. As the most formidable foe of France in the capitalist world, Germany displays a new aggressiveness which is a direct threat to French dominion in

Europe. The struggle between the French *status quo* (one imperialist partition of the continent) and the German frontier revision (another imperialist partition of the continent), added to those other antagonisms which are eaching the breaking point, spell war.

The section of Europe where the breaking point threatens most imminently, is the Balkans and the adjacent Danubian area. It is in this territory that the most complicated knots are to be found in those threads which cross and crisscross the continent.

In order to unravel them and to weave the threads into a more coherent pattern, it may be well to use Italy and its connections as a central point of departure. As compared with France and England, Italy received only a very tiny share of the spoils at the conclusion of the war. One might almost say that Italy received less on the Adriatic than did little Greece on the Ægean, when the acquisition of Macedonia with the port of Salonika and southern Bulgaria with the port of Dedeagatch made Yugoslavia and Bulgaria respectively dependent upon Greece for access to the sea. The secret treaty in 1915 by means of which her support was bought by the Allies, guaranteed Italy a position after the war which would establish her as the only Adriatic power. She was indeed given Istria, with the port of Trieste, and after several exciting years, during which Fiume was first invaded by the adventurer D'Annunzio and then made a "free city", that port too was annexed to Italy by the Treaty of Rome, against the bitter opposition of Yugoslavia.

Between Fiume and Trieste at the northern end of the Adriatic, and the valuable ports at the southern end belonging to Albania, an Italian vassal, state, lies the long but unsatisfactory Dalmatian coastline of Yugoslavia. For years now a fierce antagonism has existed between the two Adriatic powers: Yugoslavia coveting the rich ports of northern Albania, and Mussolini aiming to rule supreme over the sea by conquering the Dalmatian coast and taking under his eminently emancipatory wing the Croats and Slovenes now oppressed by their Serbian overlords. The loud outcries of solicitous indignation against the sufferings of the Croats, which fill the columns of the Italian press from time to time, are merely a transcription in the realm of idealism of the desire to convert the profits and power of the Yugoslav dinar into their equivalent in Italian liras.

Italy's antagonism towards Yugoslavia has not only determined her opposition to France in the past, but has dictated her patronage of the two defeated countries to the North of her Adriatic enemy's frontiers, namely, Hungary and Austria. Austria has found in Italy an ally, a guarantor of her independence. Austria fears absorption into Germany by way of Anschluss, and Italy is determined to prevent the consummation of the alliance on German terms out of concern over the reestablishment of the latter's old position of dominance in the Danubian and Balkan corner of Europe. But Italy's attitude towards Austria is not a matter of principle with her, any more than it was in 1915. The cement between the bricks not only keeps them apart; it also keeps them together. And Austria is not only a barrier between Germany on the one side and Italy and the Balkans on the other, but also a possible bridge between the Blackshirt and Brownshirt régimes.

The relationships between Mussolini and Hitler are a story in themselves, not devoid of the elements of a classical Italian farce. Italy has great African colonial ambitions which are far from being to the liking of the principal North African imperialist power, France. To extort colonial support from the latter, Italy has been toying provocatively with the idea of an alliance with Germany. The opinions which the two dictators have of each other are hardly a deep state secret. Against Hitler's contemptuous reference to

the "filthy Mediterranean peoples" can be balanced off Mussolini's speech at Bari, where his auditors at home and abroad were reminded that Rome had her Virgil and Cæsar when Hitler's ancestors wandered about in Teuton forests as illiterates. The exchange of compliments has not prevented the carrying on of negotiations between the dirty Mediterraneans and the Teuton swineherds, thus far without satisfactory conclusions. In effect, the issue will be settled on Austrian soil. Starhemberg's *Heimwehr* is directly under the patronage of Italy and serves her faithfully. Schuschnigg's *Sturmscharen* are not only pro-monarchist and pro-restorationist in their predilections, but are not disinclined to a reconciliation with the German Nazis. Upon the outcome of the conflict between the two will depend whether Austria remains a barrier between Italy and Germany or a bridge.

Whatever the outcome, Austria is already a bridge between Italy and Hungary. This alliance too has been determined in the past by a mutual antagonism to France and her Little Entente. Croatian refugees from Yugoslavia has always found shelter in Italy or Hungary, and it is not without significance that Hungarian army officers were found to be the military instructors of fugitive Croatian terrorists at their camps in the border villages of Jankapuzta and Mezö-Kanisza, whence the assassins of King Alexander are reputed to have come. Hungary still chafes under the dismemberment she suffered after the signing of the "peace treaties". She falls naturally into any bloc that may be formed in Central Europe for the purpose of revising the territorial provisions of the treaties. She does not conceal her insistence upon frontier revisions, although the Little Entente has been even more sharply candid in its assertions that revision is equivalent to war. Hungary covets Bukovina and the Siebenburg regions which fell to the lot of Rumania after the war, as well as the southeastern Slovakian regions of Czechoslovakia. Here again the basis of the anti-French orientation of Hungary is clearly discernible; so also, Hungary's past financial, political and military affiliations with Italy.

It is at this point that the threads leading through the labyrinth of alliances breaks off in a new direction. After years of unceasing hostility, a *rapprochement* between Italy and France seems to be in a fair way of accomplishment. The policy of bluster and blackmail pursued by Mussolini has apparently convinced France that it is better to grant the Italians some concessions in Africa than to have them extend the scope of the already alarming Germano-Polish alliance. In gaining each other, however, the old enemies are threatened with the loss of old friends. The regrouping of forces and alliances is taking place at a speedy rate before our very eyes.

The fact that in the course of his *rapprochement* to France Mussolini sought the friendship of Czechoslovakia, has practically put an end to the Italo-Hungarian alliance. The dissatisfaction of the Magyar revisionists, who are undoubtedly being prodded along by a whole section of the British Conservatives, is producing a turn to Germany for the first time in years. The first clear sign of the reorientation was the announcement of an economic and military alliance between Berlin and Budapest. The second was the ostentatious visit of Premier Gömbös to Warsaw, the seat of Germany's most prominent ally, lost to France upon the consummation of the Franco-Russian agreement. It should be borne in mind that the Hungarian reaction can attain the frontier revisions dear to it only by means of a violent assault upon Czechoslovakia and Rumania which would end in a common borderline being established in Carpathia between Hungary and Poland. By the very nature of their position, neither Germany nor Poland would necessarily be averse to the adventure. If, as appears at the moment to be the case, Gömbös was not received in Warsaw with the cordiality he would have preferred, it is only because Polono-Rumanian relationships are not yet a settled matter. Rumania has signed a non-aggression pact with the Soviet Union, it is true. The dominant group in the country, moreover, is still unmistakably loyal to French imperialism. But here too, nothing is fixed and rigid. The details of the shifts behind the scenes are not easy to establish. However, it is known that whereas Titulescu, minister of foreign affairs, and arch-enemy of Hungarian revisionism,

continues to stand by France, the president of the council of ministers, Tatarescu, leans strongly towards joining the German-Polish bloc. In any case, it may be said with a fair degree of certainty that if Rumania does not join the bloc, Hungary will.

Another old French alliance is imperilled by the impending Franco-Italian agreement. While Rumania looks with official favor upon it because it feels that, allied with the Quai d'Orsay, Italy will curb Hungary's territorial ambitions, Yugoslavia is of quite a different mind. As soon as the Mussolini's pro-French orientation became clear, the Yugoslav press began to write with a noticeably increased aggressiveness against Italy and with a friendlier tone about Germany. The feverish activity of Hitler's emissaries in the Balkans has been far from fruitless. Economic pacts now link Belgrade with Berlin. At Geneva, the Yugoslav delegate openly supported the arrogant position taken by the Polish representative, Colonel Beck, towards the ever-recurring question of the "minorities". Furthermore, it is significant that the Yugoslavs refused to sign the pact directed against Hitler by which France, England and Italy guaranteed the "independence and integrity of Austria", that is, repeated the assurances given on February 17. It will be remembered, also, that Barthou's visit to Belgrade was obviously not crowned with success, in contrast to all previous negotiations between France and Yugoslavia. It was undoubtedly in a final attempt to arrive at an agreement that Alexander reciprocated Barthou's visit. The Geneva correspondent of the *New York Times* puts his finger on the nub of the question when he writes: "Alexander seemed to be the keystone of the Little Entente. He was flirting with Berlin. He was going to Paris for a showdown, and, if he returned dissatisfied and swung toward Germany, then Rumania, already doubtful, would follow, and Czechoslovakia could not alone resist the current."

Just who was behind the hand that struck down the Serbian despot may not be ascertained for a long time, if ever. But the unusual circumstances surrounding his death simply saturate the affair with great political significance, and make it most unlikely that the assassination was planned by an obscure individual or group of persons without high official connections. He was driven through Marseilles in violation of French regulations which, ever since the assassination of Carnot, provide that no sovereign or chief of state shall be transported in a vehicle with running boards; the police line, usually so dense, was loosely strung out on this occasion; these and other aspects of the affair lead one to conclude that something more than fortuitous circumstances made it so easy to dispatch him to his ancestors. In any case, whatever may have been the real forces behind the pistol of Petrus Kalemén, Alexander's visit to France was a symbol of the deep-going changes taking place in Europe's imperialist alignments.

All the combinations and re-combinations are, to be sure, still in a fluid state. It would not be correct to assert that even Yugoslavia has cast the die and taken up a determined position. It is significant to note that, according to a press dispatch from Istanbul on October 12, Yugoslavia has asked that the fifth of the semi-official but highly important Balkan conferences, scheduled to take place at the beginning of October, be postponed *sine die*. "The Yugoslav government's objection to holding the conference this year may be attributed to a desire to avoid public discussion of certain vexed questions." What more vexed question do the ruling Serbs face than that of determining their future affiliation: with the German bloc or with the French?

If Marseilles did not have the immediate effect of a Sarajevo, it was not because the outbreak of another world war is not to be dreamed of, as Sir John Simon hastened to assure the public two days after the assassination. In 1914, the system of alliances on both sides was practically completed, fixed, sure—save for some uncertainty about a country like Italy, or Rumania. At the present hour, the old alliances are being recast. But the realignments are taking place at such a mad, convulsive pace that the war clouds which hover over the old continent, and are especially dark and swollen over Central Europe, threaten not to be overly long in bursting into a hellish storm.

Marko SHTIP.

Shifts in the Negro Question

NEGROES in the United States in 1930 numbered about 11,900,000. About 80% live in 16 southern states and the District of Columbia.

Historically the Negro was rural and agricultural. He was primarily a cultivator of cotton. Since the center of the cotton area is in the South, the Negro population was from the very beginning concentrated there. In this sense it is still correct to speak of the Negro as primarily "southern". In approaching the Negro problem these historical aspects have been stressed more than sufficiently, but the profound changes that have taken place among the Negroes during the last few decades have been neglected almost completely.

Originally, the history of the Negro in America was the history of cotton. But today, it is an anachronism to view the Negro as primarily a backward farmer confined to cotton areas. In this sense it is no longer correct to speak of the Negro as primarily "southern". The history of the Negro has become directly linked with modern industry. He has been separated from the soil and suddenly placed in the midst of the complex modern industrial structure. This is a fact. And, obviously, it is necessary to establish this fact because a tendency still prevails to view the Negro, especially the southern Negro, in terms of those conditions that prevailed at the outbreak of the Civil War, and in the period immediately following. The Negro, especially the southern Negro, is no longer overwhelmingly agricultural.

In 1860 the Negroes were most densely concentrated in the South, particularly within the boundaries of six cotton-growing states, Mississippi, Georgia, Alabama, South Carolina, Louisiana and Arkansas. Naturally enough these states then could serve as a focus in any consideration of the Negro problem. In 1860 what was true of the Negroes in these states applied largely to the Negroes of the entire South, who comprised more than 92% of the total Negro population, and who were overwhelmingly agricultural. But to take these six states as our point of departure today can lead only to most grievous errors. The profound economic changes that the South underwent following the Civil War met with the greatest inertia precisely in these states. To this day they have remained predominantly agricultural with cotton still the main crop. (They produced 53% of the cotton crop in 1930.) Only within this area have the Negroes remained largely rural and agricultural.

The Negro population has been becoming urbanized (i.e. proletarianized) at an ever increasing tempo. For three decades following the Civil War, for the U. S. as a whole, it remained rural and agricultural (in 1890, it was 80.6% rural and only 19.4% urban); in the three decades following, and particularly in the last decade the trend has been toward towns and cities. In 1920 the shift was to 66% rural and 34% urban; in 1930 the shift was much more accentuated, 56.3% rural, 43.7% urban. The shift was by no means restricted solely to the North. In 1930 the number of Negroes living in southern cities exceeded those in northern cities. Concurrently, while the Negro population was growing in other states (southern as well as northern), the Negro population in this *Old South* area remained stationary over a period of decades. The Negro population of these six states was in 1910—5,087,000; in 1920—5,079,000; in 1930—5,073,000. During the same period the Negro population in the U. S. had increased more than 20%. This clearly denotes an intense migration from these agricultural states into industrial sections. However, it should not be concluded that deep-going changes have not been occurring within the Old South itself. Here too, the industrial development has been making gigantic strides forward, breaking down the old economic structure, and the original economic differentiation between the industrial North and the agricultural South. The development has been uneven, but the same process has been going on here as elsewhere, only at a different rate. The historical cultural and economic conditions of the Old South tended to retard the process. What has most tended to obscure its actual course is the fact that even today more than 42% of the total Negro population still lives within the boundaries of these six states. In 1910 the

same area held 51.7% of the total Negro population.

More than two-thirds of the total Negro farmers in the South and almost three-fourths of the tenant farmers are to be found in these same six states. A study limited to this area must necessarily fail to reflect the fundamental changes in Negro life.

From the density of the Negro population within this area, conclusions have been drawn that are highly fallacious, particularly the conclusions that the Negro problem is primarily geographic, i.e., southern, and agricultural, and therefore a "national" problem. Flowing from this, the attempt is made to reduce the entire problem to the analysis of only this particular section of the South, the famous "Black Belt" sector. For the core of this sector stretches precisely over the states we have been discussing. Just as it is possible to draw any kind of a triangle within a circle, so it is possible to construct within this territory a particular "well defined area" in which the Negroes would compose the majority of the population. But just as what applies to the inscribed triangle need not apply to the circle, just so what applies to this particular sector need not apply at all elsewhere. Such a sector may be, and in this case it actually is, arbitrary and artificial. In the first place the "Black Belt" embraces a territory that has remained primarily rural and overwhelmingly agricultural; secondly, even according to the most sanguine estimates it includes only about 3,000,000 Negroes, or approximately one-fourth of the total Negro population. Even the Stalinists claim for it only "some 3,320,000 Negroes". The "Black Belt" is a very arbitrary sort of a belt. The six states over which the core of it extends comprise about 500 counties, with a population of 8 million whites and 5 million Negroes, that is, 61.5% white. To obtain a "solid area" in which the Negroes form the majority of the population, it is necessary to select particular counties which must be contiguous. Some 200 counties can be squeezed into this requirement. The most imposing picture of the "Black Belt" is painted by the Stalinists. Yet even they claim for it only that, "In 192 counties they made up from 50% to 75% of the population; in 36 counties they comprise more than 75% of the population" (*Labor Fact Book*, p. 78. Figures based on 1920 census).

Leaving aside for the moment all other considerations it is obvious that one cannot equate even the actual area over which the bulk of the Negroes is spread—some 24 states including the District of Columbia—with a handpicked area of 192 counties, in which the whites compose an insignificant minority only in 36. Moreover such a belt, to be consistent, must exclude the remaining 300 counties in which there are *only* about 2 million Negroes. It also throws out of focus not only the millions of northern Negroes, but also a greater southern population than the one actually included, some 3,300,000 Negroes in the directly adjoining states of Texas, North Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, and Florida, in which there are 11,460,000 whites. Needless to say, the constructors of "Black Belts" do not and cannot remain consistent with their own premises. They include perforce within it counties that explode the premises of Negro majority, of contiguity and of "well marked area". No two maps drawn of the "future" Negro State tally. The most appalling and ambitious ones include practically the entire South. The least pretentious would include the cities of Richmond, Memphis, Vicksburg, New Orleans and Savannah, which with the exception of Savannah are predominantly white.

By focussing our attention on the "Black Belt" we cannot understand the significance of the decisive economic and social shifts in the South in general and among the Negroes in particular. By thinking in terms of the "Black Belt" we can only think of the Negro problem in terms of conditions that prevailed in the middle of the 19th century. The basic factors in the Negro problem are not geographic divisions, or state boundaries, or county lines. The basic factors are economic. The so-called "Black Belt" was and still remains predominantly rural and agricultural. In the meantime, the economic development has been surging over the old state and new county lines. Under the impact of economic forces the mass of the Negro population in and outside of the six states has been rapidly shifting from rural to urban, from agriculture to

industry. This shift, which has been going on at an ever increasing rate, must continue to take place in accordance with the internal logic of American capitalist development. This process, which has already vitally affected the "Black Belt" itself, although it has not yet disintegrated it, must proceed at an ever increasing tempo. The agricultural aspect of the Negro problem, particularly in this phase of it, provides the subject for an independent analysis. Suffice it to say that the entire agricultural base of the South as a whole is being disintegrated not only by the permanent crisis of American agriculture, and the industrialization of the South, but also by the mechanization of cotton farming. All these factors bear most directly and immediately upon the Negro farmer who is being driven from the land into urban centers and into the ranks either of the proletariat or the unemployed. In the period immediately before us we shall witness accelerated changes in the "Black Belt" proper, precisely along the lines indicated by what has already happened elsewhere in the South. The Negro farmer is being driven from the land.

This movement has already penetrated deeply into the heart of the "Black Belt" itself. We have already pointed out its stationary or declining population and also the fact that more than two-thirds of the Negro farms in the South and almost three-fourths of the tenant farmers are in the "Black Belt" area. What holds true of the entire South bears most directly upon the Negro farmers in these six states. In the entire South, in 1920, there were about 950,000 Negro farmers of whom 714,000 or about three-fourths were tenants; in 1930 the Negro farmers dropped to 880,000 of whom 699,000 were tenants or more than three-fourths. At the same time, only 46.6% of the white farmers in the South were tenants. The pressure to which the agricultural Negro is being subjected is brought out still more clearly by comparing the trend among Negro farmers with that among white southern farmers. Between 1920 and 1930 the number of white farmers dropped also, but only 1.6% as compared with more than 7% for the Negroes. While the Negro tenants decreased absolutely, the number of white tenant farmers increased. At the same time the number of white share croppers almost approached that of the Negro croppers: white, 383,381; Negro, 392,897. The white farmer is being pauperized at a different rate from the Negro. But the pauperization of the white farmer accelerates the rate at which the Negro is being driven from the land. And in point of fact this has already crystallized itself definitely: the economic base of the Negro has already shifted from agriculture to industry. The crux of the Negro problem is in modern industry and not in the old agricultural South.

The movement of the Negroes to the North has been nothing but an integral part of the urbanization of the Negro. The movement northward began at the same time as the urban shift in the South. The growth of Negro population in the North from 9.4% in 1890 to 20.2% in 1930 is only an integral part of the shift to cities and towns of the Negro population as a whole from 19.4% of the total in 1890 to 43.7% in 1930. The sweep of this shift is apparent at a glance, if we examine some figures.

In 1930 there were more *adult* Negroes in towns and cities than remained on land. According to the last census, adult urban Negroes—in the entire U. S. between 20 and 44 years of age—numbered 2,520,000; those who remained on the land numbered 2,197,000.*

Over 3,500,000 or almost two-thirds of those gainfully employed were engaged in occupations other than agriculture in which there had remained only 36.1%, a drop of almost a million from the number in 1910 when 54.6% of those gainfully employed were engaged in agriculture.

Equally illustrative of the intensity of the shift is the fact that the Negro population in 79 major cities increased over 60% in a single decade, 1920-1930, leaping from 1,920,000 in 1920 to 3,150,000 in 1930. Even in 1920, at the inception of the "Black Belt" ballyhoo, this trend away from the land was clearly indicated, for

*As the obverse phase of this shift, we naturally find that the bulk of children, adolescents as well as the aged remained behind on the land. Thus in 1930 there were:

Negroes	under 5	5-9	10-14	15-19	65 & over
Rural	802,000	900,000	843,000	803,000	233,611
Urban	427,000	468,000	407,000	447,000	139,108

already at that time only two-fifths of those gainfully employed were engaged in agriculture.

The consequences of this urbanization have been far-reaching. The relation of the Negro to industry has radically altered. Until as late as 1914, the Negro served as a reserve to draw on in times of labor shortage or strikes. By 1930 the Negro had become an integral part of the labor force in practically every important industry.

In the movement away from the land, two peak waves are to be observed, one in 1916-1919, the other in 1921-24; but they were only a part of the continuous trend and not a sudden isolated exodus. Once again we stress that underlying the ebbs and flows of this movement are not geographic or "sentimental" causes but profound economic forces. The labor agencies of large industries had a great deal more to do with it than the activities of the Klu Kluxers in the South.

The Negroes' function as a labor reserve led to their utilization as strikebreakers. But from this rôle of a labor reserve they have become transformed into integral parts of the industrial structure. Negroes compose 7.6% of the total labor force in the mining industry; 10.3% in transport; 7.2% in manufacturing and machine industry. Although they are only 9.7% of the U. S. population, they composed, in 1930, 25% of the unskilled workers in large meat packing concerns; 16.2% of the unskilled in the steel industry; and 22.7% of the laborers in building trades. Instances are not lacking of strikes in which the proletarianized Negro served as the backbone while the bosses depended upon Negro strikebreakers primarily recruited from rural districts. The Negro has definitely become an integral part of the proletariat, preponderantly unskilled and most intensely exploited.

The Negro problem is and will be to an ever increasing degree a working class problem; and the crucial criterion is the economic and not the geographic distribution of the Negro population. By themselves statistics are meaningless such as that in 1930 almost four-fifths of the Negro population still lived in the so-called South, or that the bulk of the Negro population is spread over 24 states and that almost 20% lives in eight northern states (Pa., N. Y., N. J., Ohio, Ill., Mich., Missouri, and Indiana), or any other assortment of vital statistics. What is decisive is the economic content of the figures. And in respect to the Negro this content is industrial. This does not mean that we disregard entirely, or intend to minimize the importance of the Negro farmer. The Negro agrarian problem is an acute and an important one. However, the American Negro is not predominantly agricultural. He is a proletarian.

From the revolutionary standpoint the Negro problem is primarily the problem of gaining over to the revolutionary platform the overwhelming majority of the Negro workers. The rural Negro can be gained as an ally only in the same manner, basically, as the rural white, and that is by being mobilized under the leadership of the proletariat.

From the very beginning the misleaders of the American working class as a whole and Negroes in particular have tried to drum into the heads of Negro and white that working class unity could not be achieved directly. Booker T. Washington did what he could to discourage Negroes from putting their trust in working class unity. And on the other hand, the reactionary trade union bureaucracy has drawn racial lines as rigidly as any Ku Kluxer. The unmasking of the class struggle will greatly facilitate the political development of American workers, Negro and white. But we will fail to unite them unless our fundamental approach to the Negro is the same as to any other worker, taking of course into consideration that they represent at present the most backward section of the backward working class, not because they were colored but because they stem directly from the most backward rural sections.

The elemental urge to class solidarity has manifested itself time and again. But these were and remained only episodic beginnings, in the absence of a genuine revolutionary party. Decades ago, in 1886, the old Knights of Labor had over 60,000 Negroes organized in its ranks. The I.W.W. even in the darkest South was able to organize into a single organization Negroes and whites and lead them to successful strikes particularly in the lumber industry. In West Virginia, where the reactionary United Mine Workers of

America tried to gain a foothold, two counties were more than half organized and most of the miners were Negroes; they were the backbone of the strike. But numerous as these instances are, they have remained episodic, and the base must be practically laid anew. One thing is certain: there are no "national" shortcuts to organizing the Negro workers. The basic slogan is that of *class solidarity*, and not at all the slogan of "self-determination".

Booker T. Washington preached to the Negroes against class solidarity and tried to imbue them with self-degradation. He said, "the wisest of my race understand that the agitation of questions of social equality is the extremest folly. . ." He advocated an

"alliance" with the wealthy whites against the "white trash", i.e., against the white workers who are the "oppressors and scoundrels, who hold Negroes in contempt and lynch them". The Negroes have been taught by the bourgeoisie to distrust and hate the white workers and vice versa. We must imbue the Negro with class solidarity. We must say, "The wisest of the Negro race understand that the agitation of the question of class solidarity is the only way out for his race! Class conscious Negro and white workers must teach the Negro masses and the white that they have only one enemy—their real lynchers and oppressors—the capitalists."
J. G. WRIGHT.

Passports to Utopia

THE decline of capitalism in post-war Europe stimulated the production of monetary nostrums, guaranteed to be quick, pleasant, and painless cures for the diseases of a dying economic system. Since the crisis of 1929, many of these panaceas are being advertised in the United States, together with some home-brewed concoctions. They find a ready market among the middle classes, squeezed between the plutocracy and the proletariat, and desperately anxious to maintain their former comfort and security.

All these middle class radicalisms propose to abolish the gold standard in favor of some fanciful monetary invention of their own. Scrip, social credit, commodity-money, index-numbers, land-money, ergs and other energy units, effort, etc., are some of their substitutes for gold. The proponents of these schemes fall into two groups, the simon-pure monetary reformers and the radical Utopians. In the first group are the Social Credit followers of Major Douglas, the disciples of Gesell (the German inventor of "stamp scrip"), and Professor Soddy, the author of *Wealth, Virtual Wealth, and Debt*. The second includes the various sects of Technocrats, the Incorporated Utopians, the Epic Planners fathered by Upton Sinclair, and such inveterate Utopians as Stuart Chase and Lewis Mumford.

The two schools speak for different segments of the middle class. The currency cranks voice the demands of the upper middle classes, the independent producers, industrialists and merchants, who suffer directly from the extortions of finance capital. The radical Utopians express the protests of the propertyless lower middle classes, the salariat, professionals, and intellectuals, against all the masters of capital.

The theoretical heads of these schools have themselves labelled their doctrines "The New Economics" in order to distinguish them from the presumably outmoded, nineteenth-century, pre-Power Age economic ideas of Smith, Ricardo, and Marx. Actually, however, the New Economics represents a modern revival of the theoretical errors and fanciful flights of the petty bourgeois socialist sects and monetary reformers of the early nineteenth century, so devastatingly criticized by Marx.

Despite their differences in detail, all the New Economists agree that the central cause of the contradictions of capitalism is to be found in the sphere of the circulation of commodities, rather than at the point of production, where the Marxist locates it. They pose the question in this fashion. The problem of production has been solved: we must now solve the problem of distribution. By "the problem of production" they mean the *technical* possibility of abolishing poverty, which incidentally, was solved generations ago. By "the problem of distribution" they mean the *financial* side of capitalist production. In short, the New Economists want to solve the *social* problem of capitalist production without changing the existing relations of production. They therefore discover the infirmity of what they call "the price system" in some part of the monetary mechanism. The Social Creditors in the banker's credit monopoly; the Technocrats in the whole burden of debt-claims upon industry.

Their particular prescriptions for the cure of the disease accord with the desired diagnosis. The currency reformers of the Social Credit type wish to save capitalism by making changes in the monetary system alone. The Technocrats and their ilk hope to eliminate capitalism by doing away with the capitalist's control

over production. While the Social Creditors praise the industrialists for "perfecting the productive system" and concentrate their attacks upon the bankers for impeding its harmonious operation, the Technocrats condemn all the capitalist groups for their wilful sabotage of industrial efficiency. The Social Creditors propose to socialize credit only and leave the capitalists in control of industry. The Technocrats talk of socializing the means of production as well as the means of exchange, and placing industry under the "control" of a Soviet of Technicians, without, however, invalidating the property claims of the present owners. The proposed lever for this social transformation is the same as that by which Social Credit seeks to reform capitalism: an alteration in the monetary mechanism.

The differences between the two groups ultimately reduce themselves to the difference between two dreams, a dream of reform and a dream of revolution. Both shrink from drawing any genuine revolutionary consequences from their principles, and hope to attain their heart's desire by peaceful, parliamentary means, as simply and easily as pressing an electric switch. Their practical political programs reflect the timidity of the middle classes, which can neither live with capitalism today nor without it, and tremble at the prospect of proletarian revolution.

Confronted with the Marxian analysis of the class basis of capitalist production, the New Economists rationalize their own middle class position by asserting that the economic and political power of the proletariat is rapidly decreasing. They paint pictures of factories operating with that mightiest of all instruments of production, the proletariat, either absent or thrust into the background. They quote statistics by the page to prove that the mechanization of industry is eliminating the worker, until one wonders from where the masses of striking workers suddenly spring. These ideas are of course advanced as impartial scientific observations with the claim that they support no particular class interests.

Although there is little originality or scientific value in the teachings of the various schools of New Economists, the social and political importance of their offspring is great. They become half-way houses on the road to a consistently revolutionary position, even though the movement as a whole may drift in the opposite direction. The contradictory currents in the English Social Credit movement, for example, carried John Strachey to Stalinism and Mosley to Fascism. In either case, the evolution of these middle class radicalisms is a reliable thermometer of the social fevers of the most advanced sections of the petty bourgeoisie.

I. Social Credit

The Social Credit scheme of Major Douglas, an English engineer, is the most popular monetary panacea among the middle classes of the British Empire. The Social Creditors claim sixteen representatives in the New Zealand Parliament, and in the September elections in Australia their candidates received strong support in New South Wales and Victoria, exceeding the Labour vote in some districts. They entertain hopes of initiating the first Social Credit experiment in the Antipodes.

Social Credit has only recently taken hold in the United States. Major Douglas made his first public appearance here last spring. He was greeted by his disciples as the greatest living economist and saluted with their slogan: "Adam Smith for Capitalism, Karl Marx for Communism, Major Douglas for Economic Democracy."

The Douglasites have even proclaimed themselves to be the true Fourth International, the legitimate heirs of Marx and Engels. These delusions of grandeur are characteristic of their peculiar form of social paranoia.

The Social Creditors have the merit of recognizing that wars and imperialism are caused by the contradictions of capitalist economy; that the productive forces of capitalist society are being strangled in an economic straitjacket; that poverty in the midst of potential plenty is shameful and unnecessary. They sincerely desire to abolish war, poverty, and the miseries of exploitation, but without upsetting the existing social relations of production and without compelling anyone but a handful of bankers to yield up their present privileges. The proletariat must remain in its place; the productive forces must be enclosed even more tightly within national boundaries; the sphere of capitalist production, profaned by the investigations of the Marxists, must be considered holy ground belonging to the industrial high priests whom the rest of mankind was born to serve. These conflicting considerations, combined with their ignorance of all previous economic theory and history, lead them to look for an easily recognizable scapegoat on which to hang their troubles and a simple method for getting rid of them forever.

They find the scapegoat in "the money power", the credit monopoly of finance capital. They quote from the fake Protocol of the Elders of Zion to prove the existence of "the banker's conspiracy". They insinuate that bankers deliberately create panics and crises by contracting credits or withholding them. They do not know that the calling of credits is simply evidence that the crisis is already under way, instead of being the fundamental cause of its occurrence, and pass over the fact that bankers, like other capitalists, can only invest money where there is the prospect of profit.

The fountain-head of their errors is the belief that money is not (or should not be) a commodity, but a system of worthless tokens. They mistake the superficial forms of modern money (its paper dress as currency or its phantom bookkeeping existence as checks) for its inner nature. They completely fail to comprehend the function of money in a commodity producing society, and particularly under capitalism, the most developed form of a commodity producing society. As the general equivalent of value, money is not only a commodity but the king among commodities, destined to reign so long as capitalism endures.

Nor do the Social Creditors understand that money is also a constitutional monarch, subject to all the laws of capitalism. Chief among these laws is the necessity of transforming money into capital, and using capital to appropriate surplus value. The financier accomplishes this by loaning money to the industrialist or the merchant, who, in their turn, appropriate their share of surplus value directly from the working class. The selfsame capital is used for exploiting purposes by both groups of capitalists, and yet the Social Creditors condemn the bankers alone. Their position amounts to this: the capitalist may exploit the working class, but the finance capitalist must not exploit his brother capitalists.

The social source of their animus is evident. Social Credit formulates the fear of the unorganized capitalists for the Frankenstein monster of finance capital which threatens to destroy them, just as the Single Tax expressed the hatred of the industrial capitalists for the landed proprietors. Hence, the Single Taxer's attack upon the rent monopoly, and the Social Creditor's assault upon the credit monopoly, both of which are merely specialized extensions of the monopoly of the means of production by the capitalist class. The credit monopoly is the means by which large aggregates of capital exploit the lesser capitalist groups, and through them, the working class. The credit monopoly at the apex of exploitation could be overthrown only by an overthrow of the general monopoly of the means of production in the hands of the capitalist class.

The Social Creditors, however, have no quarrel with any other form of the power of private property but "the money power", and, above all, they fear a communist revolution. They therefore are forced to conceal their class interests by evading all questions that involve them and taking cover in meaningless abstract phrases. For example, they charge the banker with converting "the communal wealth into financial debt", although that process is only a special case of the continuous transformation of social wealth into private property under capitalism. They speak of "the communal

credit" as though such a thing existed in a social system based upon the institution of private property. Marx disposed of such nonsense once and for all with the remark that "the only thing which enters into the collective possession of the people under capitalism is the national debt".

Douglas' chief contribution to the science of economics is his discovery of a flaw in "the price system". This flaw is formulated in an algebraic theorem, $A > A + B$. According to Douglas, all purchasing power is distributed in the course of the productive process, as follows: Let A represent payments made to individuals (whether workers or capitalists) in wages, salaries, and dividends. Let B represent payments made to other organizations for raw materials, bank charges, and other external costs. Then A, the rate of flow of purchasing power to individuals, must obviously be less than the rate of flow of prices, $A + B$, by a proportion equivalent to B. This permanent deficiency in purchasing power is supposed to be bridged by the banker's extension of credit against production. When the banks withdraw credits, the gap between prices and purchasing power grows wider and wider, until the crisis occurs.

This theory fails to explain why, if there exists a permanent deficiency in purchasing power, capitalist crises break out periodically. The Social Creditors attempt to get around this difficulty either by asserting that the present crisis is altogether unprecedented, a phenomenon peculiar to the Power Age of the twentieth century, or by accusing the bankers of anti-social conduct. Neither of these explanations will hold water. Fourier over a century ago described the first capitalist crisis in the same phrase used by the Social Creditors, "poverty in the midst of plenty". The financial magnates are as helpless as any other capitalist group to start or stop a general capitalist crisis, although they have induced temporary credit stringencies for their private purposes.

But even as it stands, the fallacy in Douglas' discovery is not difficult to detect. This lies in the fact that B payments (raw materials, bank charges, and other external costs) are A payments (wages, salaries, dividends) at a previous stage of production. So long as some other, more fundamental flaw does not interrupt the production and circulation of commodities, B payments will continue to be transformed indefinitely into A payments; banks will keep extending or renewing credits; and the industrialist will continue producing profitably. The fundamental cause of capitalist crises is to be found in the antagonisms of capitalist production, which generate all the relatively superficial flaws discovered by Douglas in "the price system".

Except for scientific purposes, it does not much matter whether the reader grasp this part of the Douglas theory. His panacea does not necessarily follow from it, nor is it understood by most Social Creditors. They put their trust in the scientific attainments of this quack doctor of economics because his remedy is so cheap and palatable.

There are three proposals in the Social Credit program: the socialization of credit, the National Dividend, and the Adjusted Price. First, the power of creating credit is to be taken away from the private bankers and vested in the state. Then the state is to be incorporated and a National Credit Account set up. Out of the Social Credit, calculated from the excess of productive capacity over purchasing power, National Dividends will be periodically distributed to all eligible stockholders of the corporative state. The inflationary rise in prices which would follow the issuance of National Dividends (a fancy name for unsecured currency) will be prevented by the Adjusted Price. The Adjusted Price requires all retailers to sell their goods at a decreed discount and to be reimbursed at the average rate of profit by the government. Thus, as Alfred Bingham, the editor of *Common Sense* remarked, Social Credit combines the best features of the dole, perpetual price-cutting, and a bull market.

The scheme is utterly Utopian. If credit was nationalized, as it is for all practical purposes in many capitalist countries today, it would simply put a more powerful weapon in the hands of the monopoly capitalists who control the state, and be used, as it is in those countries, to protect the profits of national capitalists against foreign competition. The closest the workers will ever get to a National Dividend under capitalism is the national dole, a subsistence pittance to keep them alive until capitalist production or

imperialist war needs them. To put the Adjusted Price into effect would entail the regulation of the entire national economy, and, short of proletarian revolution, this could only be attempted by a dictatorship of monopoly capital. Credit could only be successfully socialized, however, after all the instruments of production had been socialized.

The Social Creditors assure us that Social Credit is not socialism, communism, or Fascism, but Economic Democracy. The historical and social roots of Economic Democracy, its leading personalities, its practical proposals, and political direction, however, unmistakably point to Fascism as its nearest relative. The Fascist character of Social Credit stands out clearly in Douglas' concrete plans. In the Draft Scheme for Scotland, he proposed to reduce all wages in organized industries twenty-five percent, to deprive the membership of any trade union violating a wage agreement of the National Dividend, and to compel every worker to remain at his present trade for five years after the initiation of the scheme on penalty of losing his dividend. The National Dividend is supposed to compensate the worker for this loss of wages, freedom, and the right to strike. Combine these labor conditions with Douglas' project for reconstructing the English coal mining industry, which gave a perpetual six percent to the present owners—and all the elements of the Fascist state, from *gleichgeschaltete* trade unions to guaranteed incomes to stock and bond holders à la Mussolini, are present.

Like all typical Fascist programs, Social Credit is radical in form and reactionary in substance. Its propaganda panders to all the confused antipathies of the infuriated petty bourgeois, providing a pseudo-socialist covering for their outspoken hatred of finance capital, their nationalism, anti-communism and anti-semitism. It would be a mistake, however, to say that the Social Credit movement is Fascist in its present form. It is still in an adolescent stage of Utopian illusion. The Douglasites walk with their heads in the clouds, filled with rosy dreams of the future Economic Democracy in which, by their financial feat, there is enough of everything for everybody, God's in his heaven, and all's right with their world.

The small sect of Social Creditors in this country has so far devoted its energies to propaganda and persuasion of key men in

government and industry. Their propaganda has found a welcome among the influential inflationists at Washington and elsewhere. Father Coughlin, the Sweet Singer of Michigan, has used Social Credit ammunition in his latest broadsides from the radio pulpit. Several Senators have been captivated by Major Douglas' siren song, and Senator Cutting of New Mexico has already prepared a bill for the nationalization of currency and credit. Social Credit seems to have the charms of a *femme fatale* for the economic illiterati. Archibald MacLeish and Ezra Pound, the admirer of Mussolini, are two of its more celebrated advocates among the intelligentsia.

The Social Creditor's hope to dislodge the money power in the country, the stronghold of monopoly capital, is doomed to disappointment. It is even doubtful if they can muster enough mass support among the middle classes to become a political force, particularly when they must enter the political arena in competition with such outright Fascist demagogues as William Dudley Pelley, *Der Führer* of the Silver Shirts. Pelley has stolen the most attractive features of the Social Credit program, including the Incorporated State and the National Dividend of eighty dollars a month.

In England the Social Credit movement is more advanced politically. There its oracle, A. R. Orage, hobnobs with the Tory die-hard, Lord Lloyd, who is being groomed as the Von Papen of British Fascism. A green-shirted youth movement, the Kibbo Kift, has declared for Social Credit and may be seen on street corners, agitating for the Economic Democracy of Major Douglas. Social Credit propaganda has even affected certain sections of the labor aristocracy, who substitute speeches about "the banker's ramp" and the nationalization of the Bank of England for a revolutionary program.

Whether the Social Creditors will wither into a hole-and-corner sect like the Single Taxers, or be sucked into the whirlpool of a Fascist movement depends upon the course of the class struggle in the English-speaking world. As the class struggle approaches a crisis, and the proletariat prepares for decisive battle, hard historical facts will dispel the intoxicating effects of such fantastic schemes. Social Credit, like its contemporary counterparts in Germany and Austria, will then expire in a miserable fit of the blues.

John MARSHALL

The Conflict in the O. S. P.

THE Amsterdam disturbances of July 4 to 10 brought to light the latent antagonisms within the O. S. P. [*Onafhankelijk Socialistische Partij*: Independent Socialist Party of Holland]. They split the O.S.P. into the camps of two factions fighting each other with increasing sharpness. This struggle ended with a victory of the Left wing under the leadership of P. J. Schmidt and the expulsion of the Right wing, led by Sal. Tas and de Kadet.

Whereas at the beginning of the disturbances the greatest unanimity prevailed in the leadership of the O.S.P., which expressed itself in a leaflet published for the whole country—in which the O.S.P. placed itself behind the protesting unemployed, demanded the broadening of the action throughout the land and called upon the workers to strike in solidarity—the Right wing became terror-stricken in the further course of the action. As the sharp terror of the government made the resistance of the unemployed seem more and more hopeless, and large-scale action and solidarity strikes failed to materialize, the Right wing leaders, de Kadet and Sal. Tas hastened to disown their former standpoint and to throw off all responsibility. In the *Fakkkel*, organ of the O.S.P., of July 10, they explicitly separated themselves from the views of P. J. Schmidt, the party's leader.

This article, in which de Kadet called the

desperate resistance of the unemployed against the unprecedented attack of the government upon their already meager support, a "brawl and a barricade action, a typical Stalinist undertaking", and in which he concluded by designating the "communist danger" as the "main enemy", was justly received by the O.S.P. workers, persecuted by the police and fighting side by side with the unemployed, as a stab in the back. A hail of protests against this article descended upon the party leadership.

The committee session of July 16, at which vehement disputes took place between P. J. Schmidt and Sal. Tas, was a favorable opportunity for the latter to resign from her momentarily inconvenient positions. This she did in a shabby declaration on July 17. One day later Schmidt was arrested for his "inciting" articles in the *Fakkkel*. Sal. Tas and de Kadet now sniffed something in the air. At a committee meeting they made a declaration acknowledging their withdrawal as an error and saying they were ready to resume their work. In their pamphlet they say on this point: ". . . Now the O.S.P. was a ship without a captain and we returned with the intention of steering it through the breakers."

It immediately became clear how they intended to steer the O.S.P. ship through the breakers, namely, into a calm and safe

harbor, far from the class struggle and the hands of the state power. Their aim was first to cripple the Left wing of the party. However, they reckoned without the host. Every attempt to defame the arrested and universally beloved Schmidt, to depict him as a romanticist and a martyr (in quotation marks!), and to convince the membership of Schmidt's stupidity and their own—de Kadet's and Sal. Tas'—erudition and the correctness of their defeatist conceptions, proved to be a failure. It became plainer every day that their articles were nothing but dyed-in-the-wool reformism draped with revolutionary and scholarly phrases.

The increasingly strong protest of the O.S.P. workers soon compelled Sal. Tas and de Kadet to resign their posts for good and to withdraw from the editorial board of the *Fakkkel*. The two then put out an "Open Letter to the Members of the O.S.P." in which they sought to justify their policy and to instruct the O.S.P. members in the most supercilious manner. At the very outset, their pamphlet remarked that the Amsterdam events had had "a very limited significance in the long run and very limited effects". Nevertheless, in order to make the distance between themselves and Schmidt as obvious as possible, they treat the whole question in their further remarks as if it had not been a question

of a resistance of the unemployed against relief cuts which was brutally suppressed by the state power, but rather as a spontaneous attempt of the "Stalinized" masses to seize power. The majority of the O.S.P. supporters, who supported to the maximum of their forces and sought to extend the resistance, which, moreover, was conducted by the unemployed without weapons, are characterized by de Kadat and Sal. Tas as "gangsters", "adventurers, slum proletarians"; the Left wing leaders became "hysterical persons". In the opinion of the two, the "revolutionary party could have conquered the respect of the masses" only if it "had unhesitatingly counterposed its thoughts, its insight [!] and its slogans to the instincts of the masses".

And what do the thoughts and the insight of the revolutionary party look like, according to de Kadat and Sal. Tas? Summarized, as follows: The defeat of the proletariat has become inevitable in all countries, Holland included. The power of resistance of the proletariat has been paralyzed by reformism and Stalinism to such an extent that the defeat is inevitable. This is de Kadat's perspective.

"Only under the pressure of the defeats will the best elements of the socialist movement develop into a cadre which has sufficient insight and sufficient toughness to be able to provide leadership in the future." Thus the "Open Letter". The task of the O.S.P., as the "revolutionary party", thus consists, according to de Kadat and Co., not in preparing and carrying out the struggle against Fascism, but in further paralyzing the fighting power of the proletariat and in reinforcing defeatist moods by the philosophy of the inevitability of the Fascist victory. Its task consists exclusively in preparing itself for the defeat, that is, above all and in the first place—Sal. Tas and de Kadat continue, and not by accident, to repeat this constantly—to safeguard the leaders, and for the rest, to engage all the members in a study of the *Communist Manifesto* and *Capital*, and to counteract the revolutionary instincts of the masses.

The deepest contempt for the masses and the deepest disbelief in the forces which slumber in the proletariat, are the essential hallmarks of the "insight" of these terrified Right Centrists. The notions they have of the essence of the revolutionary party is

shown by their attitude to party discipline. "In a party consisting of cadres, the greatest possible freedom of thought and discussion must exist with regard to all questions relating to policies, and discipline should apply mainly to organizational, technical questions which are, of course, entirely subordinated to policies."

Here too, evidently, the wish is the father to the thought. Under the banner of "freedom of criticism", de Kadat and Sal. Tas would like to smuggle their opportunistic, defeatist "theories" into the O.S.P. and in this manner prevent its evolution to a revolutionary, communist party. The working class members of the O.S.P. understood quite well what these gentlemen, who have been enthusiastically applauded by the Dutch social democracy, really want, and they lost no time in giving them the air. The liberation of the party from such elements as de Kadat and Sal. Tas undoubtedly signifies a step forward. There is reason to expect that a closer rapprochement will again take place between the O.S.P. and the Revolutionary Socialist Party: another serious step forward to the Fourth International.

What Schacht Is Heading Towards

THAT Germany's foreign trade is ruined was acknowledged with noteworthy candor by Schacht in his last big speech. The paltry remnants of exports, together with redeemed foreign bills, still barely suffice to import the most urgently needed raw materials and thus to keep alive any German economy at all. The universal imports control will not be able to improve the situation. The attempt will of course be made to provide the plants producing vital necessities with raw materials. But the question immediately arises: Which enterprises are to be favored? There is no doubt as to which will emerge triumphant out of the inevitable disputes: in the long run, the strongest and most influential. Accordingly, the monopolistic bourgeoisie and among them, it goes without saying, the armaments magnates.

Schacht himself has already called the bureaucratization intolerable. The more widely ramified the bureaucracy, the stronger grows corruption. Bribe money is as usual reckoned into the selling price, that is, it is paid by the consumers.

Large foreign credits can somewhat moderate the calamity. Yet a country which barely raises a part of the interests on its old debts, has little to hope for. Therefore Schacht prefers to suspend payments altogether, and is putting forward the prospect of a general moratorium.

The economic dictator entertains no illusions as to the future. The "substantial limitation of imports" he has proclaimed signifies that little by little the national-socialist "ideal" of autarchy is now being approached. To carry it through consistently is naturally impossible. Listen to what an expert writes on this score in the *London Economist*:

"The technical and economic possibilities of such a [substitute] production in no wise correspond to the boastful official propaganda. . . . The substitution of imported raw materials by synthetic substitute materials—the theme of the most clamorous propaganda—promises nothing. The new

textile materials are technically inferior and very dear. They are mainly products of the artificial silk industry which must import wood and is itself hardly able to meet the domestic demand for artificial silk, so that the excess of imports has sharply risen this year. The expansion of this industry would require enormous investments of capital, which would in no way be justified by the production of an inferior material and which would furthermore find no export market. The production of substitute materials would require in general technical reorganizations which would swallow new capital and destroy the old. The high prices of these artificially produced raw materials would raise the general price level, hamper the general export, and reduce the German standard of living."

In metallurgical production the situation is worse yet by far. Since profits must be maintained, the state, in order to promote the cutting down on native ores, will have to pay extraordinary premiums. With regard to the domestic production of copper, the *Frankfurter Zeitung*, for example, writes that "the technical productive capacity of German copper mining in its present scope is being fully utilized and could be increased only by new shutdowns, that is, by protracted measures involving an appreciable expenditure which did not appear warranted even during the war". German industry is today necessarily taking on a war character. Goods that could be cheaply imported from abroad, must be produced at home at an enormous expense. Even thought the individual enterpriser has his profits guaranteed by subsidy and higher prices (that's the very premise of capitalist industry), the vast losses to the whole of economic life nevertheless remain.

A short time ago, the Paris periodical *Lu* reports, two Frenchmen who were received among others by Bade, councillor of the Propaganda Ministry, returned from a students' tour of Germany. They set themselves the task of objectively establishing

wage and food conditions by means of direct inquiries made to numerous German workers. The results exceed all expectations. Weekly earnings, for example [the mark is now approximately 40 cents] were as follows:

	Before Hitler	After
1 Skilled worker	48	25 - 30
1 Unskilled worker	27	20
1 Skilled metal worker	86	43 - 49
1 Building trades worker (Private enterprise)	86	51
1 Building trades worker (Government enterprise)	84	28

Food prices have changed as follows:

	Before Hitler	After
1 Lb. margarine	.28 - .90	.66 - 1.20
1 Lb. lard (2nd quality)	.45	.90
1 Kg. potatoes	.45	.90
1 Kg. sugar	.32	.39
1 Liter milk	.24	.32

In the official statistics, of course, these differences are not so crassly expressed. Nevertheless, the tremendous rise of the cost of living as well as the decline of the average income can no longer be concealed even by official quarters.

Even though the last drop is being squeezed out of the working class, profits remain too slight to bring about a temporary improvement, a natural conjunctural boom. Japan offers the best example in this respect. There the degree of exploitation has attained the very highest imaginable level. The contradictions, however, have continued to grow. They drove Japanese imperialism to war upon China, to the conquest of Manchuria as the first stage in preparation of an expedition against the Soviet Union.

That is just what Germany is being propelled into, even if the Angel of Peace himself were the *Reichsführer* of Germany. Just the same, Hitler and Schacht know exactly what they are doing. They speak of peace and are arming for war. Every measure is considered by them exclusively from this angle.

Why, everybody asks, does Schacht tell

his foreign creditors the fairy tale that the reparations are the *one and only* cause of Germany's poverty? The payments of the first post-war years were, as is known, brought back again in large part by means of the inflation, in which the speculators abroad lost enormous sums in Reichsmarks. Today, everybody knows that the reparations were paid after 1923 with money pumped in from America. Whom does Schacht aim to deceive into thinking that Germany's need is the main cause of the world economic crisis? It is as well known to him as it is to anyone that the great crash in New York began at a time when the crisis in Germany was barely discernible. At most, this swindle will be believed by his own countrymen, who have been shut off from the outer world for a year and a half. Yet Schacht has attained his aim thereby: Versailles is guilty! Down with Versailles!—*This is the ideological preparation for war!*

When Schacht decides today upon a coercive economy, he knows quite well that it is impossible to maintain it for any length of time. The outlay which it involves, can be made good again only by means of a victorious war, which will create colonies, outlet markets and reparations.

The Bankruptcy of the Belgian Labor Bank

AS MIGHT have been expected, the investigation commission established to determine the causes for the bankruptcy of the Belgian Labor Bank [*Banque Belge du Travail*], composed mostly of Right wing elements of the Belgian Labor party [*Parti Ouvrière Belge*], ardent defenders of the traditional policy of this party—has, in order to save this policy, thrown the responsibility for the "disappointments" upon a few persons accused of having been delinquent or of having employed methods which injured the growth and the prosperity of the economic enterprises of the P.O.B. The general characterization which appears from the report handed in, may be transcribed as follows:

All efforts were exerted to discover fitting means of moderating the evil effects from which the economic enterprises of the P.O.B. suffer, while the cause of the evil is allowed to remain, that is, the policy of integration into the capitalist régime. However, since certain measures had to be taken in order to reduce in the minds of the working class the effects of the repercussions from the bankruptcy of the B.B.T., the fixing of individual responsibility permits the attainment of this goal by demanding censure or the expulsion of the eight mainly responsible, members of the P.O.B., including the minister of state, citizen Anseele.

The fact of the matter is that the bankruptcy is the logical outcome of the policy whose essential aim was the creation of vast economic organisms within the framework of the bourgeois régime, in order to combat the bourgeoisie on its own ground. These enterprises, integrated into a decadent capitalist milieu, filled with insoluble contradictions, could have no other fate in periods of crisis than that reserved for them by the operation of the relentless laws of the capitalist system against the weakest commercial, industrial or banking establishments, that is, either absorption by powerful enterprises, or ruination. Having

Coercive economy, which is a logical consequence of the national-socialist economic policy, must be organized right at the present moment in such a manner as to assure it the ability to hold out in a war. No doubt can exist: *It is a question of the organizational preparation for war!*

The economic dictator has, further, rejected deflation, that is, limitation of credit. The job-creation program, which is synonymous with an armaments program, must accordingly be maintained. Since the state finances are shattered, adjustments have had to be made to limitations, and according to official figures 180,000 emergency workers were dismissed in June and July alone. The armaments industry, however, is working day and night, strategically important roads, underground landing places, etc., are continuously built up, for the credits are being saved for *the material preparation for war.*

The law dealing with the "Distribution and Exchange of Employment" declares that almost every worker and employee under the age of 25 must be dismissed in favor of older workers. Humanity was never the guiding line of the national-socialists, and would therefore hardly be the motive for this law. If the general prac-

tise is today being abandoned, and young, cheap and productive workers are replaced by older ones, there must be very cogent reasons for it. The French press does not err when it reports that young workers are being given military drill in the labor camps. *It is all a part of the military war preparations.*

Industry cannot be assisted for any greater length of time by means of purely economic measures. Wage reductions alone can no longer assuage the profit lust of the bourgeoisie. Without the conquest of foreign markets, Germany will never emerge from its state of lasting unrest. To be sure, it can maintain itself for a certain period in this precarious equilibrium, but only by means of increasing sacrifices, by staking all its reserves which are small enough as it is. Consequently, it will be ready for any adventure which offers even a half-way promise of success; all the more so because it knows that it will conduct no isolated war, but will join in a bloc which is combatting the Soviet Union. And only because the fronts on this globe have not yet been marked off clearly enough, is our present hour still an hour of peace.

PARIS, September 1934.

BRN.

specialized in the control of textile enterprises (10 factories)—an industry very much subject to the influences of the crisis (in 1933, a large number of woolen mills worked only up to 50% of their productive capacity, some mills not reaching even 25%), the B.B.T. suffered the repercussions flowing from the fact that the capitalist enterprises constituting the supply, faced with a considerably reduced demand for products, were drawn into a struggle which was rendered very bitter by the sharpened competition between capitalists, in which the more poorly financed enterprises succumbed. These were the enterprises patronized by the B.B.T.

There lies the real cause of the bankruptcy of the B.B.T.; but not a word of this is to be found in the cited report. On the contrary, one finds in it a justification of the "realistic" policy followed in this field. It says:

"Just so long as the capitalist régime shall not have been abolished, our own undertakings will be obliged to submit to the special exigencies of this milieu, which correspond neither to their spirit nor their goal."

With the bases enunciated above as its point of departure, the commission confines itself to preaching the following remedies. The only initiative it takes in this domain deals with a functional perfecting of the economic enterprises of the P.O.B. The most important proposals are a centralization of control and management and the creation of workers' control where it does not yet exist.

To our mind, the centralization proposed by the Right wing elements who actually hold in their hands the commanding levers of all the organizations of the P.O.B., the worst enemies of a genuine and healthy workers' democracy, has as its aim to permit a restricted circle of new or old leaders to pursue with impunity the renowned "realizable" policy of Anseele and his associates. This appears all the truer

to us because the promise of workers' control is at present nothing but a promise which, it appears, is not going to be realized too soon. Consequently, should this hypothesis prove to be exact, it is certain that the policy of integration will continue in the same conditions as today and at the next stage will have consequences identical in form but more serious in essence than those which are now hitting at the worker-depositors. This is inevitable, for bound up with the capitalist system in which it evolves, the existence of the economic organisms of the P.O.B. is conditioned by the degenerated and jerky existence of the bourgeois régime in its present phase. The agonized somersaults of this great capitalist body engender identical somersaults of whatever it bears within itself, that is, the economic organism of the P.O.B.

In conclusion, we believe that in striking at the men, while allowing to subsist the policy which led them to act as they did, it is certain that despite the palliatives recommended in the report, other directors will inevitably commit the same errors as their predecessors, errors which have their source in the reformist policy.

In order, therefore, to shelter the working class from the consequences which flow inevitably from the preservation of this policy, it is the principle which ought to be changed.

The only truth enunciated by the investigation commission in its labors, confirms, by its own absurdity, the correctness of our conceptions, namely:

That the social democracy and its enterprises, as an appendix of the bourgeois régime which endeavors by its own palliatives to resist the grip of the world economic crisis, determines the social democracy to create its own means of safeguarding itself and of self-preservation within the framework of the régime with which it is so intimately linked.

BRUSSELS, October 1934.

Archives of the Revolution

DOCUMENTS OF THE HISTORY AND THEORY OF THE WORKING CLASS MOVEMENT

The Opposition and the Wrangel Officer

TO THE Political Bureau of the C.E.C.,
C.P.S.U. (Bolsheviks) and the
Præsidium of the C.C.C.*—

I. The Opposition Printing Plant and Its "Connection" with a Military Conspiracy.

On the night of September 12, a number of party members' homes was raided by agents of the G.P.U.

On September 15, the Secretariat of the C.C.C. met to hear comrade Yaroslavsky's report "concerning the participation of members of the C.P.S.U. (Bolsheviks) together with non-party men in the activities of an illegal counter-revolutionary organization"; and resolved to "approve the action of the G.P.U."

On September 22 a communication relating to the discovery of a printing plant was issued in the name of the Political Bureau and the præsidium of the C.C.C., and it was transmitted to all party organizations. This communication stated that "a number of the arrested non-party men were found to be actually involved with certain individuals from among the military circles who were planning a military overturn in the U.S.S.R. after the manner of Pilsudski's overturn".

This assertion which was repeated in the communication several times was founded upon the September 13 communication of the G.P.U. We think it necessary to cite here the main section of the G.P.U. communication.

"On September 12, 1927, the G.P.U. learned that one of the former officers in Wrangel's army had been approached with a proposal that he obtain a mimeograph by a certain citizen, one Scherbakov, son of a former manufacturer, and a non-party man; almost simultaneously information was received that the same individual had been approached by one, Tverskoi, a non-party man and a civil employe who turned out to be intimately connected with Scherbakov and who had information concerning the organization of a military overturn in the U.S.S.R. in the immediate future. Acting upon the said information on that very night of the 12th, the G.P.U. raided Scherbakov's apartment; and the search revealed an illegal printing plant which was publishing the anti-party documents of the Opposition prohibited by the party. The G.P.U. deemed it its duty to confiscate this literature, and in view of the connections between Scherbakov and Tverskoi to arrest all non-party men involved in this matter. In view of the extraordinary nature of the case (the organization of a military conspiracy) and the absolute urgency to track it down as fast as possible, the G.P.U. was compelled to raid without delay the homes of those party members who as the search revealed were directly connected with the illegal Scherbakov-Tverskoi organization. Of course none of the party men was arrested.

"Since a number of party members (Gruenstein, Gerdovskii, Mrachkovskii, *C.E.C. is the Central Executive Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, and C.C.C. is the party's Central Control Commission.—ED.

One of the most infamous accusations launched at the Russian Bolshevik-Leninists on the eve of their expulsion from the communist party, was that they had been conspiring with a counter-revolutionary "Wrangel officer" for the overthrow of the Soviet government. This charge, together with a sensational report that a secret "Opposition printing plant" had been unearthed in Moscow, was hurled at a bewildered revolutionary public at the height of the internal struggle in September 1927. In connection therewith, a number of sterling Russian Bolsheviks were arrested and imprisoned by the Stalinist machine. Although the Oppositionists promptly proved that the "secret printing plant" consisted of a typewriter and a mimeographing machine for reproducing the illegally suppressed Platform of the Left wing, and that the "Wrangel officer" was no other than an agent of the G.P.U., the two stories can be heard solemnly repeated in communist circles to the present day. As a despicable sample of the frame-up system, the episode has few equals in modern history and shows the lengths to which the Stalin faction went to discredit and crush the Opposition. The prophetic warning letter to Bukharin is signed by the noted Leningrad Bolshevik, Zorin. The two other documents bear the signature of members of the Central Committee and Central Control Commission. This is the first time all three have ever been published in any language, the Russian not excluded, because they were suppressed by the Stalinists along with ninety percent of the other documents of the Opposition.—ED.

Okhotnikov and others) are involved in matters relating to the illegal Scherbakov-Tverskoi organization, the G.P.U. deems it its duty to transmit all the details, together with all the material pertaining to this case to the C.C.C.

"In view of the fact that the testimony of the arrested non-party men has confirmed the existence of a group which sets as its aim the organization of the above-mentioned military conspiracy, we are continuing our investigation of this case."

From this communication it may be gathered that Scherbakov, who did actually participate in the work of the Opposition printing plant, had applied to a Wrangel officer on a matter concerning a mimeograph. This same Wrangel officer was also approached by Tverskoi who had no connection whatever with the Opposition printing plant, but who had "information concerning the organization of a military overturn in the U.S.S.R. in the immediate future".

Thus, we have two cases before us: one case dealing with an Opposition printing plant, and another case dealing with a military conspiracy. Through what or through whom are these two cases linked up? They are linked up through the person of a Wrangel officer whom Scherbakov approached regarding a mimeograph, and whom Scherbakov approached regarding

a mimeograph, and whom Tverskoi informed about an impending conspiracy.

On September 23, comrades Zinoviev, Smilga, and Peterson addressed a letter to the party organizations in which they put the following questions:

"Who is this Wrangel officer? What's his name? Why is it being kept under cover?"

"Has he been arrested?"

"Why was precisely this Wrangel officer approached, and simultaneously at that, both for a mimeograph and with information regarding a military overturn in the U.S.S.R. in the 'immediate future'? For what reason was this latter information supplied him?"

"Who was supposed to perpetrate this military overturn in the 'immediate future'? Which group? Which organization? Which individuals?"

In reply to the letter of comrades Zinoviev, Smilga and Peterson containing the foregoing questions, the Political Bureau and the præsidium of the C.C.C. transmitted on September 27 a new communication to all organizations, this time a letter of the chairman of the G.P.U., comrade Menzhinsky, to the Secretariat of the C.E.C., C.P.S.U. (Bolsheviks). This letter reads:

"The Wrangel officer referred to in G.P.U. communication to the C.C.C. dated 9-27-27 was not arrested by the G.P.U. because this citizen, whose name I can supply only upon the direct order of the C.E.C. C.P.S.U. (Bolsheviks), has assisted the G.P.U. on more than one occasion in tracking down White Guard conspiracies. Thanks to information he supplied were discovered, for example, the stores of arms of the counter-revolutionary Savinkov organization. It was he also who aided the G.P.U. in catching the individuals implicated in the recent military conspiracy.

"The raids and arrests bound up with this case were made with the aim of discovering this military conspiracy.

"The discovery of an underground printing plant was an incidental and unexpected consequence of the arrest of non-party individuals connected with the group in the military conspiracy. The G.P.U. did not hold and is not holding any inquiries into the matter of the illegal Opposition printing plant, in which party members were involved, but has given this case over to the C.C.C."

Thus, the G.P.U. communication of September 14 established that between the Opposition printing plant and the military conspirators there existed a link in the person of a Wrangel officer. However, the communication of the chairman of the G.P.U. of September 27 admits that the Wrangel officer is no Wrangel officer but an agent of the G.P.U. Thus, according to the new interpretation of the chairman of the G.P.U. himself the so-called connection between the Opposition press and the military conspiracy is personified by an agent of the G.P.U. This and this alone is the connection. There is not a single word about any other connection either in the

G.P.U. communications or in any other documents.

It is obvious that an agent of the G.P.U. cannot be considered a counter-revolutionist. According to the G.P.U., Scherbakov applied to this G.P.U. agent "with a proposal that he obtain a mimeograph". These words must be obviously understood to mean that Scherbakov attempted to obtain a mimeograph through a citizen who no-wise could be considered a participant in a counter-revolutionary military conspiracy, because this citizen happens to be a G.P.U. agent. There is not to be obtained even the tiniest bridge between the press and the military conspiracy, unless the G. P. U. agent is transformed into a Wrangel officer, precisely as was done in the first G.P.U. communication.

As we already know, a certain Tverskoi also applied to this same G.P.U. agent with information about the preparation of "a military conspiracy in the U.S.S.R. in the immediate future". From the first G.P.U. text, where the G.P.U. agent is recommended only as a Wrangel officer, one might draw the conclusion that one, Tverskoi, unconnected in any way whatever with the Oppositionist press, informed a Wrangel officer about a military conspiracy—evidently in order to draw this Wrangel officer into the overturn. The second G.P.U. communication presents the matter in just the reverse manner.

Tverskoi approached the G.P.U. agent "with information concerning the organization of a military overturn" obviously in order to expose this overturn in time. Where then is the connection between the Opposition press and the military organization? One must presume that the G.P.U. agent transmitted to the proper channels the information Tverskoi gave him regarding the military conspiracy. One would also assume that this agent informed the proper authorities concerning his negotiations with Scherbakov regarding a mimeograph, independently of the fact as to who had initiated these negotiations. Thus, the sole "connection" between the Opposition press and a military conspiracy was an agent of the G.P.U. who was trailing White Guards and the Opposition. Even if we allow that the G.P.U. agent had accidentally stumbled across the mimeograph—this agent still remains the only "link" between the Opposition press and the military conspiracy unbeknown to us.

It is true that the first G.P.U. communication speaks in passing about an intimate connection between Tverskoi and Scherbakov without explaining whether it is a question of family, neighborhood, political or organizational ties. It is true that this same first communication says that the party members, "as the search revealed, were directly connected with the illegal Scherbakov-Tverskoi organization".

But we learn from neither the first nor the second G.P.U. document—what sort of an illegal organization is the illegal Scherbakov-Tverskoi organization. In the papers relating to the printing plant case, nowhere is any mention made of "the illegal Scherbakov-Tverskoi organization". Yet the same G.P.U. communication informs us that Scherbakov had some conversations with the G.P.U. agent about a mimeograph; whereas Tverskoi gave the G.P.U. agent information about the pending military overturn. What then does the "illegal Scherbakov-Tverskoi organization" refer

to? To the Opposition press, perhaps? But Tverskoi had no connection whatever with this press. To the military conspiracy? But nowhere is a single word said about Scherbakov's participation in the military conspiracy. What then did the Scherbakov-Tverskoi "organization" consist of? The communication only informs us that they both applied to one and the same G.P.U. agent, even though for entirely different reasons—one on a matter relating to a mimeograph, the other with information about a conspiracy.

With respect to the first G.P.U. communication only, the reference to the "illegal Scherbakov-Tverskoi organization" could be indirectly based on the fact that they both applied, even though for different reasons, to one and the same Wrangel officer, that is to say, a White Guard. But this construction collapses completely in the face of the second G.P.U. communication which attests that not a Wrangel officer is concerned here but a member of a government institution, fulfilling secret commissions in the interest of the Soviet state. Consequently there is no illegal Scherbakov-Tverskoi organization. It was precisely in order to maintain a semblance of such an organization that the G.P.U. was impelled in its first communication to depict its own agent as a Wrangel officer. That is the incontrovertible testimony of the facts.

On September 27-28 the case of the communists participating in the Opposition press was heard by the Moscow C. C. and on the 29th by the C.C.C.. At these hearings absolutely nobody supported the accusation that the communists were "directly connected with the illegal Scherbakov-Tverskoi organization". To all the demands of the accused as well as of the C.E. C. members—Yevdokimov, Zinoviev, Smilga and Trotsky—present during the C.C.C. hearings that it be definitely and clearly stated what the illegal Scherbakov-Tverskoi organization consisted of, and wherein the connections lay between communists and this organization, the members of the M.C.C. and the C.C.C. indignantly replied by accusing the questioners of attempting to sidetrack the hearing to matters which had nothing at all to do with the case; that they, the accused, were seeking to befuddle the issues in order to escape giving answer to the question of the press, and so forth and so on. The indictment of the M.C.C. and the C.C.C. in the so-called printing plant case accuses the party members "of creating jointly with non-party bourgeois intellectuals an underground anti-party organization possessing its own illegal printing plant". We have heard more than once the M.C.C. and the C.C.C. label the Opposition as "an underground anti-party organization". But this is a question separate and apart. Fourteen party members were held accountable on the question of the Opposition press. Twelve of them were expelled. But what happened to the "counter-revolutionary Scherbakov-Tverskoi organization"?

The first G.P.U. communication read: "Since a number of party members (Gruenstein, Gerdovski, Mrachkovski, Okhotnikov and others) are involved in matters relating to the illegal Scherbakov-Tverskoi organization, the G.P.U. deems it its duty to transmit all the details together with all material pertaining to this case to the C.C.C."

This is of course entirely correct. But what has happened to all the "details" and "all the material"? When the accused comrades. Gerdovski, Mrachkovski, Okhotnikov, and others demanded that Tverskoi's report be made public, that is, the testimony of one of the two founders of that very same "illegal organization" to which the above named communists supposedly belonged, the praesidium of the C.C.C. refused them point blank—on the ground that Tverskoi and his testimony have no connection whatever with the matter under investigation, namely the Opposition press. By this very thing, the praesidium of the C.C.C. declared the first G.P.U. communication to be fraudulent, which asserted that Gerdovski, Mrachkovski, Okhotnikov and others were involved in the illegal Scherbakov-Tverskoi organization. The C.C.C. turned out to have no information either detailed or abridged and no material at all on this score. Why? Obviously because the G.P.U. sent no such documents to the C.C.C. for the reason that it had none itself. Had such documents obtained, there would have been no need to pass off a G.P.U. agent for a Wrangel officer, and on this masquerade to erect "the illegal Scherbakov-Tverskoi organization" in which communists were supposedly involved.

This, however, did not prevent the chairman of the G.P.U. from concluding his second communication, which completely refutes the myth about the Wrangel officer, with the following words:

"It is no fault of the G.P.U. that the allies of the Opposition among non-party intellectuals turned out to be connected one way [?] or another [?] with army men conspiring a military putsch."

What does this imply? What sort of connections "one way or another" are these? This implies that the chairman of the G.P.U.—who under the pressure of the letter written by comrades Zinoviev, Smilga and Peterson was compelled to disclose that the White Guard Wrangel officer was not arrested because he was no White Guard but an agent of the G.P.U.—is nevertheless making an attempt to sustain at least a semblance of the accusation against the communists which was based upon this very same fake White Guard.

In the meantime both the September 22 and 27 communications of the Political Bureau and the praesidium of the C.C.C. are making the rounds of all the organizations down to the nethermost nuclei. Moreover, the second communication which was written after the trick played on the party regarding the Wrangel officer was already exposed, concludes with the following words:

"The C.E.C. and the C.C.C. declare that they will cut away with an iron hand every attempt to draw into the internal affairs of the C.P.S.U. a bourgeois intellectual crew like the Scherbakovs and the Tverskois and the military putschists who hang on to their coat tails and strive to overthrow the régime of the proletarian dictatorship."

These words leave no room for any doubts: the Opposition is accused of seeking to draw into the internal affairs of the C.P.S.U. not only bourgeois intellectuals but also the military conspirators who hang on to their coat tails. Consequently the Opposition is seeking to draw military conspirators into the internal affairs of the C.P.S.U. This was written on September

27 in connection with the discovery of the Opposition press. But on September 29 this same præsidium of the C.C.C. which had countersigned the foregoing words announced to the accused communists that Tverskoi, and his testimony, as well as the case concerning the overturn in general, had no connection whatever with the case relating to the Opposition press. If such is the case then what was the import of the signature of the præsidium of the C.C.C. which was appended to the communications transmitted to all the members and candidates of the C.E.C., and the C.C.C. of C.P. S.U. (Bolsheviks) and the præsidium of the Executive Committee of the C.I. and to all the Regional, District, and Section Committees and the Control Commissions of the C.P.S.U.?

From what has been said up to now, the following questions arise:

1) When comrade Yaroslavsky reported (Sept. 15) to the Secretariat of the C.C.C. "concerning the participation of members of the C.P.S.U. (Bolsheviks) in the activities of an illegal counter-revolutionary organization", did he or did he not at the time know that the Wrangel officer—this only "link" between the Opposition press and the military conspiracy—is an agent of the G.P.U.?

2) If comrade Yaroslavsky was not aware of this, it implies that the G.P.U. had misled him. Then it is necessary to establish who were the guilty ones on the staff of the G.P.U., and to hand them over to prosecution.

3) If comrade Yaroslavsky did know, why did he fail to inform the Secretariat which in its decision found that "the G.P.U. had acted correctly"? Did comrade Yaroslavsky mislead the Secretariat or, as we have already said, was he himself misled by the G.P.U.?

4) When did the Political Bureau and the præsidium of the C.C.C. first find out the truth about the "Wrangel officer"? Was it at the time when the first communication was made public or when the second communication of the G.P.U. was received in answer to the direct inquiry of comrades Zinoviev, Smilga and Peterson?

The significance of these questions is self-evident. The communication of the C.E.C. and the C.C.C. fooled the party on the question of the supposed connection between the Opposition and the military conspiracy. The party is not free from the influence of this trickery even now. On the contrary the periphery of this trickery is ever extending further and further in the country, attaining an increasingly coarser character. Who played the active and conscious rôle in perpetrating this trickery? Who was involved in it by dint of factional blindness? Who acted out of carelessness or slovenliness? And finally who is the actual organizer and instigator of the trick? Complete and unconditional clarity is needed on these questions. Without this clarity it is inconceivable to have an honest preparation for the fifteenth party congress.

II. The Military Conspiracy Case.

Inside the party and far outside its precincts there has been set in circulation, in this manner, in two editions—the first and second—the vile myth concerning the Opposition's presumed attempts "to draw into the internal affairs of the C.P.S.U. military putschists, striving to overthrow the régime of the proletarian dictatorship".

Who are these putschists? What is this military conspiracy? During the session of the præsidium of the C.C.C. we were told that this military conspiracy has no connection whatever with the Opposition press. We were told by the G.P.U. that matters relating to the military conspiracy were still in process of investigation. Nothing is left us except to hope that the conspiracy will be exposed and those implicated fittingly punished.

However, even at this given stage we cannot pass over in silence the question of the military conspiracy—and not only because an attempt was made to implicate communists in this matter through the medium of a fictitious "illegal Scherbakov-Tverskoi organization" which was built upon a single Wrangel officer who turned out to be an agent of the G.P.U. Above we dealt with this aspect of the case with the utmost brevity possible, leaving aside many details, each of which deserves a separate treatment. But there is another aspect to the "case" no less instructive, and one which sheds some light upon the future.

We have already been told by the G.P.U. that in addition to Scherbakov, there was another participant in the illegal counter-revolutionary organization—one, Tverskoi, the same individual who had informed the G.P.U. agent about "the organization of a military overturn in the U.S.S.R. in the immediate future". The gravity of this information requires no comment. The same communication from the G.P.U. of September 17 reads:

"The testimony of the arrested non-party men has confirmed the existence of a group which sets as its aim the organization of the above-mentioned military conspiracy."

Thus Tverskoi's information had been confirmed. What did Tverskoi's information consist of? It is available in documents which the G.P.U. handed over to the C.C.C. It is true, that the præsidium of the C.C.C. has refused to make this information public since it has absolutely no connection with the case. But on the other hand, we were indeed told by the same præsidium that those conspirators about whom Tverskoi had informed, were being drawn in by the Opposition to settle internal party questions. From the G.P.U. we have learned that involved in the Scherbakov-Tverskoi organization are Gruenstein, Gerdovski, Mrachkovski, Okhotnikov and others. All this sufficiently justifies our interest in Tverskoi's report. We append the main portion of Tverskoi's statement, putting initials in place of proper names in order to confine ourselves to those names only which are already given in the communications of the C.E.C. and the C.C.C. Here is what Tverskoi reported:

"Citizenship N. related to me under the vow of great secrecy a conversation she had with M. M. told her that there was a movement going on in military circles headed by comrades Trotsky and Kamenev, obviously a military movement, and that this organization is active. No mention was made that this organization intended to make an overturn, but that was self-understood. From my conversation with N., I concluded that the Opposition was involved here, but when I asked her about it, she said that this was not all the case, although Trotsky and Kamenev were participating. From this I concluded that the organization has its own independent character. No mention was made that M. himself belonged

to the organization, but this was also clear from the entire conversation."

Such was Tverskoi's information on the question of the "organization of a military overturn in the U.S.S.R. in the immediate future". We shall not here bring in the testimony of citizenship N. and citizen M. inasmuch as this testimony adds nothing new except for citizen M.'s reference to the fact that the information concerning the conspiracy was supplied him by an individual who happened to be very far away from Moscow. Neither Tverskoi, nor N. nor M. knew anything about the conspiracy at first hand. Tverskoi gets his information from N., N. from M. and M. from the above-mentioned and absent witness. The most concrete picture of the conspiracy is given by Tverskoi, in so far, at any rate, as he says that at the head of this conspiracy are Trotsky and Kamenev. According to the categorical statement of the chairman of the G.P.U., Menzhinsky, with whom comrades Yevdokimov, Zinoviev, Smilga and Trotsky had a conversation on this subject, there is no other material available concerning this military conspiracy case as yet. It was this information, and only this information, that confirmed, in G.P.U.'s opinion not only the existence of the group setting as its aim the said "military conspiracy" but also the participation in this group of a "number of party members" (Gruenstein, Gerdovski, Mrachkovski, Okhotnikov and others).

Both Scherbakov and Tverskoi were arrested on the night of September 12. The very next morning, on September 13, the G.P.U. was already writing to the C.C.C. about the preparation of "a military overturn in the U.S.S.R. in the immediate future"; about the "illegal Scherbakov-Tverskoi organization"; and about party members who "as the search revealed were directly connected with the illegal Scherbakov-Tverskoi organization". However, as it appears from the documents, the only party member implicated in the "organization of the military overturn in the U.S.S.R. in the immediate future", and indicated by name is—comrade Trotsky.

To our inquiry directed to comrade Menzhinsky why he who placed such extraordinary significance upon Tverskoi's report had failed to inform comrade Trotsky about it, Menzhinsky replied that he could "not recall" if Trotsky's name was mentioned in these reports. Let us recall that the first communication of the G.P.U. came on September 13; the second on September 27, while the conversation took place on September 28. Comrade Yagoda who was present during the conversation explained that when an investigation points toward the implication of party members in a case, the related documents are transmitted to the C.C.C. This was done in this case too. As a matter of fact, as we already know, the statements of Tverskoi, citizenship N., and citizen M. concerning the military conspiracy were included by the C.C.C. to that very volume of documents which deals with the Opposition press. The C.C.C. in its turn also failed to communicate in any way whatever with comrade Trotsky. Comrade Yevdokimov accidentally became acquainted with these documents and then called them to the attention of comrade Trotsky and other Opposition members of the C.E.C.

What does all this mean? For the time being we refrain from making any political comments.

III. *The Necessary Conclusions*

We move that a joint session of the Political Bureau and the praesidium of the C.C.C. be immediately called in order to draw up a new and a third communication to the party which must refute the false assertion contained in the first two communications. In other words, we move that the party be informed and that a categorical explanation be made to the party, with utmost clarity and precision possible concerning the decision reached by the praesidium of the C.C.C. in which it refused to make Tverskoi's report public,—the decision that the case relating to the Opposition press and the case of the so-called military conspiracy have nothing in common.

We move that the entire party be informed that it was misled by the first two communications of the Political Bureau and the praesidium of the C.C.C.

The Appeal to the Party Members

For Members of the C.P.S.U. (B) only
To the Central Committee—
To the Central Control Commission—
To the Executive Committee of the
Communist International—

TO ALL PARTY MEMBERS

Rumors emanating from the tops are circulating in the party about the connection between the Oppositionists and a Wrangel officer, and a White Guard conspiracy. Who is circulating these rumors? and what for?

For two years no party congress has been called. Some 200 old Bolsheviks including 13 members of the Central Committee and the Control Commission have prepared a platform for the fifteenth congress in which they subjected to criticism the policies of the Central Committee on the workers' question, on the peasant, industrial, and national questions, on questions of the international policies of the Comintern, and the internal party régime. But upon the motion of Stalin, the Political Bureau has banned the platform of the Bolshevik-Leninists (Opposition) at a time when it was duty bound to print the platform for the information of the entire party. The district conferences for the election of delegates to the fifteenth congress have been set for the end of October, almost for the entire U.S.S.R. Yet it is promised that the so-called "discussion" will be permitted only beginning with November 1, i.e. after the election of delegates to the congress. Isn't this trickery? Isn't this faking a congress? Actions of this sort grind under heel our party statutes; they are an unheard-of blow to the congress and the party. We, Oppositionists, i.e., Bolshevik-Leninists, will spread our platform with all our might and main and by all the means at our disposal. And that is just what we said at the Political Bureau and the C.C.C. praesidium.

Fourteen irreproachable party members undertook to reprint the platform on typewriters, mimeographs, etc. They were subjected to raids by the G.P.U. The C.C.C. has expelled twelve of them out of the party. Everywhere expulsions are taking place.

But this time mere expulsion, exile, removal from posts and so on proved insufficient for the directors of the entire machinery. Neither the calumny about "agents of

We move that a special committee of the C.E.C. and the C.C.C., in which Opposition members of these bodies participate, be established to investigate this entire matter from beginning to end, to establish who are guilty and bring them to account as soon as possible.

Only the hope that the Political Bureau and the praesidium of the C.C.C. will satisfy our most lawful and elementary demands makes it possible for us not to give here the appropriate *political evaluation* of the facts and circumstances written down above.

We insistently urge that arrangements be made by phone to have such a session called today.

(Signed)

G. YEVDOKIMOV, G. ZINOVIEV,
I. SMILGA, I. BAKAYEV,
L. TROTSKY.

Moscow, October 1, 1927.

Chamberlain" nor the calumny about the "second party" helped. Alarmed, they said to themselves: "Suppose the party wants to find out what sort of platform it is for the sake of which old and good party members are sacrificing themselves! Is it true that it is an anti-party platform? Lenin once said that whoever does not demand documents but takes somebody's word in party controversies is a hopeless idiot. We do not wish to be idiots. Hand over the platform to us." Should the party demand the platform, it would get it. Should it get it, it would see from the platform that the Opposition, in the struggle against the Stalinist leadership, defends to the last genuine proletarian interests and Lenin's work. At the tenth congress Lenin said outright that if there were serious differences in the party, the "elections will have to proceed on the basis of platforms" and that "we have no power to forbid this" (*Tenth Congress Minutes*, p. 292).

That is why the most rascally retainers of the apparatus have decided to fling such an accusation against the platform as would scare the party, compel it to draw aside, give it no opportunity to listen to any arguments or convictions and put through "the elections" for the fifteenth congress under orders from the apparatus tops.

It is with this aim in mind that the dishonest accusation of the connection between the Oppositionist "printing plant" and a White Guard military conspiracy was put forward. Every party member is duty bound to be completely informed on this question.

On September 13, the O.G.P.U. sent a communication to the C.C.C. stating that the Bolsheviks who were working in the Opposition "printing plant" turned out to be connected through a non-party man with a Wrangel officer, who in his turn turned out to be involved with a military conspiracy, having as its aim the achievement of an overturn in the U.S.S.R. "in the immediate future". The secretariat of the C.C.C. approved the activities of the O.G.P.U. that was raiding communists who were supposedly members of a "counter-revolutionary organization". On September 22, the Political Bureau and the praesidium of the C.C.C. transmitted to the entire party a special communication to the effect that the Oppo-

sition workers who were printing our pre-conference platform were presumably in communication with a counter-revolutionary conspirator. This communication has been and is being read in all the nuclei, including those in the most forsaken corners of our country. Rumors about "connections" between the Opposition and a military conspiracy are ever spreading wider among the non-party men. What is this unheard-of accusation based upon? On the fact that one of the workers in the Opposition "printing plant" presumably spoke with a Wrangel officer about a mimeograph. That is how the G.P.U. presents the case.

On September 23, comrades Zinoviev, Smilga, and Peterson (Oppositionists) addressed a letter to the C.C. and to all party organizations, in which they asked, "Who is this Wrangel officer? What's his name? Why is it being covered up? Has he been arrested?"

Only under the lash of these questions did the chairman of the G.P.U. supply written information that the so-called Wrangel officer was merely an O.G.P.U. agent who had been utilized on more than one occasion to expose White Guard conspiracies. Thus, the entire communication about the Wrangel officer and about the connection between the "printing plant" and military conspiracy turned out to be a lie and trick—a lie against the Opposition, a trick played on the party. The only conclusion that follows from the facts reported by the O.G.P.U. itself is the following: One and the same O.G.P.U. agent was keeping under surveillance conspirators and communists who were preparing the platform of the Bolshevik-Leninists (Opposition) for the fifteenth congress. The party nuclei were led astray with malice aforethought. Without being aware and without suspecting it they passed resolutions on the basis of trickery and of fraud. The question of the military conspiracy has no connection whatever with the printing of the Oppositionist platform of the Bolshevik-Leninists. This was fully established during the trial of those who participated in the so-called Oppositionist printing plant. None of the accusers of the C.C.C. referred to by so much as a single word to the connection with the military conspiracy. This lie was based on the fact that the O.G.P.U. agent was presented to the party as a conspirator.

But that is not all there is to the matter. According to the G.P.U. communication it was the Wrangel officer, i.e., in reality a G.P.U. agent, who was the contact between the Opposition printing plant and some sort of a military conspiracy. In their letter to the C.C., comrades Zinoviev, Smilga and Peterson asked, "who was supposed to perpetrate this military overturn in the immediate future? Which group? Which organization? Which individuals?"

In answer to these questions we were merely told that the matter was still being investigated.

But since the investigation was just being made it would seem that one should wait until its conclusion. Our motion to form an investigating committee with Opposition members of the C.C. and the C.C.C. participating, was rejected. Calumny runs ahead without waiting for any investigations.

Who was the source of the information about the military organization? One Tverskoi, a non-party man connected in no way either with the Opposition or with the printing of the platform. Whom did

Tverskoi inform about the military conspiracy? An agent of the G.P.U. Up to this point everything seems to be in order. From this it follows that Tverskoi, having become cognizant of a military conspiracy of counter-revolutionists, did what every honest Soviet citizen should do, i.e., he informed the G.P.U. But what did the G.P.U. do? It transmitted the information of Tverskoi to the C.C.C. as proof of the connection between the Bolshevik Oppositionists and the counter-revolutionary conspirators. The secretariat of the C.C. applied the information of Tverskoi to the papers dealing with the printing of the platform.

But what is the essence of Tverskoi's information concerning the preparation for "the military overturn in the U.S.S.R. in the immediate future"?

Citing a certain citizeness who in turn quotes another citizen, and so on, Tverskoi says, "Among military circles there exists a movement at the head of which are comrades Trotsky and Kamenev, obviously a military movement. . . This organization is active. No mention was made that this organization proposed to make an overturn, but this was self-understood."

As is evident from the communication of the O.G.P.U. itself, Tverskoi on his own initiative supplied an O.G.P.U. agent with the information that he had heard at third or fourth hand about the existence of a military "movement" at the head of which are, it appears, Trotsky and Kamenev. And which communists are members of the counter-revolutionary organization? Perhaps those printing the platform? No. The presidium of the C.C.C. itself categorically rejected this accusation. But what communists are spoken of then? Is it Trotsky perhaps? Tverskoi names Trotsky and only Trotsky. But the investigators of this dirty business are evidently not yet ready to put into circulation this second and much more peppery dish—regarding a military conspiracy headed by Trotsky! Evidently, they consider that the hour for this has not yet struck.

The O.G.P.U. has passed off its agent for a counter-revolutionist in order to justify raiding communists. The secretariat of the C.C.C. approved the behavior of the O.G.P.U. on the basis of Yaroslavsky's report concerning the supposed participation of communists in a counter-revolutionary organization. The Political Bureau issued a communication on this subject. Who is guilty of trickery in this matter? And who is being tricked? Who perpetrated this fraud? And what for? Who set this poisoned accusation in circulation in the party?

All threads lead to Stalin. Without his consent, approval and encouragement, no one would have ever dared to throw into the party ranks fraudulent accusations about the participation of Opposition communists in a counter-revolutionary organization.

What Stalin is perpetrating on a large scale is being repeated locally on a small scale. Dull-witted functionaries or scoundrelly careerists raise at party and non-party meetings the following poisoned question: And where is the Opposition obtaining funds for its activity? These contemptible slanderers are evidently not aware that our party grew up on the self-sacrifice and heroism of its members and not upon monies collected from the side-lines.

In Stalingrad, Putnin, the former secretary of the District Committee accused

worker-Oppositionists of selling state secrets and that with gun in hand they compelled communists to keep mum about the activities of the Opposition. Such and similar filth is being spread during meetings and given publication in the press. They are being spread among ever wider party and non-party circles.

All our attempts to stem this dirty tide of slander and to obtain an honest principled and sober discussion have led to nothing as yet. Our demand that the slander be denied about the connection between the Opposition and the military conspiracy was rejected. The myth about "the Wrangel officer" is being broadcast through the land, poisoning the minds of a million party members and tens of millions of non-party men. There is one aim, and one aim only: to screen the political bankruptcy of Stalin, to blacken the Opposition, to terrorize the party, break off the discussion, and pack the fifteenth congress. Such is the situation at the present moment.

Only the party itself can lead our party from the Stalinist quagmire onto the open road. The party must judge; the party

must decide. Put all the documents on the party table! Whoever in party controversies demands no documents but takes somebody's word, is a hopeless idiot. The most important document at the present moment is the platform of the Bolshevik-Leninists (Opposition).

Shame upon those who seek to hide their political bankruptcy behind the back of a fake Wrangel officer!

Put the platform of the Opposition before the party!

Long live the free and honest internal party discussion of disputed questions!

Down with cheating, fraud, slander, persecution, terrorization, expulsions, and exclusions!

Long live the fifteenth congress, honestly convoked!

Long live C.P.S.U. (Bolshevik), the one and only party of the proletarian dictatorship.

TROTSKY, ZINOVIEV,
YEVDOKIMOV, BAKAYEV,
PETERSON, I. SMILGA.

Moscow, October 4, 1927

Zorin's Letter to Bukharin

COMRADE Bukharin:

The case of comrade Fischelev impels me to write you a few lines. You have known Fischelev for twelve years. I have known him for eighteen. I know that all during his youth he was in the Russian social democratic party and that he was arrested as far back as 1906; that he remained in prison, in solitary, for two years, and that he was banished for life to Siberia, whence he escaped. As soon as he arrived in the United States, he and comrade Voskov, now deceased, founded the journal *Novy Mir*. When you, comrade Bukharin, arrived in New York and joined the editorial board of *Novy Mir*, the paper had already been put on its feet and became a daily. You yourself know how difficult it was to establish a paper under the conditions set down by American capitalism. You know at the beginning the small number of proletarians who published *Novy Mir* had to lend money out of their meager wages, to write the articles and print them themselves after their day's work, at night, that they themselves had to mail the paper and get the subscribers. In a word, you know that in America we expended the true Russian muscular power and did not carry on a mechanical labor. And you know that Fischelev stood in the front ranks of those who fought for a new world, literally [*Novy Mir* means: new world].

Comrade Bukharin, who among us has not made mistakes? The proletarian Fischelev has also made mistakes. In 1917, returning from emigration, he worked in a Kharkov printshop and joined the Menshevik-Internationalists. He was soon elected secretary of the Typographical union of Kharkov, and in that capacity, organized the general strike of the printing trades workers during the German occupation. He was arrested for this by Petliura's soldiers and would have been killed but for the solidarity of the workers who refused to return to work unless he was set free. In 1919, he returned again to our ranks. He worked as secretary of the Moscow district of the Typographical union, then as a Red director. Everywhere he worked as a

true proletarian, vigorously and honestly. Now he is arrested and expelled from the party. Why?

Comrade Bukharin, I ask you, you who are a member of the Political Bureau, why do you arrest workers like Fischelev? I ask you, as editor of *Pravda*, why do you calumniate workers like Fischelev?

You, Bukharin, were imprudent enough to print an article by V. Nikolayev in your paper, in which, among other calumnies, Fischelev is accused "of having published in New York the journal of Trotsky, *Novy Mir*". But you and I, as members of the editorial board of *Novy Mir*, also published the articles of Trotsky. Why do you forget that? Why do you neglect, as editor-in-chief, to call yourself a Trotskyist? Because you go insane when faced with comrades like Fischelev. Had Fischelev stolen money, like Broido, or printed your anti-Leninist articles, you would have given him your approbation. But Fischelev did not steal money, he only printed the platform of the Opposition, a platform which rightly reflects the interests, the needs and the aspirations of the proletariat and the poor peasants—and that is why Fischelev now lies in a G.P.U. prison while his family is dying of hunger.

Comrade Bukharin, such a state of affairs is very dangerous to the building up of socialism. Socialism itself is inconceivable with the imprisonment of the best communist workers. How can you reconcile the chairmanship of the Communist International with the job of jailor of the best communists?

I know that behind the political motives and petty revenge lies the intention of frightening off others, of preventing them from following the example. It is part of your struggle of self-defense. But you cannot frighten us off. Fischelev's place will be taken by a hundred others. A quarter of a million Leningrad workers showed, at the October 17, 1927 demonstration, that they have had their fill of your calumnies and falsehoods, by displaying their sympathy for us, the Opposition. You will try to deny this, too. What self-defense

can be practised by such means? You have fallen to such a low level of political degradation, that the political struggle in the ranks of our party before the congress, at a time when the two groups ought to preserve the maximum of dignity and carry on that calm and serious discussion so needed by the party, has been conducted against the Opposition exclusively by violent practises. You are making the dry guillotine operate at all hours. By expelling hundreds of the most devoted communists from the party you are trying to kill them politically. But the guillotine is only beginning to operate. Every day you will be compelled to arrest more Bolshevik-Leninists, to immure them in prison. And why? So that you and your group may select the delegates to the fifteenth congress, and separate yourselves completely from Leninism. But can a congress convoked under such conditions have any authority in the disputed questions? And afterward? Have you asked yourself this question?

Do you remember the time you were fighting Lenin, before the Cronstadt rebellion had reached Leningrad? We who fought against you nevertheless organized meetings for you, we printed your platform, and elected delegates to the congress in proportion to the importance of the platforms. That's how we acted in Lenin's time, when you and Stalin didn't have the slightest power. Whereas today, armed men come to arrest Fishlev in his home. They ransack his books, putting aside the books that you and your friends have written against the Opposition. They hunt inside for what might have been inscribed there about the Opposition. They finally seize a pamphlet containing the resolutions of the fourteenth congress, in which a number of letters are found. They triumphantly carry off the pamphlet and drag Fishlev along. They conduct him to the Central Control Commission, the purgatory before the prison. He is probed at the G.P.U. while his affairs and his thoughts are probed at the Control Commission.

"Where did you get the platform of the Opposition?"

"Who suggested the idea that you print it?"

And you, comrade Bukharin, who gave you the idea of doing against Lenin all that Fishlev is doing now? Had we employed such methods then, do you think we would have come out of the discussion stronger and more united? Have you asked yourself: How will the party come out of this battle?

The problems that have arisen in the present party crisis must be discussed intelligently and scrupulously by every party member. Only then will the discussion help the party and the revolution. You want to cook up a reply to the questions put by the G.P.U. policemen. Comrade Agranov is in his place when he fights anti-Soviet elements, but he is incompetent to sit in judgment in the case of Fishlev and the other imprisoned Bolshevik-Leninist oppositionists. Take care, comrade Bukharin! You yourself have often fought against our party, and probably you will some day have to carry on another fight against it. The comrades will then give you Agranov of the G.P.U. as your judge. Examples are contagious.

Fishlev and other comrades are imprisoned. They have no right to receive food or anything else from the outside. They

are deprived of all visitors. Their families are starved. Evidently all this makes you happy. You think that this will cut down the Opposition's vote. This fact forces me, as a party member and an Oppositionist, to make a gesture. Either you set free the workers who are with us in the fight for Leninism, with whom we have hungered, with whom we have suffered and fought, or

I shall print this letter by every means at my disposal and distribute it to the party membership. Arrest me for it! Only, remember that from prison our voice will reach deeper into the party and carry further.

This time, without greetings,

Sergei ZORIN

Trotsky on Max Eastman

DEAR Nicolai Ivanovich,

I received your inquiry about comrade Max Eastman who is played up from time as a bogie by our press, being almost depicted as a hireling of the bourgeoisie, selling it the state secrets of the U.S.S.R. This is a shameless lie. Comrade Max Eastman is an American revolutionist of the John Reed type, a devoted friend of the October revolution. He is a poet, writer, and journalist; he came to the Soviet Republic during the initial difficult years of her existence, learned the Russian language here, and came into intimate contact with our internal life in order to defend better and with greater assurance the Soviet Republic before the national masses of America.

In 1923 Max Eastman sided with the Opposition and openly defended it against political accusations and especially against insinuations and calumnies. I will not here touch upon those theoretical differences which separate comrade Eastman from the Marxists. But Eastman is an absolutely irreproachable revolutionist whose entire conduct is proof of his ideals and political disinterestedness. In this respect he is several heads higher than many of the functionaries who are hounding him. Eastman held to the opinion that the struggle waged by the Opposition was not energetic enough and he inaugurated a campaign abroad on his own accord and risk.

Having no access to the official communist press and desiring at any cost to give the widest possible publicity to Lenin's Testament, Eastman handed it over to an American bourgeois newspaper. Everyone of us, both before and during the epoch of the Soviet government, has had more than one occasion to resort to foreign bourgeois newspapers in order to give one bit of news or another the wide circulation which we could otherwise not obtain. Lenin on more than one occasion utilized such publicity in the form of interviews given to foreign journalists. One

must also add that except for an absolutely insignificant minority, American workers read only the bourgeois press.

Lenin's "Testament" is no state or party secret. It is no crime to publish it. On the contrary, it is a crime to keep it hidden from the party and from the working class. Today, the minor and casual remarks of Lenin which he wittingly wrote for his own personal use (for example, nota-

tions on book margins) are being printed by the hundreds, provided these notations can be used even if indirectly against the Opposition. But kept hidden are many hundred articles, speeches, letters, telegrams and notations made by Lenin, in proportion as they apply directly or indirectly against the present leadership, or in favor of the present Opposition. It is difficult to conceive of a ruder and more disloyal handling of the ideological heritage of Lenin. Had the "Testament" been given timely publication in our party press, it could have been freely reprinted by any bourgeois newspaper. But inasmuch as the Stalinist censorship had placed a ban on Lenin's "Testament" as well as upon hundreds of his other works, Eastman turned to the bourgeois press. There was nothing at all underhand in such a utilization by Eastman of a newspaper for the sake of publicity. Even on the pages of a bourgeois newspaper the "Testament" of Lenin remains Lenin's testament.

But, the slanderers say, Eastman "sold" this testament. Yes, the bourgeois paper paid for the material it got. But did Eastman appropriate this payment and use it for his own personal purposes? No. He donated it all to the cause of the French Opposition in order that this same testament of Lenin and other documents shamefully kept hidden from the party and the proletariat may be published. Does this act place the least splotch on Eastman's reputation? Not the slightest. On the contrary, Eastman's entire behavior proves that he was motivated exclusively by ideological reasons.

During the time when the Opposition still figured on correcting the party line by strictly internal means without bringing the controversy out in the open, all of us, including myself, were opposed to steps Max Eastman had taken for the defense of the Opposition. In the autumn of 1925 the majority in the Political Bureau foisted upon me a statement concocted by them-

Under the sensational title "Trotsky Condemns Eastman", the Stalinist Workers Bookshop of New York has published a reprint of two letters against Max Eastman signed by Leon Trotsky sometime in 1925, on the occasion of Eastman's publication of Lenin's Testament and his own book, Since Lenin Died. The letter reproduced below was written by Trotsky during his exile in Alma-Ata to another exiled Bolshevik, N. I. Muralov, leader in the Moscow uprising in 1917 and subsequently commander of the Moscow military district. It throws light on the conditions in which the letters were written and signed, and also gives Trotsky's opinion of Eastman's revolutionary integrity. Our endorsement of this opinion does not, of course, affect our attitude towards Eastman's attempts to revise Marxism, which have anything but our endorsement.

—ED.

selves containing a sharp condemnation of Max Eastman. In so far as the entire leading group of the Opposition considered it inadvisable at that time to initiate an open political struggle, and steered toward making a number of concessions, it naturally could not initiate and develop the struggle over the private question of Eastman who had acted as I said on his own accord and at his own risk. That is why, upon

~ BOOKS ~

Declining America

THE DECLINE OF AMERICAN CAPITALISM, by LEWIS COREY. 622 pp. IX Graphs. New York. Covici, Friede. \$4.00.

Lewis Corey has been unfortunate in his reviewers; the handful of radical and liberal papers which should have introduced his work to an audience which badly needs it have, indeed, but served to screen the book from the labor movement. Scarcely one of them gave even a hint of its quality and content. To what extent the reviewers alone were to blame for this, to what extent Corey himself is responsible, requires some discussion. It will help clear the ground for an adequate appreciation of Corey's work if we begin by a consideration of the principal reviews.

The nasty review in *The Nation*, by the New Dealer, A. A. Berle, revealed more about how "impartial" an economist Berle is than it did about the quality of Corey's thought. Nor is there anything in Corey's book to justify the ill humor and economic illiteracy of the editor of *Common Sense*. Of the liberals, only George Soule in *The New Republic* gave some notion of the proportions of the book, though without seriously coming to grips with it. The only review so far in the socialist press was that of James Oneal in *The New Leader*, which lightly passed over the whole book in a gingerly fashion solely to denounce its revolutionary conclusions. On the whole, the reviews in the capitalist and reformist press merely revealed the ignorance and prejudice of these people, and it is only unfortunate that their readers were thus barred from learning how valuable a book the reviewers were tampering with.

The truly fantastic review of thirty-odd pages in *The Communist* was, if one needed such confirmation, a thorough revelation of the abysmal theoretical level of the Stalinists. It was a mosaic of quotations from Marx, Lenin, Stalin, etc., most of them

the decision of the leading group of the Opposition, I signed the statement on Max Eastman foisted upon me by the majority in the Political Bureau with the ultimatum: either sign the statement as written, or enter into an open struggle on this account.

There is no cause to enter here into a discussion whether the general policy of the Opposition in 1925 was correct or no. It is my opinion even now that there were no other ways during this period. In any case, my then statement on Eastman can be understood only as an integral part of our then line toward conciliation and peace-making. That is how it was interpreted by all those members of the party who were in the least informed or who did some thinking. This statement casts no shadow either personal or political upon comrade Eastman.

To the extent that news has reached me about Eastman for the last year, he remains right now what he has been: a friend of the October revolution and a supporter of the views of the Opposition.

With Bolshevik greetings,
L. TROTSKY

ALMA-ATA, September 11, 1928.

quite irrelevant, and tied together by sentences at least half of which were wholly unintelligible. It was the work of men long bereft of any loyalty to ideas, and completely incompetent to discover whether the leading ideas of Corey on economics were or were not in conformity with Stalinism. Perhaps the very sanity of Corey made him sound like a heretic; and so, ever and anon, the Stalinists quoted at random and asked: Is this Trotskyism? Though the specific passages thus isolated were not at all significant, the Stalinists were right, however, in being suspicious; for Corey's conception of the process of capitalist decline provides, like Lenin's, for a continuation of capitalist production, though on continuously lower levels, until it is politically overthrown. In this Corey differs fundamentally from the apocalyptic theory of "the last crisis", by which Stalinism revises Lenin and reverts to the Kautsky-Luxemburg theory of an internal collapse of capitalism.

Why did not the Stalinists merely vent their bile on the book in their usual fashion of dealing with non-Stalinists? They were instinctively uneasy and distrustful of the book; but they were not sure that a deal could not be made with Corey, as indicated by the closing chapter of his book. That chapter, hastily sketching the history of the radical movement and the necessary strategy and tactics, is ambiguous and hazy on those points—as Corey himself well knows—around which most controversy revolves (Negro, trade unions, united front), ends the story of the radical movement with the communist party, and says that in the period 1923-29, "except for the communist party all labor organizations became more and more conservative",—thus ignoring that these were the years of the political degeneration of the party, and the rise of the oppositions (mention of which is apparently taboo). Undoubtedly this chapter raised hopes in the Stalinists for bringing Corey into open captivity. This is made quite obvious by the ending of the Stalinist review, which abruptly closes with a promise to return next month to a consideration of the last short chapter, i.e., after waiting to see whether Corey will crawl to Canossa.

This last chapter is also, perhaps, a clue to some of the defects of the whole book. The avoidance of questions of economics controversial among Marxists, the lack of even a single reference to the writings of the local Stalinist or Comintern "Experts" on America and, above all, the heavy, often even clumsy and repetitious style lacking all personality (Corey has evidenced elsewhere that he can write well), reveal, it may be, the marks of a man who is writing under a sense of restraint. Except for this sense of one not permitting himself complete intellectual freedom, however, the main body of the book is, in its scholarly integrity, in sharp contrast to the Jesuitical last chapter.

Another review which could only serve to prevent readers from coming to Corey was Paul Mattick's in the *Modern Monthly*. Mattick continues the most repulsive aspects of the interpretation of Marxian economics, as a mechanistic conception of an automatic collapse of capitalism. His re-

view disgraced the name of Marxism in its scholastic pettiness and gave Corey no credit for even those sections of his book which Mattick must agree with. His accusation that Corey holds to the theory of underconsumption is preposterous, for on the fundamental issue which distinguishes the underconsumption theory from the Marxian overproduction theory—whether or no a balanced economy is theoretically possible within the social relations of capitalist production—Corey is most unambiguously a Marxist.

That Mattick could even raise this question does, however, reveal one weakness in Corey's exposition; and this is substantiated by the readiness with which George Soule—who does follow the underconsumption theory—thinks himself in agreement with Corey as against other Marxists.

This weakness appears in Part Four. To the usual reader (and the not so usual, as Mattick and Soule testify), it may seem that the exposition appears to lead up to a consideration of the "Antagonism Between Production and Consumption", as if that were the basic antagonism. Corey falls into some absurd errors, such as:

"The economic contradictions in the movement of production and consumption are necessarily expressed in class antagonisms:

"Struggle between the workers and employers over wages," etc. (p. 156.)

This is unforgivably slipshod. As Corey himself would no doubt be the first to admit, the correct statement of the capitalist contradictions is precisely the opposite of what he has stated. It is the class antagonisms which are expressed in, among other ways, the "antagonism between production and consumption, which is a mere secondary effect of the class antagonisms. And the struggle between workers and employers, arising from the contradiction between wages and profits, is a struggle at the point of production, and can be described and understood without any reference to consumption.

What has happened is that Corey has unthinkingly accommodated himself to the prevailing formulations of the liberal bourgeois economists. These, unconsciously but determinedly, limit their analysis of capitalism to the problems which trouble capitalists themselves. That capital itself, that is, the conditions of capitalist production,—production for the sake of capitalist accumulation—is the barrier which prevents an unrestricted extension of production, is an answer which is unthinkable for the capitalist and its economists. Hence they limit their analysis to that one of the results of this barrier which troubles capitalists most—not mass unemployment, mass starvation, imperialist war, cultural degeneration, etc., but the empirical observation that production does not continue because consumers goods are not sold. The only form in which they see the contradictions of capitalism is in the lack of balance between production and consumption. It is only when we go behind this mere appearance that we reach the fundamental nature of capitalism. For Corey to adapt himself to the superficial terminology of bourgeois economists aids him in no way, but rather involves him, sound though his general position is, in a number of absurd errors of which the above quotation is typical.

Marx himself was particularly careful at all times to demonstrate that the basic contradictions of capitalism are at the point of production itself. One of the effects of

these contradictions is the phenomenon of a conflict between the tendency to unconditional development of the forces of production as contrasted with the limited consumption of consumers goods. This conflict, however, Marx always emphasizes, is merely the reflection, in the subsidiary realm of exchange, of the contradiction at the point of production, the "tendency to an absolute development of productive forces, a development which comes continually in conflict with the specific conditions of production in which capital moves and alone can move." (Vol. III, p. 302.)

Corey's unthinking accommodation to the empiricistic formula of the liberal bourgeois economists is a serious mistake. Precisely because it is so prevalent, Corey should have sharply dissociated himself from it and used the Marxian formulations. There is no more reason for a Marxist to use the bourgeois formulation on this point, than the bourgeois definition of capital, value, etc.

Worse, still, Corey's treatment of this subject makes it seem as though the fact that the forces of production are developed more highly than the forces of consumption is of itself a sufficient cause of economic crises. He thus obscures the fact that only under capitalist production is production over any given period dependent upon consumption. A socialist society, if it so willed, could go on producing for years tenfold what it consumed, without a dislocation of harmonious productive relations, for under socialist production there can be an absolute increase of the forces of production without any relation to consumption. This most significant aspect of a socialist economy is obscured, if one emphasizes the capitalist antagonism as one between production and consumption, as if one were a blind bourgeois economist instead of a Marxist.

Despite the lack of clarity evidenced by Corey on this question, his errors are mainly limited to Part IV, and even there, only to a series of passages; for his weakness, it is worth repeating, is due merely to taking over at this point the bourgeois formula of production versus consumption.

In considering Corey's reviewers and the questions raised by them, we have also stated our main disagreements with him. Having thus cleared the decks, there remains to give a general estimation of *The Decline of American Capitalism*.

Its most obvious contribution is the astonishing wealth of statistical material marshalled together for the purposes of demonstrating that the facts of American capitalism offer "the fullest confirmation of the analysis Karl Marx made of the laws of capitalist production". The wealth of statistics is not only organized for the reading text, but is constructed into tables and graphs which have their counterpart nowhere else and which, once seen, become indispensable for a Marxian exposition of the processes of American capitalism.

A work of such proportions in the Marxian literature is a rarity indeed, for many reasons. Few leading Marxists since the time of Marx himself have had the opportunity to assimilate the sheer volume of economic materials required for a large-scale statistical demonstration of the Marxian laws of capitalist production. Where the opportunity existed, there were other difficulties. Even the Germans had no such materials available as Corey used, for the American statistical material is

more abundant, and far superior in scope and continuity, than any in the world. Moreover, with the general tendency riveted on the Marxian tradition by Kautsky, to treat Marxian economics as a closed deductive system, it was natural that Marxists should give more attention to deductive analysis than to statistical demonstration. It is a fact, therefore, that Corey's work is the most comprehensive attempt yet made in the Marxian tradition to give a statistical-analytical demonstration of the working of the Marxian laws of capitalist production within a specific country.

Where does this book belong in the the Marxian tradition? It belongs, it is clear, with those who have understood that Marxian economics is a *sociological* economics; that the economic process is not analogical to that of a machine, of which political, cultural events, etc. are mere by-products; that the economic development of capitalism provides the objective conditions for the proletarian revolution and socialism, but that any talk of the automatic collapse of capitalism is either meaningless babble or derives from a thoroughgoing mechanism which is really a form of mysticism. Corey speaks of tendencies and processes. He never forgets that *economic* barriers to capitalism as a going concern may be broken down for a period by a non-economic category of action—imperialist war (*politics*, in its most aggressive form)—precarious and dangerous though such a method of blood-letting may be for capitalism itself. He might well have taken for the motto of his book Lenin's famous thought, that there is always a way out for capitalism so long as the proletarian revolution does not overthrow it. The reactionary nature of declining capitalism, its consequences in moral suffering and degradation, slaughter and brutalization, does not provide the end of capitalism, it provides the opportunity for its overthrow.

Sharing none of its mechanistic conceptions, Corey belongs in another line of development than that of the German Social Democracy. He belongs with Lenin, whose sharp break with mechanistic Marxian economics is the foundation of most of his important contributions, most obviously in his theory of the rôle of the peasantry in imperialist and colonial countries. Less obvious, but equally susceptible of proof, is the fact that the Leninist theory of the rôle of the party and the nature of the proletarian dictatorship, also have their foundation in his sociological, anti-mechanistic Marxian economics.

The valuable direction that Corey's work will give to the study of Marxian economics in this country is, I believe, peculiarly timely. Many now coming to the revolutionary movement come from non-Leninist traditions; they bring with them a baggage of dangerous theories of spontaneity: lack of understanding of the leading rôle of theory, confusion of trade union and political levels of activity, failure to comprehend the importance of the autonomy of the party, failure to understand that revolutionary confiscation of private property will not instantaneously wipe out class hostilities and attitudes, which can only disappear during a considerable period of proletarian dictatorship.

One of the most important correctives for such theories of spontaneity is a correct approach to economic phenomena. Most theories involving spontaneity can be

traced, logically, back to a mechanistic economics, which makes social and political actions a mere reflex of economic change. Thus many of Rosa Luxemburg's differences with Lenin flow from her mechanistic economics: her failure to understand the possibilities of the peasantry as proletarian allies; her failure to understand the progressive character of colonial revolutions; her unclarity on the autonomous rôle of the party. Luxemburg, despite her revolutionary instincts, is closer in her economic methodology to Kautsky than to Lenin.

Corey's work, then, should serve as a sharp corrective to the mechanistic economics which is always implicit or explicit in theories of spontaneity. In his approach to economics, Corey understands Marx as Lenin understood him.

The Marxian exposition of the significance of changes in the composition of capital takes on added significance as Corey utilizes the statistics collected by conservatives and government agencies. The theory of the falling rate of profit has never to my knowledge before received such statistical demonstration and yet been handled with such a frank recognition of the difficulties involved. Felix MORROW.

Man's Fate

MAN'S FATE. By ANDRÉ MALRAUX. Translated by Haakon M. Chevalier. 360 pp. New York. Harrison Smith and Robert Haas. \$2.50.

Aside from being one of the outstanding books of the present generation, *Man's Fate* serves as a forceful indictment of the treacherous Stalinist policy pursued in the Chinese revolution. It is but another document, in fiction form, which bears out the correctness of the theories of the Left Opposition on China.

Malraux's approach is that of an individualist and pessimist. For him, as for Hardy, Fate is always cruel. And Marxism is a "fatality", although it may also play the part of "will". His extreme individualism takes on an exaggerated form and at times bears an unreal aspect. Men who are in the midst of a great historical conflict, who must bend their entire energy to act objectively, stop with Malraux to analyze their innermost egos and search long and deeply into their recondite souls. The truism that revolutionists cannot be introverts is dispelled by Malraux's characterization of his actors. His men, during the whole rapid drama, never forget themselves for a moment; they never lose themselves. The conflict of souls must go on.

All characters are extreme individualists. Each is quite different from the others and each seeks to give life a meaning. There is Chen, the terrorist, who attempts to resurrect the ancient and outmoded idea of individual terroristic acts. Kyo, the communist organizer, who seeks to give life dignity. Old Gisors who reaches the stage of the Buddhist Nirvana and wishes to deny both life and death. Katov, the Russian revolutionist, whose last supreme act of heroism is to give cyanide to his two frightened companions, carries out his idea of self-sacrifice to the last. And Ferral, the head of the French Consortium, who strives to do with his senses what he cannot do with his intellect. All must justify their lives because all think.

As we read on we see the revolution beginning to take shape and grow—the formation of the revolutionary cadres, the arming of the workers, the planning of the insurrection proper. We see the vivid attacks of the revolutionists and the disarming of the police of Shanghai. Shanghai falls and the communists are in complete control.

The formation of Soviets is on the order of the day. Throughout all China the peasants are seizing the lands of the wealthy landlords. The workers are organizing into revolutionary syndicates and are forming nuclei for the future Red army. The masses are flocking to communism by the thousands, because communism is their own idea; it is the expression of their own needs and demands.

But the communists? Are they intensifying their propaganda? Are they forming Soviets? Are they organizing the Red army among the 200,000 unemployed of industrial Hankow? Not a bit. To do so would mean to break with the Kuo Min Tang, the organization of the Chinese petty and large bourgeoisie. It would mean that they must break with Chiang Kai-Shek, the military leader of the Kuo Min Tang. And that precisely is what the Stalinists will not allow. That is exactly what the Moscow Synod refuses to do. The Kuo Min Tang, according to the Stalinists, is the ally of the communists. Was it not solemnly admitted, against Trotsky's lone vote, into the International, as a "sympathizing" party?

Let Kyo speak: "First extend the Revolution, and then deepen it. . . . The line of the International seems to be to leave the power here to the bourgeoisie. Provisionally . . . we shall be robbed. I have seen couriers from the front: all workers' movements are prohibited behind the lines. Chiang Kai-Shek has had strikers fired on—after taking a few precautions. . . ."

And further: "Before a fortnight the Kuo Min Tang will prohibit our assault sections. I have just seen some Blue officers, sent from the front to feel us out; they slyly insinuate that the firearms would be better off with them than with us. They want to disarm the workers' guard; they will have the police, the Committee, the Prefect, the army, and the arms. And we shall have made the insurrection for that. We must leave the Kuo Min Tang, isolate the communist party, and if possible give it the power. In this whole matter it's not a question of playing chess, but of thinking seriously of the proletariat."

That exactly expresses the will of the masses. The workers know it would be suicide to give up the arms to Chiang Kai-Shek; yet Vologin, the agent of Moscow, directs them to do so—directs with his ecclesiastical hands (Malraux's characterization is quite adequate). But not only does the International urge that the Chinese Communist party disarm the workers—it prohibits the seizure of land by the peasants. And all because the Kuo Min Tang wills it so. Truly, the ways of the ecclesiastics pass all understanding!

"And if the Military Committee, on the one hand, insisted on being given arms, no matter what happened, the Central Committee, knowing that the Trotskyist theses were attacking the union with the Kuo Min Tang, was terrified by any attitude that might, rightly or wrongly, seem to be linked up to that of the Russian Opposition." This is from Malraux, not from a

Trotskyist. Rather lose the revolution, betray the masses, than follow the correct line, the line which reason dictates. Rather betray than have the "stigma" of Trotskyism cast on the Central Committee.

The results are inevitable. Chiang Kai-Shek, having disarmed the workers' guard, proceeds to slaughter the Shanghai proletariat. The heroism of the workers is unbounded. Against tremendous odds, the handful of revolutionists who had disregarded the orders of the International, proceed to hold out against the murderous bands Chiang sends against them. Captured at last, all die like heroes.

So ended the experience of "Menshevism transferred to the soil of China". It is interesting to note that Isadore Schneider, reviewing *Man's Fate* in the *Daily Worker*, declares that the union with the Kuo Min Tang was necessary, that through it was developed the Chinese Communist party and "smashed the spirit of compromise, the bargaining psychology." He concludes: "The Chinese people today realize how dangerous it is to go into partnership with capitalism. They have learned a lesson in political realism which their customs and institutions had blinded them to, until the Kuo Min Tang betrayal."

A fine conclusion! The Chinese people were not blind. They did not lack political realism. The leaders, the directing heads of Moscow under Stalin were blind. The idea of communism spread, it is true, not because of the policies pursued by the Stalinists, but in spite of them. It grew in spite of the barriers erected by the ecclesiastics of Moscow, and it will triumph in spite of them. New Kyos will arise. New Katovs will come to lead the masses. But these Kyos and Katovs of the future Chinese Revolution will not be fooled again. They will smash not only the reaction from without, the Kuo Min Tang, but also the reaction from within, the Stalinists and their ecclesiastical decrees. All will be swept into the dust bin of history. Until then, let us wait patiently for the Kyos and Katovs of the future.

B. SPARTACK.

The Press

TRADE UNION UNITY IN FRANCE

[From *La Voix Communiste*, organ of the Belgian Internationalist Communist League, we take the following comment on the question of trade union unity in France.]

THE position of the two groups, C.G.T. [reformist] and C.G.T.U. [Stalinist] toward this problem, are the following: the C.G.T.U. is proposing an inter-trade union congress of fusion, recommending the constitution of new trade union organisms called "single unions" and affiliation to the Red International of Labor Unions; a referendum among the workers on the points of disagreement.

The Administrative Commission of the C.G.T. proposes the following tactic:

"Unity from below in the Confederated unions [C.G.T.] followed by general assemblies in which all the members who have fused will dispose of equal rights to name the leadership of the trade union and, even-

tually, the delegates to the federal unity congress;

"Unity in the federations in which all the trade unions having the same rights to make proposals and to vote, will designate the leadership of the united federation. A delegation of the former Unitary Federation would be added to the bureau of the Confederated Federation in order to have a check over admission to the trade union congress and the exactitude of the manner in which the mandates and the votes are to be verified;

"Unity in the unions by the adherence of the trade unions of the same department to the departmental union and convocation of constitutional assemblies to name the leadership of the union;

"Unity in the C.G.T. by an extraordinary congress composed of the delegates of all the trade unions freely designated by them by majority vote;

"This extraordinary congress should be prepared with the collaboration of a delegation of the C.G.T.U. in order to assure the respecting of the statutes, the control over admission of the trade unions, the sincerity of all operations and votes;

"This congress should decide the leadership and the orientation of the old C.G.T. thus reconstituted. It could indicate all the modifications in the statutes which the reconstituted unity might appear to necessitate."

What are the Stalinist leaders of the C.G.T.U.—who declare that they defend the interests of the workers—waiting for before accepting this working basis which we consider perfectly acceptable?

Is it not urgent to the French workers to forge their unity of action immediately in order to prepare themselves for the struggle which they must engage in against their imperialism which, for the moment, strikes at their trade union, press and other rights and which only waits to strike at their working conditions and their lives?

The workers affiliated to the C.G.T.U. must mandate their leaders to accept this working basis which guarantees the right of expression, of criticism and the application of democratic centralism, and to act in the future in such a manner that these rights remain preserved.

The participation of the heads of the C.G.T.U. in trade union work being guaranteed, what are they waiting for before inviting their members to effect the necessary turn?

Doumergue, the spokesman of the bourgeoisie, wants to revise the constitution in order to attack the workers' liberties more violently and to pave the road for Fascism. To prevent the anti-working class reform of the constitution, it is necessary to realize trade union unity so as to prepare the general strike which must be called against

Doumergue or against the Fascist bands who are ready to recommence the *coup* of February 6 if Doumergue does not obtain from parliament and the senate the convocation of the national assembly or if the elections are unfavorable for him after the dissolution.

The Spanish example cries out to the workers to act speedily and to cast aside every obstacle that stands in their way.

Long live trade union unity by the return of the C.G.T.U. into the C.G.T. and the unity congress to follow it.

There is no other road to salvation for the French working class.

At Home

IT CAN'T be done! So many skeptics have told us from the first day till now. What can't be done? Get out a publication like THE NEW INTERNATIONAL at such low subscription and bundle rates. Well, we admit it's tough going, but here we are: the fourth issue off the press and the fifth number already under way. We look forward confidently to solid financial support from our swiftly increasing number of readers to assure the permanence and growth of THE NEW INTERNATIONAL.

Yes, we got a little conservative, to our own surprise, with the September-October issue, and so we ran short of copies even as with the first issue; likewise our 4,000 copies of the August numbered vanished among our readers. The reason why? Look below. The circulation just keeps on climbing.

Far-off Australia leads the crowd this time. The Sydney branch informs us: "Please increase our order from 60 to 100 copies." Despite the fact that our Australian comrades necessarily get the magazine six weeks late, they now sell 130 copies all told.

Buenos Aires, Argentina, sends in its first bundle order. So, too, a bundle order from Athens, Greece.

And Glasgow! Who dares slander the Scotch? From 70 copies, Glasgow increases its order to 100 copies—and pays in advance. What a bunch! The unusually large circulation of our magazine in Great Britain, Canada, Australia and South Africa is testimonial to its world-wide appeal.

In the United States, the circulation moves ahead likewise. H. L. Goldberg, that veteran of the class struggle, has taken THE NEW INTERNATIONAL under his wing—and sales mount. An increase to 30 copies for him, plus 25 copies for Foster's Bookshop, 410 Washington Ave., moves St. Louis sales to 55. And comrade Goldberg writes: "If you can get the November issue to us before our mass meeting, send me a bundle of 100; we'll sell them all right." Newark increases its total order to 40 copies. The Newark Spartacus Youth Club writes: "Keep up the fine work. Magazine splendid. Enjoys a growing popularity here. Am placing an independent order for Spartacus." And while we're mentioning the youth, it might as well be told: they're the *ne plus ultra* live wires for THE NEW INTERNATIONAL. Manhattan Spartacus Youth Club, Manny Garrett, agent, sells 75 copies, thereby deriving rent money for itself. San Francisco Spartacus Youth on the job. Pittsburgh, Pa., Spartacus Youth write: "All members fully realize how really worthwhile, timely and far-reaching is the publication of THE NEW INTERNATIONAL magazine as an organ of revolutionary Marxism. We, the Pittsburgh Spartacus Youth Club have a committee to promote it. . . will endeavor to increase its circulation among workers and to increase the quantity allotted for this territory and branch." Chicago Spartacus Youth push the sales steadily. But not to have the youth get too "uppity", we leave them at this point and say a word or two about others, and what they have to say.

The Philadelphia North Side and South Side branches have each increased their respective orders to 50 copies: a sort of competition which has our endorsement.

Williston, N.D., through A. C. Miller, disposes of a small bundle among the Marxist-inclined farmers. The Chicago Friends of the Militant Club, through its secretary, Shirley Schlesinger, writes: "We realize your difficulties in getting out this type of magazine at the price" and will find ways to assist. The Chicago, S. S. branch, C.L. A., says: "We will be able to support THE NEW INTERNATIONAL to a much better degree as soon as winter organizational plans are laid out."

Scattered commentaries on the qualities of THE NEW INTERNATIONAL make one—excepting editors and business managers—blush. Shanghai and Peiping readers write, to put it in one word: "Fine!" Glasgow, Scotland: "Second issue beats the first. Keep up good work." Boston: "Anti-war number was a splendid one." Waukegan, Ill., regarding second issue: "Every article of vital importance . . . know high quality of magazine . . . will make special efforts to obtain subscriptions." A Pasadena reader: "Enclosed \$1.00 for N. I. May it flourish!" A subscriber from Virginia says, "Enclosed M. O. for \$1.50. for NEW INTERNATIONAL. . . It is an excellent magazine, indispensable for diagnosis, criticism, etc. of the political, social and economic interpretations."

From Antwerp, Belgium: "Received NEW INTERNATIONAL. It is necessary to have this theoretical organ in the study of the new positions that have to be taken. . . We follow here with great interest the economic and political evolution of the American world. We will try to translate articles from your magazine."

From Spain, scene of great class struggles in recent weeks, we read the comment of the theoretical organ, *Comunismo*, as follows:

"The first number of the theoretical organ of our North American comrades is an exceptional contribution to the theoretical movement of our international organization. None of the reviews published in the Yankee labor movement, especially by the Stalinists who have the richest means at their disposal, can be compared with the review of our comrades. Thirty-two pages of choice and compact prose. . . Few are the reviews in the international labor movement that can be compared with THE NEW INTERNATIONAL."

And so, like Pepys diary, it goes—on and upward. Our immediate goal—in sixty days—is 4,500 copies. Can we make it? Don't know. Let's try.

A final word—and request. Despite well-growing circulation, THE NEW INTERNATIONAL, because of high cost of publication of this size and quality of magazine and the low selling rates, still circulates at a financial loss. We count upon our supporters to help to make up our monthly deficit by sending *donations* now directly to THE NEW INTERNATIONAL. THE MANAGER

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NOT SO with us. We can't give you money in order to get circulation. We wouldn't if we could. In fact, it's just the other way with us. We are not heavily or even lightly subsidized. Our advertizing, at least up to the present, has been nil. We depend exclusively upon our readers.

Here are some facts:

THE NEW INTERNATIONAL is no profit-making enterprise. Up to now, we have been running at a financial loss. We set the price of the magazine at 15 cents per copy not because we can afford to sell it at that price from the outset and continue running for any length of time. This extremely low rate we set because we want to make the magazine available to every militant worker. We have figured so closely that if our circulation can be increased another few thousand, the magazine will be practically self-sustaining. We look forward to the future with confidence. *In four months, we have attained a circulation larger than that of any other monthly review published in the radical movement.* Unfortunately, however, we cannot

bank on futures alone. We must also take care of the present. And for the present, we must have the financial aid that will make possible the continued publication of our review at the present price!

*We cannot give you anything but—*THE NEW INTERNATIONAL.

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