

THE FLIGHT FROM POLITICS by Irving Howe

The New
INTERNATIONAL

OCTOBER • 1947

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Behind the British Crisis

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By Oscar Williams

Archives:

THE GENERAL STRIKE

By Leon Trotsky

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STATEMENT OF THE OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, CIRCULATION, ETC., REQUIRED BY THE ACT OF CONGRESS OF AUGUST 24, 1912, AS AMENDED BY THE ACTS OF MARCH 3, 1933, AND JULY 2, 1946

Of The New International, published monthly, except May and June, at New York, N. Y., for October 1, 1947.

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

Before me, a notary public in and for the state and county aforesaid, personally appeared Paul Bern, who, having been duly sworn according to law, deposes and says that he is the Business Manager of The New International and that the following is, to the best of his knowledge and belief, a true statement of the ownership, management, etc., of the aforesaid publication for the date shown in the above caption, required by the act of August 24, 1912, as amended by the acts of March 3, 1933, and July 2, 1946 (Section 537, Postal Laws and Regulations), printed on the reverse of this form, to wit:

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THE NEW INTERNATIONAL

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VOL. XIII

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The Marshall Plan vs. Stalin Plan

SAN FRANCISCO TO NEW YORK

The formation of the United Nations at San Francisco was an illusory achievement. Disintegrating tendencies followed quickly and it is now much the same as the League of Nations, a public forum employed by all the imperialist powers to project their respective plans, test out their friends and foes, and lay the basis for winning permanent allies and creating coalitions in preparation for future struggles.

The decline of the UN was already prepared at Teheran, Yalta and Potsdam. Its organizational structure guarantees control by the Big Five (read: Big Three). There is a General Assembly of all the member nations, but this is little more than a debating society. Power presumably rests in the eleven-nation Security Council, but its actions are subject to veto by any one of the Big Five. The veto system has thus far operated to make the UN a totally ineffective body, as should have been expected.

But even more important than this, the UN was formed after the big powers had already adopted "fundamental" decisions at their successive meetings. The division of Europe had been tentatively agreed to. The UN was merely asked to endorse the actions of Roosevelt, Stalin and Churchill, the champions of the Atlantic Charter. Russia was given a number of "concessions" in territory and reparations without regard for the wishes of the people involved. The Big Three then worked out its program for the forced migration of peoples, much in the style of Hitler, and they devised an unworkable plan, even from their own imperialist point of view, for Germany, and hoped to create good relations among themselves by handing Stalin and his police forces a good part of Eastern Europe. In exchange for Rumania, for example, Stalin agreed to Britain's "rights" in Greece. Stalin was not only to repay himself for the bad bargain he made with Hitler in his 1939 pact to divide the world, but to prevent the rise of the socialist revolution on the Continent. The Russian dictator did himself proud in both ventures.

But it did not take long for Churchill and Truman, Roosevelt's pathetic successor, to realize their disadvantages in Eastern Europe at least, in face of Stalinist *Realpolitik*. Unhampered by bourgeois convention and tradition, Russia's ruler proceeded quite independently of his allies (with hundreds of thousands of troops and a well-trained and experienced police force) to reorganize that part of Europe which he took under control and to move beyond the agreed-upon "concessions," much to the consternation of his Western allies.

Why has Stalin adopted this course, while protesting his desire for friendship with his former allies? The reasons are several. Stalin knows the causes of the Second World War lay in the very nature of modern capitalist production, in the decline of the world market, and the intensification of the inter-

nal problems of each imperialist nation. He understands, empirically at least, that given this decline of world capitalism, no group of powers can share equally the world among them; that one or another must dominate. When Hitler described the German problem in the statement, "We export or we die," he described the problem of the other powers as well, and especially the present problem of the United States. In this world situation, the United States must drive all the more relentlessly toward world domination. This domination, in its most essential respects, cannot be shared with any other power—the lesser powers can have only the remains, the fragments of the total economy, and their place in the world economy will be determined by their specific relations to the United States.

The Path of Stalinist Expansion

With the destruction of Germany and Japan and the sharp decline of Great Britain, no obstacle stands in the way of the United States goal of world economic domination except Russia, which already has a stronghold in Europe. European domination by the U. S. would weaken Russia economically and politically, since the Russian economy becomes more and more difficult to operate behind the borders of the country. The destruction of the war has had a serious effect upon the progress of industrialization; the slave system in a modern industrial economy proves more and more expensive and inefficient.

Thus the seizure of Eastern Europe and the Balkans has an economic as well as political purpose. Economically, Stalin has used the occupation of these lands to recoup his war losses and to acquire new capital. Wherever the Russian armies went, they were accompanied by industrial engineers, technicians and laborers. In Germany, Hungary, Austria, Rumania, Poland and even Bulgaria and Yugoslavia, the Russians took whole factories, machinery, rolling stock, raw materials, agricultural commodities, seed, livestock and personal articles looted by their victorious soldiers. Almost the entire industrial plant of Manchuria was stripped and taken to Russia. In addition, tens of thousands of people were deported to Russia as slave laborers. No one has been able to estimate fully the amount of reparations and loot taken in this way, for Stalin has persistently refused to divulge what the Russian acquisitions have been in the confusing months following the war. It is true that the Western imperialists also participated in this general looting of Europe, but they were inhibited by the knowledge that they could not disrupt the bourgeois economies of the defeated countries, having in mind post-war reconstruction—a problem everyone agreed would have to be solved by the United States primarily.

The creation of puppet states and their occupation by Russian troops created an immense defensive territorial ring around Russia. These puppet states were from the very beginning, long before the Marshall Plan was conceived, drawn

into the Russian economic and political orbit. The Russians did not wait for the Marshall Plan to carry out their economic and political program. The Stalin plan was laid down long ago and has been carried out step by step.

Moreover, the occupation of this vast territory has prevented the rise of the socialist revolution in Eastern Europe—the Europe closest to the borders of Russia itself. Stalin's fear of the Russian masses is only exceeded by his fear of the European socialist revolution. And with his occupation of so vast a part of Europe, he made those people silly, some who even call themselves Trotskyists, who believed that Stalin's armies were bringing the socialist revolution to Europe, even describing that imperialist and mercenary force as "Trotsky's Red Army."

Birth of the Truman Doctrine

Finally, Russian expansion was conceived and carried out to prevent the reorganization and reconstruction of the continent by the United States. Stalin was fully conscious of the fact that given the failure of the socialist revolution which he helped to halt in its tracks, a stabilization of Europe by American capitalism would weaken his totalitarian police regime, resting as it still does on a backward economy. The longer Stalin can maintain instability on the continent and yet prevent the coming of socialism as the alternative to capitalist and Stalinist imperialism, the more certain is he that his regime of terror will survive.

Thus while Molotov and Gromyko, now joined by Vishinsky and Manuilsky, fought the Russian battle of vetoes in the UN, Stalin sought to complete his program in Europe. But when Russia moved into Greece and threatened Trieste, Anglo-American imperialism became truly alarmed. The "Truman Doctrine" was born. American imperialism decided to take the lead in "containing" Russian expansion. Having assented to much of Stalin's grab, the U. S. and Great Britain now asserted: this has gone far enough.

The way to resolve this situation, declared Truman, is for the United States to intervene more directly in European affairs. Nothing short of an economic revival could stop Stalin. Yes, and nothing short of an economic revival can insure stability of the American economy which itself rests upon the revival and control of the world economy, and in the first place, the European. The State Department worked out the Marshall Plan, which its Secretary offered at first to the Big Four. While some of the Stalinist satellite states, thinking of American loans and capital goods, responded favorably, they were quickly drawn back by Molotov's "No!" With the Russian refusal, all the satellite nations, some belligerently, others with a deep sense of loss, announced that they would have nothing to do with an imperialist plan which threatened their sovereignty and would place them under control of the coveted American dollar. And thus it was that the little victims of one imperialist camp thought themselves saved from another.

But the Marshall Plan was accompanied by an important corollary demand. Fully aware that the plan would be embraced by only the Western European nations and the customary "neutrals," Marshall sought to make up for the loss by directing an offensive in the UN against the veto scheme and Russian policy, asserting that the end of the veto would "strengthen the machinery for peaceful settlement." Vishinsky quickly replied that the Marshall Plan and the proposal to end the veto were "incompatible with the principle of sovereign equality (Poland! Latvia! Hungary! Austria!)"

AIMS OF THE MARSHALL PLAN

The Marshall Plan wants nothing less than to revive at least the West European economy, being quite willing to accept half of Europe for economic exploitation by the U. S. if it cannot have all. To make Europe, or even part of it, serviceable to American imperialism, the bourgeoisie in this country will have to pay considerably. This is not merely an economic necessity, but given the present world situation politically indispensable if Russia is to be contained. It is the only way the Western imperialists can halt the Stalinist drive in Europe which will now be concentrated on France and Italy.

The Marshall Plan embraces sixteen nations. These countries contain a large part of the European population, over 150 million people. Despite the ravages of war, production in many of these countries has risen perceptibly. According to the survey of the UN, industrial activity in terms of 1937 has reached 93 per cent in France, nearly 100 per cent in Belgium, 100 per cent in Denmark and 123 per cent in Norway. Industrial activity in Great Britain has exceeded the pre-war years. But this increase in production does not go into consumer goods but into reviving the industrial apparatuses in these countries. And most important of all, industrial Germany, the key to the situation, is still in a terrible plight: production stands at 46 per cent of 1936 in the American zone and 33 per cent in the British.

The lack of production of consumer goods vital to the people prevents the necessary exchange between industrial goods and agricultural, i.e., between the cities and the farms. In addition, production of goods going into a revival of industry means that there are less goods for export to pay the United States for its loans.

The Marshall Plan countries are asking the United States for \$22 billions during the four years between 1948 and 1951. They are asking for 20 per cent increase in imports in 1948 over U. S. shipments to them during the first half of 1947 which saw the biggest peacetime exports in American history. The report of the Marshall Plan nations calls for 320,000 tons of nitrogen fertilizer necessary for agriculture in 1948, which is more than 20 per cent higher than was shipped to the entire world in 1947. They ask for \$150 million of electrical equipment, which is double the amount shipped to these countries in this period. The same is true for the demand for \$510 million of petroleum products. While the steel monopolies here claim a shortage of scrap, the Marshall Plan nations are asking for a million to a million and a half tons from the U. S. These are merely a few indications of the problem involved.

How is Europe to pay for the \$22 billion of goods asked for in their report? Presumably from the exports to the U. S. and Latin America.

The Trade Balance Deficit

But already the balance of trade with Europe is heavily in American favor and the European nations go deeper and deeper into debt to American capitalism. The Marshall Plan nations propose to export to the United States in the period in which it expects to receive goods valued at \$22 billion, a total value of \$4.7 billion. As can be readily seen, that leaves an enormous deficit. The World Bank, it is to be assumed, will finance \$3.1 billion of the huge deficit, although the bank's reserves are largely theoretical, to be supplied by its nation-members, including those which are Marshall Plan nations.

Europe also expects to import goods from other Western

Hemisphere countries estimated at \$13.6 billion and to export to these countries goods valued at \$7.6 billion, leaving an additional deficit of \$6 billion. The gap between exports and imports, while initially favorable to the United States, cannot go on endlessly without reaching the point where it becomes utterly hopeless to get payment from Europe, the while it throws the economy of the Marshall Plan nations into a new crisis.

Unquestionably, American capitalism is quite willing to underwrite billions in goods to maintain stability in the nations encompassed by the plan. But there is a limit to such underwriting. The U. S. requires considerable assistance from the European nations themselves, or what it describes as the spirit of "self help," being quite willing to "prime the pump" in order to place the Marshall Plan adherents in a position where they can help themselves. For U. S. economy, dependent as it is upon a rise in the world economy, upon stability in international relations, faces anything but that in the coming years. Instability threatens on all sides and one of the most important factors contributing to this instability is the present division of Europe and the conflict between bureaucratic collectivist Russia and capitalist United States.

The American problem would have been much easier had Stalin not erected the "iron curtain." The present division of Europe which has closed off the industrial nations of the West from the agricultural nations of the East, together with a debilitated or inoperative German industry, makes the problem of reconstruction a hundred times more difficult.

The Western European nations now rely chiefly on food and other agricultural commodities from the Western Hemisphere. The Eastern European nations, in turn, rely on Russia and their own industrial resources for a balanced economy. Given the actual conditions behind Stalin's new borders, this means a low economic level of existence for that half of the continent, with efforts to break down the isolation from the West that would be imposed by the Marshall Plan. The Stalinists hope to neutralize American economic power with correlated nationalized economies of the puppet states. Thus, in part at least, we observe a conflict between two exploitive systems, bureaucratic collectivism and bourgeois private property.

Obviously, a United States of Europe, fusing the economies and resources on a continental level, would be the first step toward a solution of the European problem which is now several decades in the making. But how can economic and political unity of the continent be accomplished? By bourgeois imperialism? By Stalinist imperialism? Neither! They can only maintain the present geographic and political divisions and prolong the economic impasse of all Europe.

The Marshall Plan would face innumerable difficulties if it embraced the whole continent, but given the present imbalance in the division of the industrial West and agricultural East, it can readily be seen that the problems are almost insurmountable if viewed only economically. That is why the Marshall Plan is as much a political scheme as an economic one. Containment of Russia and bolstering of the bourgeois regimes is the key to whatever success the Marshall Plan can have. Thus, Felix Belair, in the New York Times, wrote: "The Marshall Plan is the implementation of the Truman Doctrine of containment of world communism at its present limits; remove the Marshall Plan and the Truman Doctrine fails. . ."

The coming period in European and world politics will be greatly sharpened as the two chief antagonistic powers prepare their respective strategies in the fight for Europe. Stalin's

political answer to the Marshall Plan was given by the meeting of his present chiefs of nine Communist Parties "somewhere" in Poland.

"BUSH LEAGUE COMINTERN"

While the bourgeois press is alarmed at what it describes as the "resurrection" of the old Communist International, the Stalinists merely say that the meeting was for the purpose of coordinating the various activities of several parties by establishing a new Communist "Information Bureau" from which has come one of the more hideous contractions, the Cominform.

The purpose of the meeting was clear to everyone. If the U. S. expects, through the Marshall Plan, to overcome the Stalinist tide, Russia can seriously challenge that strategy not only by the control it exercises in the puppet states, but by organizing its political battalions in those countries which it does not control, but which are the key to the Marshall Plan. That explains, for example, why the only representatives present at the Polish meeting who were from the other side of the "iron curtain" were the head men of the French and Italian parties. These are the first shock troops of Stalin's international battalions. The fact that the new information center has been established in Belgrade only emphasizes how integral a part of the Kremlin is Tito's regime. But it makes no difference where the ostensible headquarters of the new organization is established, the real directing center is the Kremlin. The presence of Zhdanov and Malenkov confirms that fact; they are Stalin's deputies in the ruling party of Russia.

A great deal of discussion has followed in the bourgeois press in recent weeks on what is termed Stalin's duplicity. On the one hand, they refer to the Cominform as a rebirth of the old Communist International; on the other hand, they declare that the Communist International was never really dissolved, but was put away in storage for just such an occasion. The New York Times has it both ways, but one of its more acute editorial writers observes that the new body is not really the old Communist International because its public appeals are not directed to the world proletariat and they do not speak the language of socialism!

What Is This Body?

The bourgeois mind finds it difficult to penetrate the nature of Stalinism because it thinks of this new phenomenon in the terms of the old Comintern of Lenin and Trotsky. It does not see that Stalin long ago destroyed that body of international socialism and created a new world organization to conform to the needs of a new and strange social order, neither capitalist nor socialist, that emerged from the once-glorious Russian Revolution. They are not alone in this misconception. The New Leader, organ of the American Social Democrats, also lives in an age gone by. Its editorial on the formation of the Cominform reads like it had been written in 1919 by the counter-revolutionary Social Democrats when they saw in the Communist International the embodiment of the international socialist revolution. Nothing has changed for these gentlemen; these gentlemen have not changed either. They warn of a new Pearl Harbor (!), these laudable patriots. And to confirm their alarm about this new Stalinist concoction, they quote ancient speeches of Stalin which he himself has long ago forgotten and has so demonstrated that a thousand times in the repeated blows he has delivered against the world working class.

The Militant, living in a world of its own, and reflecting the views of the Socialist Workers Party, which never fails to assert that it is an orthodox Trotskyist party, correctly denies that this means a rebirth of the revolutionary socialist international of old, but suffering from the disease of stultification brought on by the germ of the degenerated workers' state theory of Russia, writes unwittingly:

"All Stalin wants is a deal with Wall Street. He seeks to continue the wartime partnership. In return for a non-aggression pact and dollar credits he offers the services of his agents to derail and wreck working class revolutions throughout the world." (Joseph Hansen, *The Militant*, October 13, 1947.)

So pat, and yet so trite! It is pulled out of a drawer containing outlived formulas. Does Stalin want a war now? Obviously not. Does he then want a deal with Wall Street? Well, in a way. He had a deal with Wall Street. It lasted from 1941 to 1945—as long as the war lasted. That alliance could have survived the war, but not on his terms.

Stalinism is an independent class force in modern society. It will seek blocs and deals only insofar as it suits the needs of this expanding new power. That the Cominform is therefore a blackmailing instrument is true, but it is only half true. It too has an independent role to play not merely as a blackmail instrument, but to advance positively the interests of Stalin and his state. Hansen writes as though poor Stalin is just running around begging Wall Street to make a deal with him, quaking in his boots while he waits in some House of Morgan ante room for fear that the overpowering financiers will make no deal with him and thus destroy him by the slamming of a door! What puerile reasoning. If Stalin bargains with U. S. imperialism, he does so as an equal or near-equal, not for the purpose of carrying out Wall Street's aims in Europe but his own.

"In return for a non-aggression pact and dollar credits he offers the services of his agents to derail and wreck working class revolutions throughout the world." You see, that is all Stalin wants—a few dollars! For that he will wreck working class revolutions. And suppose he doesn't get the few dollars? Are we then to assume that he will make working class revolutions? What Hansen doesn't understand is that Stalin will wreck any working class revolution whether he has a deal with Wall Street or not; that the working class revolution is an independent danger to Stalinism, as Hansen should know by this time. But, really, what can one expect from people who hailed the victories of the Stalinist armies as a victory for socialism, and described those armies as "Trotsky's Red Army"? In their minds, Stalin is merely an agent of Wall Street, at present unemployed, but fighting desperately to be hired. And this is called, pity the word, "orthodox" Trotskyism.

This Is the Stalinern

It becomes clearer every day that in order to understand the nature of Stalinism one is required to break completely with old theories on the nature of the Russian state and the many foibles that it gave rise to. Stalin destroyed the old Communist International once and for all at the Sixth Congress in 1928. Ideologically and politically it was already dead at the Fifth Congress in 1924. It took the modern Cain several years to overcome the strong traditions of the greatest international proletarian association the world has ever known. Stalin accomplished his deed not only by theoretical revisions, but by the brutal method of physically exterminating the great minds of the old International.

For example, the representatives of the Russian Communist Party to the first four congresses of the Comintern were Lenin, Trotsky, Zinoviev, Bucharin and Radek. Lenin died of illness; Trotsky, Zinoviev and Bucharin were murdered by Stalin, and Radek has been variously reported dead and in jail.

The leaders of the various parties of other countries, where are they? Driven out of the International, or killed in Russia by the GPU in the murderous years of the purges. One leadership after another destroyed, the German, the Polish, the Balkan, and so on.

What of the early Bucharinist-led International, that group dealt with in Trotsky's famous pamphlet: *Who is Leading the Comintern?* Bela Kun, killed by Stalin. Pepper, killed by Stalin. Varga, a pensioner, humbled daily in Moscow and ordered to write economic reviews to conform with Stalin's latest pronouncements. Manuilsky, Stalin's agent in the Ukraine and the UN. Valetsky, killed by Stalin. Varski, killed by Stalin. Clara Zetkin, died of old age, a softly protesting Bucharinist. Smeral, reported dead. Kolarov, a Stalinist agent in Bulgaria. Kusinen, a Stalinist agent in Finland. Petrovsky, Rafes, Guaralsky, killed by Stalin. Martinov died. Lenzner, killed by Stalin. Losovsky, pensioned off in the foreign office. Roskolnikoff, fled in exile. Roy, building a party of his own in India. Bucharin, murdered by Stalin. Katayama, died of old age.

They were the leaders of the Comintern in the post-Leninist days, but they still retained much of the old traditions of the revolutionary international.

The New Leaders

And who are the gentlemen who head the Cominform? Stalinist GPU agents. Zhdanov, the purger of Leningrad. Malenkov, Stalin's personal agent in charge of the Stalinist party in Russia. Marshal Tito, GPU career man and Stalin's picked leader of Yugoslavia, who looks more and more like Mussolini every day. The rest, Thorez, Duclos, Rakosi, Longo and Togliatti, the Polish and Bulgarian representatives? They are the long-trained Stalinists, some of them old revolutionaries who have lost their ideals and their honor, the others murderous hacks trained by a murderous regime.

But if this is not enough to draw the line of difference between the Communist International of old and the Stalinist International of today, recall the glorious days of the formation of the old CI. Born in the very midst of the rising socialist revolution in Europe, the manifestoes and resolutions of the old Comintern were the breath and the soul of socialist internationalism. What is this body, but the breath and the soul of a reactionary regime, a new imperialist state, a new exploitive system. Observe its expansionist march westward—is this the state that wants to make a deal with Wall Street to get some dollars and ward off aggression, for which it will repay by wrecking working class revolutions?

That Stalin will try to wreck the bourgeois states and the Marshall Plan and Truman Doctrine, goes without saying. But it also goes without saying that he will endeavor to do so with methods of his own, and they have nothing in common with socialism or internationalism. On the contrary, Stalinism makes use of the miseries of the people, the exploitation of the working class, the ravages of war and hunger to advance the power of his own ruling class. Yes, he did dissolve the Communist International long ago. He even formally dissolved the Stalinist International of Browder, Duclos, Thalmann and Dimitrov when it served his war purposes. In fact, however,

he never dissolved his real international organizations, his world shock troops.

The Cominform is the formal resurrection of the Stalinist to carry out new tasks in new times. Let no one be deceived into believing that Stalin is trying to defend the interests of capitalism or any other nation, least of all the United States. That would be the worst kind of self-deception.

SWP and the UAW

At long last, the Socialist Workers Party and The Militant have announced their position on the faction struggle in the United Automobile Workers. This statement of position comes after many months of official silence and ambiguous conduct in the affairs of the most important mass union in the United States. In breaking their silence the SWP and The Militant announced their position in support of the Thomas-Addes-Leonard-Stalinist faction. This will not come as a surprise for those who have followed closely their strange attitude toward the struggle in the union.

Our own position in support of the Reuther group is well established. It was summarized in the September issue of *THE NEW INTERNATIONAL* in Ben Hall's excellent survey of the issues and factions in the UAW. Our readers know that we are not Reutherites but that we support this group against the Addes-Stalinist bloc. This is no specious difference. The need of the UAW and of the entire labor movement is a program and leadership based firmly on the class interests of the workers. Neither the Reuther group nor the Addes group meets this requirement. But in the absence of a qualified independent group we have advocated support of the Reuther group against its rival because, despite all its deficiencies and negative characteristics, as against the Addes-Stalinist bloc, it best represents the interests of the workers and the labor movement, even if it does this inadequately, haltingly and without a correct over-all program.

In the context of the greater struggle which faces the working class in the United States, in the conflict with Stalinism over control of the labor movement, there can be no question whom the revolutionary socialists should support, even if they do so independently and critically. Any group which is aligned with the Stalinists and dominated by their aims can never be interested primarily in defending the independent labor movement. Their aims and their course are dictated by subservience and subordination to the totalitarian Stalinist dictatorship, which is incompatible with the existence of any free or independent labor movement.

The possibilities of making the UAW a stronger and more militant union lie not through any Stalinist-Addes-Thomas-Leonard combination, but through the Reuther-rank-and-file combination. A defeat of the Stalinist-Addes bloc would be a blow to the totalitarian Stalinists and thus halt them in their endeavor to take over a union with tremendous potentialities for good in the labor movement.

Red-Baiting and Stalinism

The editorial of The Militant announcing support of the Stalinist-Addes bloc, which appeared in the October 13, 1947, issue, is a belated announcement of a policy long pursued by the SWP. How explain such a position on the part of people who never cease describing themselves as "orthodox" Trotsky-

ists? The fundamental reason for it is their conception of Stalinism as a political reflection of the "degenerated workers' state" of Russia, and is therefore, despite its anti-working class and anti-socialist policies, a left wing in the labor movement! The Militant speaks sharply about Reuther's "red baiting" as a reason for supporting the Stalinist-Addes bloc. This argument would have some validity if it could be shown that there was something "Red" about Stalinism. As our readers know, our opposition to the Stalinists has nothing in common with so-called "red baiting," since there is nothing "Red" about Stalinism. The Stalinists are the fiercest enemies of every genuine socialist or communist movement, and the greatest danger to the labor movement.

About the only thing that is true in The Militant editorial is the statement that "The victory of one or another of the two contending factions is going to be of crucial importance for the development of the UAW and indeed for the future of the whole CIO. For the UAW is not only the biggest union in the country but, because of its dynamic character and strategic position, the most influential in the CIO. . . . It is becoming clear that far more is involved than merely a clique battle over posts and positions. Great and important things for labor are at stake in this fight."

But after making this declaration, The Militant continues with an attack on Reuther which contradicts the above and is misleading, vicious and slanderous, reading just exactly as if it were taken out of the filthy arsenal of the Stalinists themselves. All one has to do is read the SWP editorial and compare it with almost any issue of the Daily Worker. The charges against Reuther that he is a dictator, ambitious and an agent of General Motors, did not originate with The Militant. They borrowed it lock, stock and barrel from a paper called *FDR* (!) published by the Stalinist-Addes-Thomas group which is a smear-sheet filled with the most venomous slanders against its opponents.

One does not have to know too much about its sponsors and writers to realize that it speaks the language of Stalinism. The SWP has merely borrowed the charges and the language of *FDR*. In a Labor Action editorial of October 27, this similarity is clearly pointed out:

"Speaking of Reuther, 'FDR' says: 'He has centralized everything in GM into his own hands so that no decision of any consequence can be made in the GM local unions and plants without the authority and sanction of the GM Department, that is, Walter P. Reuther.'

Concocting a Fable

"The Militant editorial echoes: 'The GM Department is unquestionably the worst bureaucratic division in the UAW. Everything there has been centralized into Reuther's own hands, so that no decision of any consequence can be made by the local shop committees and officers.'

"'FDR' writes: 'How does Reuther get away with this? Because he has a "gentlemen's understanding" with the GM management who play ball by dealing only with him and his representatives, and ignoring all other union officials and local and shop leaders.'

"The Militant editorial echoes: 'Reuther has successfully constructed this autocratic edifice with the help of the General Motors Corporation. He has a "gentlemen's understanding" with GM, and the latter deal only with him and his representatives and studiously ignore all other union officials, as well as the local and shop leaders.'"

It is interesting to note that The Militant constantly speaks of the Thomas-Addes-Leonard caucus, quite consciously omitting mention of the Stalinists as though they did not exist and had nothing whatever to do with this group. Nay, more, they would have you believe that the Stalinists have been thoroughly trounced in the UAW and no longer exist as a viable force in the union. Listen to The Militant's description of the Stalinist-Addes caucus: "... a confluence of circumstances has forced upon the Thomas-Addes-Leonard faction a more progressive role than Reuther's. These circumstances are the reactionary nature of Reuther's factional struggle... Through sheer necessity and for its own protection, the Thomas-Addes-Leonard group is forced to assume the role of a progressive grouping, fighting for more militant methods (like the no-strike pledge! incentive pay! the Ford contract!—AG) and attitudes, and for the democratic rights of the union membership (!) . . . victory for the Addes-Thomas-Leonard group would ensure a continuation of the present democratic setup of the UAW, maintain a variegated and collective leadership for the union and provide a freer atmosphere for the advocacy of a progressive program and militant methods of work."

There is not a word of this that is true. It is purely the invention of the editors of The Militant, for nothing in the real life of the UAW warrants such an evaluation of this group. It shows the pitfalls that face people when their conceptions of Stalinism are so utterly false. As the Labor Action editorial pointed out:

"We can understand a policy of supporting Reuther's opponents, even though we consider the policy wrong, disorienting, demoralizing and harmful in every respect. But in adopting such a policy, why did the SWP find it necessary to borrow the very language of the gang whose every word, as bitter world-wide experience has taught, is suspect the minute it is uttered? The significant relationship between politics and the language of politics is well known. The policy of the SWP is mainly determined by the fantastic theory that the Stalinists are at the 'left wing' of the labor movement and that it must follow right behind the tail of the Stalinists. This is tragic but true. This is not the first time the SWP has repeated arguments of the Stalinists. It has seldom done it so crassly. That is a bad sign."

Behind the British Social Crisis

Reviewing the Empire's Decline

"There is really very little room for doubt that the aggregate output of the British community today is from 10 to 20 per cent higher in volume than it was in 1938." (The Economist, August 2, 1947.)

The word "crisis" is employed in many contexts and by most quarters in describing the present economic and social difficulties of Great Britain. There can be no objection to the use of this word, certainly, but the sense in which it is used must be carefully qualified. If, by England's crisis, is meant the beginnings of or the approach to a full-fledged revolutionary crisis, a period in which the class struggle within the country will be lifted to intense heights and great political events will occur, then the word is completely misused and England's situation misjudged. The Labor Government, despite its vacillations and weaknesses, is still firm and stable. The masses of workers and, to a lesser extent, the middle class, still give it their support. The recent Liverpool by-election for an MP post, easily captured by the Labor Party although at a reduced majority, indicates no basic switches in political tendencies. The average Englishman still thinks the Tory Party has no program or positive counter-plan. There is no serious development of a fascist movement to be seen.

Nor can the word "critical" be employed with respect to the living conditions of today. In general, England stands between America and France so far as its material standards are concerned. It is, of course, far above Germany. Everybody is working (unemployment is the lowest in England's history); there is sufficient food for all, even though it is monotonous and of poor nutritional quality; all homes will be warmed throughout most of the winter; and general health and social services are admittedly at peak levels. Furthermore,

England is producing and, above all in contrast with Germany and the continent, she is a going economic unit.

Nature of the Crisis

Yet it is correct to employ the word "crisis," provided we explain in what sense we mean this. It is a crisis that stems from England's completely reversed position with relation to the world; it is a *permanent* and *lasting* crisis from which England, as it is today organized, can never shake itself loose; it is a crisis of perspective that will determine the development, in the future, of the islands and their 40 million people. It is therefore a type of crisis whose effects work slowly, within the body of the nation, and whose results are—at first—more social and psychological than political and revolutionary. This slow-working crisis is quite observable in England today and definitely takes on objective forms. Some of them are the following:

(1) A widespread and prevalent mood of discouragement, apathy and lack of energetic optimism as to the future possibility of their nation exists among all classes and strata of the English. The outstanding objective indication of this mood is the movement for immigration to the Dominions and America, the desire for which has been expressed—it is estimated—by between three and four million Britons of all classes! (Together with their families, this could amount to 25 per cent of the United Kingdom's total population.)

(2) The apparent helplessness and decay of the English ruling class, now utterly dependent upon the Labor Government for the retention of its position and privileges; a decay most explicitly expressed in the incapacity of Churchill and his Tory Party to capitalize on the Labor Government's blunders and to develop a counter-program. There is nothing the Tory Party dreads more than the responsibility of political power today, given the present context of economics and international relations.

(3) A reported, and well-founded, drying up in inventive powers, originality, cultural contributions, etc., among the intellectuals and other elements in the population.

(4) The rapid and expanding bureaucratization of all forms of social and economic life, under the Labor Government's initiative. The permanent intervention of the government in economic life as the state capitalist regulative agency is, of course, to be expected and arises out of the crisis itself. Far more significant is the bureaucratization of the labor movement and its organs. As the September, 1947, *Socialist Appeal* so accurately expresses it, the just-concluded Trade Union Congress: "made it clear that since the advent of the Labour Government, the trade union movement has become even more immersed with the employers, their organizations, and the government machine, to the detriment of any section of the workers forced to defend their conditions by struggle, and looking to the trade union organizations to aid them.

"From the Nationalised Boards and the working parties, down to Regional, District and Factory Production Committees and other organizations covering economic life and social services, a complicated web of collaboration between employers, government, and trade union representatives has been created.

"It is evident from the General Council Report that its main field of work lies in discussions, proposals, joint consultations with employers and government on the questions of exports, imports, production and the utilisation of the labour force."

Now, the source of this deep and fundamental crisis in England's life is a well known fact. It lies in the complete reversal of the nation's world position over the past ten years. All those prior tendencies, so long discerned, have now become realities and brute facts. Everyone grasps this, but its consequences are only now coming home to roost upon the nation.

What Happened to Great Britain?

From the position of the mighty hub and controlling factor in a great world empire, the island kingdom has descended to that of just another major capitalist power, hemmed in by rivals and hampered by severe internal difficulties. Or, expressed in its simplest form, Great Britain's role as a great creditor nation of the world has been reversed to that of a bankrupt nation, victimized by a world debt that mounts regularly. Rarely has history known such a startling, complete reversal over such a brief period.

The crisis of England, proclaim its leaders, revolves around the unbalance between imports and exports. There is at the present moment, declares Attlee, an adverse balance of trade working against England's favor to the amount of \$2,400,000,000 per year. The problem is, then, how to reduce this unbalance to zero and, if possible, create a favorable balance.

True as this posing of the crisis may be, it is nevertheless a deceitful concealment of the real nature of the matter. It throws no light on *why* the present unbalance exists (and is growing), nor does it mention the fact, well known to be sure, that England has *never* had, in simple export-import trade balancing, anything but an adverse, unfavorable balance of trade! The cause of today's harsh unbalance lies not so much in a decline in Britain's trade with the world, but in the catastrophic decline of the so-called invisible items of previous years—that is, those sources of revenue flowing from Britain's position as a world imperialist power (mother-land of the

Empire) which enabled her to more than overcome the loss shown on the simple export-import balance sheet. Dividends from world investments, profits from the shipping and financing, accumulated wealth from colonial ownership and overseeship—such were the decisive items (invisible!) that characterized Britain's former position. In the reversal of roles, this is what has largely gone by the board.

The factors behind this almost annihilation of the invisible items are familiar. The great losses in wealth and capital sustained during the war; the powerful emergence of American imperialism both as forecloser of British investments and market revival; the growth of both dominion and colonial capitalist classes (particularly in India) who came to call the tune; the general disturbance of the world's trade. But the main point to grasp is that this is a *permanent* condition.

In line with their analysis of the situation, the Labor Government proposes the only solution possible for it, given its character. Export, export, export. The shrill call for increased exports is heard on all sides. Yet this proposed program, too, conceals the real nature of the problem. "We have a crisis in dollar and sterling unbalance," says Sir Stafford Cripps, "which only more exports can cure." Yet today, allowing for price changes, exports are 105 per cent of the 1938 level, and mounting. Cripps demands—and will probably get—140 per cent of 1938 by the end of next year; he demands—and will probably get—160 per cent by the end of 1949. Yet we unhesitatingly venture to predict that even if England were to double its 1938 export trade there would be, at best, only the slightest alleviation in the situation.

The Drive for Exports

For the drive of Britain for increased exports can in no way be confused with the export drives of, let us say, young capitalist nations anxious to increase their home store of accumulated capital; nor can it be compared with the export drives of maturing, expanding capitalist nations (as, for example, the United States) which must make use of their superfluity of capital. Britain's export drive comes out of its desperation, not its health; out of the nation's fatal decline, not growth.

The basic trend then of the British export program is guided by the mere need to live, to keep going, to continue. Its aim is to get food, sustenance and the raw materials required to—export! The whole program must thus be seen as part of a vicious and impossible cycle—*forty million English work to produce exports with which to procure dollars and sterling with which to purchase food and raw materials with which to work to produce exports, etc., etc.* This, then, is the final trap into which the British people have been led by two hundred years of imperialism. The fantastic trend of British economy is thus toward the creation of an enclosed, self-sustaining (at a dull, low level) economy of survival and austerity.

Let us prove this contention. The entire economy of England is now geared to the export program, expressed in various terms. "Cutting down the unbalance of trade"; "resolving the dollar and sterling shortage"; "balancing exports with imports." Production levels for export—known as industrial targets, and constituting a crude and primitive sort of "planned economy"—have been set by the government, which exercises control over imports, allocation of materials and labor to industry, and direction of exports. The Labor Government, in accord with its export program, is prepared to (and can) bring about shifts in industrial production, favor-

ing those plants whose products will sell abroad. The most clear-cut expressions of British state capitalist development lie in the state's regulation of the complex export-import relationship.

To close this gap, conceived as the two blades of a scissors which must be brought together, the government brings pressure to bear upon the separate blades—decrease in imports, increase in exports. It is the application of these separate, yet related, pressures, together with the resistance that Britain's workers will offer to them, that will determine the political and economic evolution of the country over the next few years.

What Is an "Austere" Economy?

Pressure on the import angle is aimed at creating an "austere" economy for the masses; an economy of work and want. Import cuts amounting to \$700 million have been ordered. This will affect largely food and meat imports, and must mean additional cuts in the basic rations (for example, each Englishman is now limited to a weekly meat ration of 20 cents). This is the largest saving so far imposed. An estimated \$213 million is to be saved by the ban on foreign travel (the closing-in of English economy will also keep the Englishman penned up in his island), and the end of the gasoline ration for pleasure travel. If the situation worsens, there will be other cuts (coal for heating, gas, electricity, etc.).

From a social point of view, the most significant shift in imports will be the increase in raw materials imported at the expense of food and finished commodities. Of the planned \$6,800,000,000 imports from mid-1947 to mid-1948, that consisting of raw materials will be largely utilized for the export drive. This is intimately linked with the cut of \$800 million proposed by Cripps in yearly capital goods outlay within England itself. The phrase, capital goods outlay, refers of course to such budget items as housing, building of new schools, hospitals and various public institutions, as well as the equipping of English industry with new machinery. This phase of the program is thus the sharpest, most direct drive upon the living standards of the people.

What of the export program? The above measures will not even bring the two tips of the scissors halfway together; the unfavorable balance draining away England's productivity is not even half closed up. We have already indicated the proposed answer—Cripps' latest and still higher export targets. The goal is to export \$125,000,000 more each month, to attain, in theory, the essential balance.

This demands a greater export in capital goods (machinery, semi-finished steel and building materials, etc.). It may,

and probably will, demand the mobilization and forced direction of labor into certain industries, with a fixing of the worker to his job. And, as the austerity of home economy strikes deeper, a system of differential rationing, according to work performed, will be installed. Such is, in general outline, the prospect before Great Britain in its struggle for survival. A turning in of the country upon itself, with the autarchization of its economic institutions and the bureaucratization of its social institutions and politics.

Let us grant the complete success of the projected program. The scissors gap is closed, with the aid of the remaining invisible items; an exact balance of exports and imports is achieved. In passing, we consider this most improbable of realizations, but it does not affect our conclusions. What, then, is England's situation?

Duration of the balance over any period of time would mean, in effect, continuation of precisely the same economic conditions and measures that had brought it about. That is, *at best*, England—by its economy of austerity—would be making its way, surviving. Furthermore, it is excluded that England can lift itself above this balance; i.e., reach a favorable trade balance necessary for prosperity, since that source of revenue known as invisible items can hardly be expected to reverse its downward trend. All things may happen in our world, but the resurrection of the British Empire is among the category of least likely events. It is this prognosis that stamps our analysis with permanency. Let alone the fact that, under the best circumstances, the optimistically grounded Cripps program can hardly be expected to develop smoothly in the world of today.

Self-evident is the fact that the masses of English workers shall be expected to bear the brunt of the criminal consequences of long centuries of policy pursued by Britain's imperial ruling class. The story of the coal miners and their industry, after one year of nationalization, clearly forms a pre-pattern for the future of the English working class. The coal nationalization can now be seen in its true perspective—the taking over of a sick industry by the state, at the expense of the people, as a part of its autarchy program and with the included objective of intensifying the economic exploitation of its laborers. How far these powerful and inevitable tendencies proceed will depend upon the reactivity of the English working class and its capacity to gain the support of the nation's middle class. Otherwise, the power and weight of the top-heavy state apparatus will grow without halt. In this sense, of course, England's permanent crisis takes its place in the now familiar world phenomenon of developing statification.

HENRY JUDD.

James Burnham, A Modern Cato

Portrait of an Irresponsible

Burnham has assumed the toga of a modern Cato. There is no time to be lost. Communism must be destroyed! The world's at stake. Awake, America! Delay may be fatal. The Third World War has already begun in Greece and Burnham is filled with anxiety lest the rulers of the United States may be unaware of this fact. True, it is not yet the full-blown shootin' war, but that is inevitable in any case. Since that is so, wouldn't it be better for this country

to choose the opportune time for itself rather than to give any advantage to Russia? The war is so imminent indeed that Burnham actually wonders whether his book (*The Struggle for the World*) will not appear after it has already broken out full scale.

Perhaps there will still be enough time for us to appraise the values underlying Burnham's choice of the lesser evil of victory through mild United States use of the atomic bomb

monopoly. The "objective" and "amoral" Burnham of the *Managerial Revolution* has given way to one who supports democratic America to be the master of the world rather than its only rival, Stalin's Russia. Time was, and not so long ago either despite the jet-speed of the modern tempo, when James Burnham interpreted all modern history as posing acutely the question: communism or capitalism? His choice then was for communism, despite the fact that he claimed reservations concerning the validity of Marxist thought. Today he implies by his characterization of his former comrades that he was temporarily "psychotic" when he supported Trotskyism. What was it that forced him to his senses and cleared his vision so that it saw the truth exactly 180 degrees around? Was it history that makes him now cast his lot so urgently with "democratic capitalism" as against "communism"?

Professor Burnham is nothing if not logical. Has he not studied and written about logic and philosophy for these many years? His writing breathes with the assurance of utmost, even brutal, clarity. He sweeps aside with impatience the mist of illusion, the fuzz of Utopianism. Like a true Realpolitician, he cuts directly to the essence of every question. Strange, is it not, that for so good a mind there should be no principles worth the mention! He is a worshipper of the syllogism and models his writing on the positing of major premise, minor premise and conclusion. It seems almost superfluous to mention that with each new issuance of his "independent" thinking, he finds it necessary to change his premises, both major and minor. The clarity of the thinking as logical thought remains, it must be said. All that is lacking is real conviction.

The Professor broke with Marxism to write his new ideas in *The Managerial Revolution*. This work showed a man who had declined to use any compass. Burnham thought he was studying history "objectively," without any preconceptions, beginning entirely anew. He disowned all responsibility for what he found . . . "this book contains no program and no morality." He based himself on immediate experience—so he thought—and predicted the future from the situation of the "moment." Nazism was dazzlingly successful for the time being and Burnham objectively projected this success into the near and even distant future. He laid down "logically" all the "real" possibilities for the world—either capitalism or socialism or the managerial revolution. He proved conclusively—for himself—that, like it or not, the wave of the future was foreshadowed by Hitler, Mussolini, Stalin and some New Deal equivalent, all smoothing the way for the managerial society. The war would end with the triumph of the most advanced managerial states. Europe would be ruled by Germany, Asia by Japan, America by the United States. Russia and the British Empire would be divided up among these new super-states. Naturally the super-states would soon come into conflict with each other. "Everywhere men will have to line up with one or the other of the super-states of tomorrow."

What does the new anti-Marxist Burnham make of history? It is not difficult to show that without any program and without any "morality," one can become only a cynic, and we find Burnham coming to the defense of cynicism. History becomes a chaotic, meaningless welter of events. Politics becomes a struggle for power in the crudest and most barbaric sense. "The principles of political struggle are identical with those of military struggle." That is, the struggle is at all times utterly ruthless. A real science of politics, tracing the complex stream of events to basic material causes (and science can do nothing else), becomes impossible to this kind of "objective"

historian. "Tragedy and comedy occur only within the human situation. There is no background against which to judge the human situation as a whole. It is merely what it happens to be." The present Burnham has clearly emerged from this scientific indifference, standing above the battle as a mere observer.

Once bitten, twice careful! Burnham felt that he had been tricked by his idealism when he joined the socialist movement. He had placed his faith in the masses and they had betrayed him. The proletariat was obviously incapable of taking power and holding it; it could not make the kind of revolution envisioned by Marx and Engels, Lenin and Trotsky. Burnham started by saying that the working class would not take power in his time. He ended by saying that they had proved themselves incapable of ruling and above all "administering" at any time. They obviously lacked the necessary technical knowledge and the specialized skill demanded by the complexities of modern society. Away then, with all illusions, away with all myths! Cynicism permits one to rise superior to false idealism. "The communist myth, or a complex of myths, is a special source of great strength for the communist movement. . . . It expresses in secular form the great Dream of a Kingdom of Heaven on Earth. As a compensation for those who are weary and careworn, or an ideal for those who are aspiring, it permits that seductive leap from a reality which is not, and can never be, to our taste, into the vision of a Utopian society where all men are free and equal and good, where exploitation and war and hunger and wretchedness have vanished, and all mankind is linked together in a universal brotherhood. According to the manner of all hallucinations, this dream is mistaken for objective reality: the dream is taken to be the guiding law of the very process of history, necessary, inevitable destiny."

Burnham's Theoretical Methodology

This is the myth which Stalinism utilizes to gain fanatic adherents all over the world, according to Burnham. The real thing is something else again. The Professor states what he is fighting: "On the basis of the full evidence, communism may be summarily defined as a world-wide conspiratorial movement for the conquest of a monopoly of power in the era of capitalist decline. Politically it is based on terror and mass deception; economically, it is, or at least tends to be, collectivist; socially it is totalitarian." A footnote tells us that this definition could also apply to fascism, the two systems not being very far apart. In this "summary" definition, Burnham shows how he awakened from his dream and became a "realist," of the cynical variety, of course.

It is not good to stand nakedly alone in this big world. One always seeks the comfort of like-mindedness in others, past or present. Burnham reveals this human weakness like everyone else. Having turned away from Marx, he found himself in search of better thinkers, non-Utopian and more hardened and inured to a bleak, chaotic world. He turned inevitably to the neo-Machiavellians who expressed to the letter his disgust with the dumb masses. There it was—the very first point laid down by Michels, Mosca, Pareto. It is inevitable, human nature being what it is and the organization of society the complexity that it is, that there shall always and forever be rulers and ruled, exploiters and exploited. Can there, under the circumstances, be a real science of politics and history? Burnham answers yes, of a sort. "Historical and political science is above all the study of the elite, its composition, its structure, and the mode of its relation to the non-elite." The

masses, just as they are beneath the ruling class, are also beneath history.

The Burnhams are vaguely disconcerted by the admission they are forced to make the moment they discard Marxism. They attack its monism, its complex interrelations between economics and politics, between politics and sociology, between the mode of production and the nature of classes that afford in turn the dialectic materialist conception of history and the class struggle content of history. One will discard Marxist economics but accept the sociology, another will accept the economics but discard the rest. Burnham, in company with all the social democratic revisionists of every shade, accepts the materialist conception as one of the important factors in history, as one single fruitful concept of Marx and Engels, but as only one factor among the pluralistic many. These types always dip their fingers into Marx for tidbits to adorn their writings. But reject Marxism as they will as a science of society, they cannot deny that it has all the forms of a science. And lo and behold! They find no alternative to take its place. Without Marxism there is no science. What, for example, does Burnham propose? He wants to begin at the beginning again. We must start patiently with the gathering of data from which to make generalizations and to arrive at laws. The science of society falls back into infancy. All that we can do is to describe what takes place. Strange that in this infancy Burnham is able to posit the inevitability (he falsely attributes this term to Marx and then proceeds to attack Marxism for its use, but finds nothing strange in using it himself while covering it under the guise of "empiricism") of managerial society, the wave of the future. Burnham continually makes genuflections before the "facts," especially the very latest ones, as though these outweigh all the rest of history. It never seems to occur to him that Marx and Engels devoted themselves to a vast range of historic facts and to the most meticulous surgery of the anatomy of society before they arrived at their conclusion.

Marx, incidentally, had a proper appreciation of Machiavelli as a thinker; but Marx placed him properly as a fore-runner whose horizon was necessarily limited to the early beginnings of capitalism, even to the period of the rise of nations. Burnham, rejecting Marxism, has to go back for inspiration to Machiavelli and to those who continue on the sole basis of his thought in the modern period. It is the acceptance of the Machiavellian "theory" that leads Burnham to conclude that the next stage in history must yield the managerial society. All history of the past shows that there are rulers and ruled, that the power of the rulers is embodied in the state, which is nothing but organized force and fraud. (History is the study of organized force and fraud). Ergo: there will always be what has always been, rulers (an elite) and ruled, exploiters and exploited. Hence Burnham looks carefully around to see what the next type of rulers will be like, and he finds them among the "managers." His "awe" before the managers is typical of intellectuals who have never been inside a factory, do not know its organization and how it runs in reality, and attribute truly magical powers to the administrators at the top. The true nature of the social cooperation involved in modern industry evades him, and that includes the "planning" which Burnham attributes, entirely erroneously, to the tops alone. In any case, Burnham was being perfectly "objective," in his own view, when he predicted the new managerial "social" revolution. He did not even take sides, he merely observed; it was not a question of desire or morality, it was a question of inexorable fact. All forms of

government were undergoing the same inner changes, the tempo alone varying. The administrative "letter" bodies used by Roosevelt under the New Deal were interpreted as the counterpart of Hitler's corporate state and Stalin's planning commissions. Burnham predicted boldly that these war measures of the New Deal would become permanent aspects of American life. Never again would there be a return to "free enterprise." Possibly Burnham considers it a mistake on the part of the American rulers (are they bourgeois or managerial?) to have dissolved these bodies. Let it be again emphasized that Burnham disowned all responsibility or preference for what was happening; he was a mere reporter recording without prejudice objective truth.

This great lover of truth has, however, a singular way of presenting those elements of Marxism which he chooses to discuss. There is, for example, his handling of "ideology." Marx made it crystal clear that an ideology is the real expression, conscious and unconscious, of a class point of view. Burnham presents the idea correctly in a sentence or two and then proceeds to do Machiavellian violence to it. He treats ideology as though it were merely and identically demagogy. The ideology of capitalism in its historic rise equated liberty and freedom for the capitalist class abstractly with that of all humanity. But it did so whole-heartedly and in good faith, not as sheer demagogy, for it believed in its progressive social role, believed that it truly represented the basic interests of society, that the new class was ordained to usher into being through social revolution a new and better social organism. The ideology of the bourgeoisie was, in fact, progressive in its day. It was for that very good reason, its truly progressive nature, that it appealed to the European masses. The invading armies of Napoleon found a welcome as liberators in the countries brought under his subjection. True, this changed with the rise of nationalism, but Napoleon brought with him the social revolution for which these countries were ripe. That is why the armies of Napoleon spread the new ideology everywhere.

It Is Not Even a Good Fable

Burnham, evading completely the small question of progressive nature and awareness of the masses, actually draws an analogy between Napoleon and Hitler. So sure was he that Hitler would win the victory that he predicted that fascist "ideology" (which he identifies with "managerial" ideology) would also find a welcome in the conquered lands. The managerial revolution would be exported just as had been the capitalist social revolution. What a perfect travesty! Where was Hitler welcomed and by whom? Did the masses sabotage their own rulers and come to his aid? What about the awareness of Hitler's racial theories? Could that be exported? What then did the resistance movements mean? Burnham is hard put to it to explain the bitter hatred between Russia and Germany, and why the capitalists preferred a German victory and the workers a Russian. The capitalists just did not know their own true interests. What serious class did not know its interests when the question was a matter of life and death historically? Burnham's treatment of ideology is the worst kind of caricature of Marx.

Not only has he lost every sense of direction in history, he even reduces it to a form of fable. It is as though the fox involves the cat and the monkey in a quarrel, himself standing aloof in order to run off with the prize while they are busily engaged fighting each other. The workers, mobilized under the ideology of socialism (a utopian ideology which can only

benefit the managers in the end), will fight the capitalists, but neither of these classes will carry off the spoils. The managers will be the only victors in this struggle. These managers, it seems, can resort to any number of "ideologies." They can use the fascist variety, or the socialist, or the New Deal. It's all one in the end, Burnham assures us. Where the analogy then with capitalist ideology? The capitalists placed themselves at the head of the masses in the war against feudal society. True enough, the masses did the fighting. Burnham is forced to concede that the managers themselves, this new rising class, do not know their own interests and do not accept the managerial ideology which yet will bring them to power. They scoff at it, in fact, since they maintain a firm belief in capitalism. And why not? They are surely among those who benefit most from the present system. Remember that Burnham excludes those lower technicians whose knowledge and skill are necessary to the functioning of the entire capitalist technology, from the class of managers (although they, far more than his so-called "managers," have every reason to be discontented with their lot of exploitation). The identification of ideology with demagoguery is implicit in Burnham's remark on technocracy. He says: "As a matter of fact, technocracy's failure to gain a wide response can be attributed to the too-plain and open way in which it expresses the perspective of managerial society." Nobody could have expressed in a "plain and open" way the perspective of capitalist society with its exploitation before it overthrew feudalism and flowered into its later development. Its ideologists looked upon it as unlocking the gates to real freedom, not to a new method of exploitation. Yet, when it comes to the managers, they are aware of their real role as exploiters, and sometimes they express it too openly and plainly! Burnham is similarly aware of the truth and writes about it. The awareness of the masses, it seems, plays no role whatsoever.

Why, the Burnham concept does not even make a good fable. He has the managers even opposing the revolution which nevertheless will hand the power over to them. They fight on the side of the capitalists against the workers. Strange alliance! They enlist the aid of the capitalists against themselves. It is the workers and the middle class who help overthrow capitalism and then they hand back the power to one part of their opponents. Thus Burnham positively tortures ideology and makes it into mumbo-jumbo. Please refrain from calling this science, even in its infancy.

Burnham is nothing if not a realist, he keeps insisting. Yet there is not one single iota of scientific observation in any of his work, although there is plenty of talk about such observation. He treats reality "summarily," by logical deposition or acceptance, which means mechanistically and metaphysically. He warns against accepting documents and statements of political leaders at face value. He then proceeds to do precisely that, and in the worst instances of all. He swallows where it is essential to examine, regurgitate and reject. Hitler fulminates against "monopoly capitalism." Hence he is against such capitalism even though he relies completely on it for support. The fascists maintain that they have established a system wherein wages, prices and production are all under rigid regulation and control. Burnham not once attempts to gauge the truth of these assumptions and assertions. He accepts Hitler's word for it all.

Burnham criticizes Marxian economics. Yet he has not even reached the stage of understanding bourgeois-good bourgeois!—economics, let alone Marxist thought in this field.

Even Ricardo is a closed book to him. Here is a gem from Burnham's "logical" wisdom: "In capitalist economy, preferential income distribution to the capitalists takes place through the fact that the owners of the instruments of production retain the ownership rights in the products of those instruments. Since these products can be sold on the market at a price higher than the cost of the labor that goes into them, there is a surplus, and a large surplus, for the distribution on the basis of claims other than those for wage payments." Shades of Ricardo and Marx! Their work was all in vain; their attempts to determine the nature of prices and profits never reached to the heights of the Burnham intellect. Burnham repeats here all that not only Marx, but even some of the best bourgeois economists, attacked as completely "vulgar" economy. No wonder Burnham thinks that the "managers" can just about do as they like with economy. As a matter of "fact," the capitalists are already doing as they like according to Burnham's economy. Alas! Not only is social science in its infancy, but economic science as well, so far as Burnham is concerned. How can one expect Burnham to examine critically Russian economy or fascist economy when he fails to understand the very economy under which he is living?

Perhaps Burnham's condensed economic statement was a mere lapse in language concerning the law of value. But evidently it is not, from the treatment given German economy under Hitler and Russian economy under state ownership. It seems that Stalin, too, has escaped completely from the yoke of the capitalist law of value. Burnham tells us: "With the help of centralized state direction, managed currency, state foreign trade monopoly, compulsory labor, and prices and wages controlled independently of any free market competition, branches of the economy or the whole economy can be directed toward aims other than profit." This same idea led Bukharin in his day to say that Russia could go forward toward the building of socialism even at a snail's pace. It was Stalin's view also when he planned arbitrarily and manipulated the currency to help his form of planning until he found Russian economy running headlong into inflation. But one need not look to Burnham to give any concrete analyses of the twists and turns of Russian economy and the economic reasons for them. His lofty viewpoint avoids all troublesome details for the larger things. Economics, besides, is after all only one of the factors determining history.

Burnham likes to set down precepts only in order to violate them. He tells us over and over again that theories must give way to facts where the facts contradict them. Then he proceeds to do violence to actuality in order to force it into the Machiavellian theory that social revolution is merely a rapid shift in the nature of the ruling class. "There occur periodically rapid shifts in the composition and structure of elites: that is social revolution." This theory in mind, Burnham tells us that the Russian Revolution had nothing whatsoever to do with socialism. All the socialist talk was merely in order to enlist the aid of the masses to accomplish the purposes of a clever new elite. This generalization is then forced on the facts. Revolution and counter-revolution become mere necessary parts of the same process, the one "growing" into the other. Bolshevism and Stalinism become identical since they represent mere stages in an inevitable development. How simple this makes the writer's task! He need analyze nothing. Is the motion forward or backward, progressive or retrogressive? Has there been any essential change between 1921 and 1931? Not at all. Motion is—motion! One thing develops into

the other, that is all. An extra bit of slander of Lenin does no harm. Burnham tears a quotation or two out of Lenin to show that Stalin merely carried through the ideas already to be found in Bolshevism.

The Man as "Scientist"

Just as Burnham accepted Hitler's "thousand years," he again accepts Stalin at his own evaluation as the continuator of Lenin. Burnham does not believe for one moment that socialism exists in Russia. Quite the contrary, he thinks that Stalinism represents one form, the totalitarian form, of managerial society. Why, then, does he insist on speaking of Russian society as "communist" society? He calls communism a world-wide conspiracy for the seizure of power by the totalitarian Stalinists. This fast-and-loose, now-you-see-it-now-you-don't language can appeal only to prejudices, not to "objectivity." We shall show presently that Burnham believes, or more properly hopes, that managerial society can be arrived at by different paths, in particular the "communist" or Stalinist path, and the anti-communist or American path. He finds that the path is everything, that it is better to travel the more gentle American way even though the end will be the same. We must coin for him a new term, the "Managerial Revisionist."

Burnham himself once replied to those who would identify revolution with counter-revolution, Leninism with Stalinism. It would be both dreary and thankless to quote the one Burnham against the other. His present standpoint permits him to sum up the struggle between Trotskyism and Stalinism in the following enlightening fashion: "The principal issue between them (Trotsky and Stalin) was a purely tactical problem. What percentage of communist resources and energies should be assigned directly to the Russian fortress, and what to operations in the still unconquered sections of the earth?" This purely tactical problem apparently explains Stalin's wiping out of the whole generation of Bolsheviks, his establishing for this purpose and for the purpose of maintaining himself in power of a GPU totalitarian regime which covers all Russia with concentration camps. Does Burnham really believe that his triviality explains adequately the profound process of decay that took place in Russia? Does he hope that this establishes him as the true scientist as against Trotsky with his minute and painstaking studies of every phase of Stalinism, and his Marxist explanation of what would otherwise have been the most fantastic of all phenomena? This is no argument *ad hominum*. One has only to read. Burnham, to repeat, has not dared to attempt one bit of concrete analysis of Bolshevism and Stalinism in their political histories. He repeats with that great chorus of detractors of Bolshevism: Stalinism issued forth from the loins of Leninism. That is the sum and substance of his argumentation.

Let us take his own "science" and apply it here. Hitler in similar fashion issued forth from the Weimar Republic and yet Burnham finds it necessary to distinguish the first as the founder of managerial society, the second as the old bourgeois society. He tells us that this is because there was a rapid change of elite under Hitler. And also, no doubt, many changes in policy. Does Burnham perhaps not know that there was far less of a change of elite under Hitler than under Stalin? Hitler, as a matter of fact, prevented the rapid change of elite that would have come with the victory of the proletariat. The suppressions were not of the bourgeois ruling class, but of the working class leaders most of whom had never been in power at all, or for a relatively short time under Weimar.

If Burnham cares to examine, entirely on his own premises, the rapidity of change of personnel (actually he confines himself to the politician spokesmen of the rulers) of the elite in the two regimes, Hitler's and Stalin's, we shall be happy to assist him. The evidence would then be overwhelming that a "social revolution" à la Burnham took place under the leadership of Stalin as against the regime established by Lenin. And this "social revolution" was far more drastic under Stalin than under Hitler. But Burnham could make of this what he likes—perhaps the change from a "first stage" to a "second stage" of the managerial revolution. For our part, we do not lack a sense of direction. We recognize counter-revolution when we see it.

The latest Burnham (we hasten to say we mean the one revealed in the *Struggle for the World*, since the Burnhams change so rapidly) differs materially from the preceding one. The older one was all for "objectivity" and had neither program nor morality; that is, he took no side despite the fact that he apportioned the uncertain victory to the wrong side. Now we note a decided shift. From being the aloof scientist, Burnham becomes the ardent and alarmed advocate of a program. The program is most urgent. Whence this shift? And what is the basis of the choice of the lesser evil that he makes? We tread here on rather delicate ground. If Burnham prefers one set of means to another, he gives us no key as to the ends these means are to serve. All he gives is a "minimum" program to solve the world crisis, at least temporarily. "This bare minimum (of offense and defense) is enough to solve the immediate world political crisis. It is enough, that is, to permit civilization to continue at least through the next historical period. It is very far from enough to solve society's more enduring problems, or to guarantee a world at all in accord with our wishes. These larger problems are not part of the subject matter of this book, which is confined to the political analysis of the present crisis. Beyond the minimum, the questions are left entirely open, and they are, in fact, open. To solve the problem of the present crisis is no more than the pre-condition for the solution of the larger problems. But without the pre-condition, there will be no further problems, much less their solution." We are left breathlessly awaiting Burnham's analysis of the larger problems and his solution for them. All that he reveals right now is that the pre-condition for the survival of civilization is the supremacy on a world scale of United States power. Nor will we be able to judge the adaptability of means to ends, since we do not know these ends.

For Real Realism

Burnham motivates his new role as "adviser ex officio" of American imperialism by choosing the uncertain for the certain. If all society is now moving in the direction of managerial exploitation in place of capitalism, his preference for the American type could hardly be based on "science." His previous work showed fascism and Stalinism as the prototypes of managerial society. The superiority of Hitler's regime from the military standpoint (the only one that counted in war, Burnham told us) was traced precisely to its totalitarian nature. The democracies didn't have a chance unless they followed suit and transformed themselves into managerial societies. Burnham saw precisely this happening. Now we have the new approach which we may designate as Managerial Revisionism. The United States need not establish a strictly totalitarian regime in passing over to the stage of managerial society. "It is even possible that the United States could accom-

plish the transition to managerial society in a comparatively democratic fashion." Burnham projects, somewhat more dubiously to be sure, the idea that the world empire under American hegemony, need not be maintained under an iron heel. Of course Burnham does not care to take any responsibility in this sphere. He tells us: "Without reference to the question of whether it ought to be done, or will be done, I shall describe what could be done." To this is Burnham's science reduced, to rationalizing of the most childish sort. To whom is he appealing? He wants the more "scientific" and enlightened section of the ruling class to steer a course which will conserve as much liberty and democracy as possible. Of course, democracy itself is a mere fraud and a veneer covering the rule of the exploiters, but it does have a certain relative worth to the masses—and to Burnham. The new Burnham even answers the older one: "The argument that a free structure of society is not so strong externally as a despotic structure and therefore must be given up in an era of wars and revolutions, seems to me unproved, and not a little suspicious." Democracy, after all, does permit the chance for creative forces to develop; it permits criticisms of serious mistakes, etc. It was the United States, history demonstrated, that did bring the atomic bomb to completion.

But if Burnham tries to win over whoever it is he is trying to win over to a democratic course in the transition to managerial society, surely he has the most curious advice to offer concerning the very first step on this road. He calls for the immediate and most ruthless suppression of the "communists" in this country. He is sure that with the right measures—concentration camps—they will stay suppressed. He is aware that this is somewhat dangerous to the maintenance of a democratic course, but we must take our chances on that. What is truly hilarious is the motivation this Machiavellian gives for such suppression. The communists are violating the "rules of the game." "The principles of an organized society cannot be interpreted in practice in such a way as to make organized society impossible." The rules of the game! Rules that Burnham tells us again and again have been set by the ruling elite entirely for its own benefit and with not the slightest or at most a protective minimum of concern for the masses. The rules of force and fraud! Burnham cannot possibly pretend that he doesn't know that this argument has been the stand-by of every single reactionary at every stage of history. It is the old resort to "law and order," not even in a new garb. It becomes clear that Burnham thinks these rules socially necessary. If revolutionary changes will not come slowly according to revisionist blueprint, Burnham shows himself willing to suppress the revolution. We speak, mind you, of his own "revolution," the managerial revolution, not ours. Burnham has given us a "science" of Machiavellianism. There is no reason why we should not apply it to himself. He wants the ruling class to stop short with the suppression of the Stalinists, but he admits that this is most unlikely. Whoever says A will have to say B. Those who oppose the suppression of the Stalinists, not because of any political support, but because of understanding of the spreading social effects of suppression of any one group to all other opposition groups, will find themselves next on the list. The action with which Burnham would resolve his dilemma is all-revealing. One takes note that his appeal for the retaining of some measure of liberty is made not to the masses but to a section of the ruling class.

What is the real basis of Burnham's choice? In principle he has given no reason that is acceptable. There was a moment in the past when Burnham picked out a sentence from

the writing of Trotsky which considered the possible hypothesis that fascism might perhaps be the first stage in the decay of civilization. If the proletarian revolution failed to occur, then civilization might be doomed to disappear and give way to some new form of barbarism. Burnham soon equated this to a certainty, making the advent of fascism inevitable since the proletariat, in his view, was incapable of seizing power and transforming society. It is unclear whether Burnham still thinks that "managerial society" is a form of decay of civilization. His theories on the future, aside from the superficial abstraction from history that there will always be rulers and ruled, have not been divulged, assuming he has any. His "revisionism," nothing but a new adaptation of social democratic revisionism, consists in the wish that the new form of society will be brought about slowly and sensibly rather than in revolutionary tempo. There is no "principle" in Burnham's neo-Machiavellian "science" to warrant any choice between managerial societies. It follows that Burnham's choice is based completely on factors not revealed in his book, but merely rationalized there in rather transparent style. He tells us that there are times when the fate of the ruling class (that of the United States in this case) involves the fate of all. He would therefore defend the strength and power of his own ruling class, rather than see it replaced by a Russian totalitarian ruling class. This is the same kind of "science" that caused Hegel to defend the absolute monarchy in Germany, Scheidemann and Co. to defend Germany in the First World War, the social democrats in general to defend their own ruling classes in every great crisis.

Burnham regrets that the present situation has developed in the way that it did. He would much have preferred to see Hitler defeat Russia than to have the United States "assigned" this task. This can be surmised in his post-mortem advice to Hitler. Why, oh why, didn't Hitler offer a political partnership to France? Such magnanimity would have had the most far-reaching effects. "There were probably elements within Nazism that made it impossible for Hitler to grasp his political chance, but, looking back, we can see what kind of chance it was, and what it would have meant, if it had been taken." Too bad he doesn't expatiate on just what it would have meant. First and foremost it would have meant an alliance against Russia. Burnham would not have had to face the prospect, in case of Stalin's victory, that: "Once again the settled peoples of the Plains would bow to the yoke of the erupting nomads of the Steppes." Hitler failed so that now Burnham is under the necessity of giving the advice to his own ruling class.

The meaning of Burnham's interpretation of the Machiavellian theory that there will always be a ruling class, though the exact composition will change, is clear to a Marxist. It is the basis of submission to one's own ruling class. Why bump one's head against the stone wall of human nature and inevitable history? We must do the best we can in a bleak world with the ruling class that exists; we must contrive one way or another to get along with it. Burnham has become, along with those "radical" neo-Machiavellians who defend this "truth" first and foremost, the indirect preacher of submission and defeatism. In what real sense is this any different from the function of the church? The real irony is that Burnham builds a theory that the masses are the ones who must, in the nature of things, be ever submissive. He turns his own mind's thinking outward and places its psychology elsewhere. His "objectivity" is the purest type of subjectivity, for he has

given no analysis of reality whatsoever. He never even looked at the masses to determine their awareness, their power of organization, their capabilities. He long ago turned his back on the oppressed and downtrodden, turned his back with many gestures of snobbish contempt. The gesture cannot for one moment hide the fact that the choice of this intellectual is based on completely vulgar self-interest. He lives the life of one of the privileged in the United States. The desire to save the satisfactory way of life reduces itself to the life of Burnham. He will gladly come to the rescue of his ruling class, if that class will only maintain the kind of life to which Burnham has become accustomed. The "harsh," objective analysis of society that Burnham thought he was making leads finally to nothing but old-style radical reformism. The Machiavellian will placate the ruling class into granting a few "liberties."

Burnham correctly repeats again and again that he advocates no program and no morality. There is one class in society that has no program of its own: the petty bourgeoisie. At one time it is won over to the working class, when the workers and their leaders show firmness and ability to achieve the proletarian revolution. But in periods of defeat, the middle class moves back into its relationship of submission to the big bourgeoisie. Burnham's entire course is a perfect illustration of this Marxist wisdom. He has moved from one camp to the other. It took a little time to detach himself entirely from the working class movement. At first he appeared to be suspended in midair, belonging to neither camp, predicting in fact the end of both these camps. (Which would have solved his dilemma). The curve of his movement did not stop, however. He now finds himself advocating the salvation of the American bourgeoisie. He cannot possibly pretend that the United States has become or is rapidly becoming the managerial society. It remains what it always was, monopoly capitalism and imperialism.

Burnham is one of those intellectuals who thinks that he is giving voice to advanced thought, to "independent" ideas. He is against all illusion; yet he is under the greatest of all illusions. He thinks he is leading the way when in actuality he is becoming a camp follower. His appeal to the American ruling class to hasten to seize world rule through its monopoly of the atomic bomb is sheer beating against an open door. He need not fear. American imperialism is aware of its role and is following its destiny quite firmly. Does Burnham really think that they needed his advice, so urgently given too? It would be a poor ruling class indeed if it required the advice given by the unstable Burnham. Petty bourgeois that he is, he sways from one side to the other. How does Burnham's science account for his own instability? How does he account for his philosophic "pluralism" being so closely intertwined with political opportunism? Burnham tells us with a wave of the hand: "The law of dialectic logic is simply that whatever serves the interests of communist power is true." No, the first law of dialectics is that things ever change, and that they can move backward as well as forward. That means the recognition of the social direction of motion. There is decline, even decay, as well as advance. Stalinism represents the utter decay of the Russian Revolution. The case of the individual, Burnham, also falls under the dialectic law of motion. He took steps in the direction of the working class, that is, in a progressive direction. Then he recoiled (socialism was not for his time) and went back pell-mell to the camp of the bourgeoisie. Being an intellectual, he had to cover his retreat with

"ideology." How, after all, could a Machiavellian admit even to himself that he was exhibiting the same vulgar process of the ordinary person who says to himself that there are exploiters and exploited and that he prefers to be one of the exploiters rather than a slave all his life? The process is that simple and that reactionary. The crusader is not a leader but a follower.

Burnham examines society, not by looking around but with his eyes fixed always in one direction—gazing at the apex of political power. It is almost an obsession with him. The superstructure alone is what counts. The comic result of his investigation is that he winds up with the first law of all conservatism: conserve the power as it is, for any change can only be for the worse. The United States is today the most powerful nation on earth. Let it remain so. Better still: let it extend and consolidate its power. "The United States has power, greater relative power in the world today than has ever been possessed by any single nation. The United States is complacent in the enjoyment of many of the immediate fruits of that power, in particular the highest living standard there has ever been. The United States is, however, irresponsible in the exercise of its power. . . . The United States must itself, openly and boldly, bid for political leadership of the world." Burnham merely states openly what is in the mind of every imperialist scoundrel. He is concerned, just as they are, that this power will wane with the next great economic crisis which he, like the rest, knows is inevitable.

We can quite agree with Burnham that civilization is gravely menaced. But we can see little choice of any "lesser evil" between the frying pan of Stalinist totalitarianism and the fire of American imperialism. To us these are both the protagonists and the manifestations of inevitable decay. The idea of a "mild" use of the atomic bomb in a preventive war is a defeatist way of saying that since we must suffer the disease let us bring it on faster. It is as meaningful as the saying of the French ruler before the great French Revolution: "Alter me the deluge!" The real scientists keep assuring Burnham that his idea that the United States can maintain its atomic bomb monopoly for very long is utopian. If the American ruling class hesitates to take the course prescribed by Burnham, it is because they have not been blinded by their own power. They still see the masses of all the countries, including their own. They still speak with relief of the fact that their policy of "unconditional surrender" actually worked to stave off the working class revolution after the war—at least for the time being. The last war (the First World War) taught them that a socialist revolution is not to be trifled with and deserves respect. They hesitate to disturb the power of Stalin because they recognize his role in channelizing the revolution and preventing a new outbreak. The world is full of uncertainties.

The atomic bomb epitomizes the threat to civilization that exists in the present status quo. It is a far greater menace precisely because of the existence of Stalinism. That bloody totalitarian regime makes not the slightest appeal to intelligent, freedom-loving men and women anywhere. More than ever before it is clear that only the proletarian revolution can save civilization. It alone can achieve the form of solidarity from country to country that would enable internationalists to appeal successfully to the masses, to the scientists and idealists to join hands against those who would unleash the third cataclysm, with its atomic bomb destruction. If Burnham proves

anything at all, he proves that there is no other way. It is he who would substitute illusion for truth. The problem today is crucial and its solution is concentrated at one point, the problem of leadership and guidance. The only permanent solution lies in the shifting of power, not the retention of the present power in society. Burnham himself admits that his solution is temporary at best. How temporary? Granted for the

sake of argument the momentary success of the "Burnham plan," it offers not the faintest hope of harnessing the forces of destruction in the future. The problem of harnessing these forces is not a scientific one, in the narrower sense of that word, but a social revolutionary one. That is the real crusade. Burnham's crusade is a Machiavellian sham.

JACK WEBER.

Intellectuals' Flight From Politics

A Discussion of Contemporary Trend

The intellectuals are the most delicate sensorium of the life of society. In their remarkable ideological fluctuations of the past 30 years, one can read the history of contemporary society in oblique, distorted yet revealing terms. Bolshevism and Stalinism; pacifism and Vansittartism; pragmatism and existentialism; militant atheism and neo-mysticism; revolutionary activism and secluded quietism—the list can be extended indefinitely. A discussion of these shifts which merely denounces the intellectuals' "irresponsibility" is largely a waste of time, even if morally or emotionally satisfying. For the intellectuals' instability (which at least indicates reaction and awareness) is largely a reflection of the failure of the major social classes to resolve the crisis in which we are jugged. Any other view grants the intellectuals a degree of social independence they do not in reality enjoy.

The political development of the American "left" intellectuals since the great depression may be charted in four major trends: their attraction to radical politics in the early thirties; their subsequent break from Stalinism and turn to Trotskyism; their retreat from Marxism in the late thirties; and finally their flight from politics in general.* In this article I wish to discuss only the last of these trends, the flight from politics.

Though not a class in the Marxian sense, the intellectuals wield an influence far greater than their direct socio-economic strength. Because of their characteristic concern with ideas, they are able to wrench a certain limited freedom from their social milieu; they are not merely linked to the present, they can "live" ideologically in either the past or the future. To analyze their present situation, we must therefore not only place them in their general position *vis-à-vis* the major classes of society, but go further by examining some of their ideas.

In few instances have the intellectuals formulated their flight from politics into an explicit system or rationale, and that only by the scholastics or academicians. Such a codification is impossible for the left intellectual whose background is at least partially political. For it is such a patently absurd idea to suggest that modern men can live without politics or solve any of his fundamental problems without politics, that few have had the courage to justify their behavior by a theoretical elevation. Instead a variety of half-conscious subterfuges are adopted. One sneers at politics as "dirty"—which is in a sense true but which skirts the central problem of whether men must sometimes engage in activities which are "dir-

ty." Another turns to "ultimate" problems of life—man's basic nature, cosmic anxiety, death, "fear and trembling"—which, whatever their other areas of relevance, are certainly not a logical substitute, even if an emotional one, for the problems with which politics is concerned. And still a third says that politics is "dull" by comparison with other intellectual activities—which, again, may or may not be true but which is irrelevant if only because politics recommends itself not for esthetic reasons but by its claim to be unavoidably *necessary*. Obviously none of these subjectively formulated motivations expresses the basic cause for the flight from politics. For though the intellectuals may develop a considerable ingenuity in the means by which they negotiate this flight, its causes are largely rooted in the immediate crisis of society.

To the intellectuals politics seems to offer no way out; it seems able only to embroil us further in the current catastrophe. This feeling is the direct consequence of the failure of the revolutionary upsurges of the twenties and thirties, the most shattering experience of our time: shattering to people, to movements and to ideas. An entire generation of intellectuals was politically destroyed just as virtually an entire generation of revolutionists was politically destroyed.*

The intellectuals feel themselves trapped in a dead end: the bifurcation between knowledge and action. They feel that *nothing matters any more*; that *no matter what one does*, one cannot challenge the political power of omnipotent bureaucracies. (Kafka's novel, *The Trial*, gave anticipatory expression to this sense of powerlessness in its view of man as a *victim*.) In an article by C. Wright Mills, a radical sociologist, the feeling is vividly described:

We continue to know more and more about modern society, but we find the centers of political initiative less and less accessible. This generates a personal malady which is particularly acute in the intellectual who has labored under *the illusion that his thinking makes a difference*. In the world of today the more his knowledge of affairs grows, the less effective the impact of his thinking seems to become. . . . He feels helpless in the fundamental sense that he cannot control what he is able to foresee. ("The Powerless People," by C. Wright Mills, *Politics*, April, 1944—My emphasis—I. H.)

Now, honesty requires that we acknowledge that this feeling is not confined to the intellectuals, the "powerless people"; it is a feeling which must also seize the revolutionist who correctly analyzes each revolutionary situation only to find

*The reader may have noticed a shift in focus from "intellectuals" to "left intellectuals." It is really with the latter that I am here concerned, though to understand their development we shall have to discuss general intellectual tendencies. It goes without saying that many, perhaps most, American intellectuals did not participate in the four trends I have mentioned.

*The most pathetic evidence of the destruction of an entire revolutionary generation is the fate of the Lovestone group. This once proud Marxist tendency committed suicide *en masse* at the outbreak of the war, an act which has few precedents in the socialist movement. Of its three main figures, one, Lovestone, has become a "think man" for a trade union bureaucracy; another, Wolfe, is now a Menshevik who defends Chiang Kai-shek's regime (see *American Mercury*, August, 1947); and the third, Herberg, has been converted to orthodox Judaism. *Tempus fugit*, indeed!

in its defeat still another tragic confirmation of the validity of his analysis. (There is, by the way, an easy way to avoid this feeling and even to enjoy the most delicious optimism: simply live in another world . . . and chalk up each defeat of the socialist movement in *this* world as a victory in your private world.) But the crucial difference between most intellectuals and the revolutionists is that the revolutionists continue to resist reaction; that they have maintained their conviction of the necessity of political activity; and that they have not elevated moods of the present into philosophies of presumed universal relevance. Shortly before the Russian Revolution, Lenin, in a moment of deep pessimism, told a Swiss audience that he doubted if the Russian Revolution would come in his lifetime—which didn't prevent him from trying to nullify his prediction.

There is the greatest weakness of the intellectual: if he responds most readily to the times, he also succumbs most easily to its pressures. A glance at the present intellectual situation in America indicates the extent to which this is true. One need but list a few indices: the disintegration and atomization of American intellectual life; the pathetic *quest for novelty*, often at the expense of basic relevance and validity; the belittling of science and the elevation of the irrational; the reappearance of musty theories of social utopias; the growth of academicism in literary life; the popularity of the doctrine of man's essential and unavoidable isolation.

Perhaps even more alarming than the reappearance of reactionary ideas is the intellectuals' loss of *rebelliousness*. By and large they have become, at least in a physical-economic sense, comfortable citizens of the community. Most of them have settled down during recent years to the security of the good life, even if that good life is occasionally conscience-torn. Gone is the sensitivity to the world's sufferings which was such an admirable trait of the intellectuals of 15 years ago. So immersed are they now in *man's* cosmic suffering that they maintain their silence about the here-and-now sufferings of *men*; so fascinated are they by their private problems that they are indifferent to the social catastrophe which tortures all humanity.* Or if not indifferent, then helpless and hopeless. Marx's statement that the task of philosophers is no longer to philosophize about the world but to change it has been amended to read: "*but to mourn for it.*"

The directions which this flight takes are many, but in this article I wish only to note briefly four of them: the turns to religion, absolute moralism, psychoanalysis and existentialist philosophy as *substitutes* for politics. It goes without saying that where literary material is cited, I intend neither literary analysis nor evaluation.

The Turn to Religion

That a substantial group of intellectuals should accept religious notions as relevant to modern man's situation is perhaps the most striking tendency of contemporary intellectual life. Though the causes of any individual's conversion are often complex and perplexing, the turn to religion in general is not difficult to explain. Each age of defeat and dissolution sees similar developments. Where men fail, miracles are needed; where chaos reigns, men yearn for order. And who can offer miracles as acceptable or an order as comfort-

*A revealing instance is the indifference and silence of the bulk of American intellectuals about the recent colonial repressions by French and Dutch imperialism in Indo-China and Indonesia. Fifteen years ago such events would have evoked an immediate and powerful reaction from at least a section of the American intellectuals.

ing as the church? Hence the resurgence of religio-emotional primitivism among sophisticated intellectuals.

The consequences of this turn are enormous. For those who revert to religion must necessarily break with the entire tradition of modern thought as it stemmed from the Enlightenment and twisted through the 20th century. The assumptions of rational inquiry and scientific method; the reliance on intelligence as a means of social investigation; the conception that man need seek no sanction for his quest for dignity and meaning outside of himself and that a tragic view of life is derivable from an acceptance of a naturalistically-ordered universe which is not a *function* of some external cosmic power—all of these traditional postulates of western thought, which Marxism accepted the better to drive them to total realization, are now discarded by the religious converts who can urge only intuition, mysticism and faith. They abandon not merely Marx and Freud and Dewey and Einstein and Darwin and all the other names which have become the symbols of modern thought; they abandon as well the intellectual progenitors of the bourgeois revolution. They move back beyond the Encyclopediasts to pre-bourgeois ideology.

Notwithstanding the strained attempts of a few "left" Catholics and Protestant socialists to wed religion to some mildly leftist politics, the large-scale adoption of religion can lead only to passivity and indifference. How could it be otherwise among men who find this world so painful that they seek another? And though religion does serve as emotional nourishment and a source of mythic symbolism for individual artists (e.g., the talented young American poet, Robert Lowell), its general domination of the cultural scene could lead only to obscurantism, stultification and in some instances regimentation. For today religion is a hard crust on the social organism shutting off the breath of freedom, generosity and experimentation.

The central and most representative figure in the turn to religion is T. S. Eliot, who helped initiate the trend. Unlike many other converts, Eliot was never a radical in politics and unlike many others he has taken his conversion most seriously. He has accepted the ceremonies and dogmas of Anglo-Catholicism with apparently literal belief; he has not hesitated before some of its least credible or savory implications. And he has transmuted church values into his literary criticism and his politics. When as distinguished and sophisticated an intellectual as Eliot could write in a manner worthy of a parish priest announcing an *index prohibitorium* that

In ages like our own it is necessary for Christian readers to scrutinize their reading, *especially of works of the imagination*, with explicit and theological standards. (*After Strange Gods*, by T. S. Eliot—my emphasis, I. H.)

then the implications of the religious revival for political and cultural freedom become clearer.

Eliot has even attempted a political application of his religious doctrine. In his book, *The Idea of a Christian Society*, he constructed a Christian utopia which, having been established as a platonic *idea*, he held to be more significant than the worldly reality of church political behavior. He argued that the practice of church politics is a merely transient *aspect* of Christianity while the *idea* of a Christian society is its indestructible *essence*. Just as it is helpless before the self-contained structure of solipsism, so reason is disarmed by this bland dismissal of actuality in the name of a formal ideal. In

*Theoretically religious converts could attempt to bring God's order to earth, as a few iconoclasts have seen their task; but most of the recent converts have sought a haven in religion rather than a creed of public action.

this instance one can only put aside the *idea* and insist on an examination of the reality; one can only place Eliot's argument for what it is: a traditionally-formulated apology for church reaction.

Yet if Eliot represents the most rigidified personification of the intellectual reaction to which religion must eventually lead, he still remains a major voice in contemporary poetry. Which should warn us against too easy correlations between religiosity and cultural sterility. For despite the occasional intrusion of his dogma, Eliot's poetry still draws, as it usually has, on the emotional tensions of contemporary life for its major substance.

Few of the other converts to religion have been able to adopt the faith as rigorously as has Eliot, even when their difficulties led them to mystical extremes. Such writers as Aldous Huxley and Evelyn Waugh—paralleling the philosophical vagaries of Jeans and Eddington—have desperately run to the shelters of faith; but even after they entered God's castle they still could not find peace. For none of them has genuine religious faith. They have a will to faith, a yearning for faith, a faith in faith, but faith itself they do not have. And though the skeptical intelligence of such minds as Huxley, Waugh and Isherwood may even be driven to a conviction of the *need* for faith, the quality of faith itself eludes them. Much of the undeliberate pathos of the later novels of Waugh and Huxley derives from this insistence on a faith they have not really captured. Their faith is largely *verbal*: a chimera which they feel could give them solace if only they could grasp it.

Huxley's conversion indicates still another basis for the escape to mysticism. Running like a thread of reproach through his novels is a pervasive fear of life and especially of the modern organization of life (*Brave New World*, though purporting to satirize a future utopia actually described modern society). His fear of life manifests itself in his equivocal attitude toward sex: in his *Ends and Means* he urges sexual sublimation for "the enlargement of culture." Is it any wonder that this writer's conversion resulted not merely in a deterioration of his talent but also a rupture from all the vital sources of modern life and feeling?

But the most pitiful and in a way terrifying result of the turn to religion appears in the poetry of W. H. Auden. Not only does Auden prostrate himself before his God; he exults in the prostration, in the utter renunciation of man's powers of reason and in the promiscuous proclamation of man's guilt. The brash rebelliousness of his youth is now twisted into a masochistic abasement before his Lord. In his talented poem, *For the Time Being, a Christmas Oratorio*, he brings to ultimate reduction the surrender and self-denial of the intellectual-in-quandary.

By Him is dispelled the darkness wherein the fallen will cannot distinguish between the temptation and sin, for in Him we become fully conscious of Necessity as our freedom to be tempted and of Freedom as our necessity to have faith. And by Him is illuminated the time in which our freedom is realized or prevented, for the Course of History is predictable in the degree to which all men love themselves, and spontaneous in the degree to which each man loves God and through Him his neighbor.

It is Auden as well who urges on modern man the Calvinistic dogma that:

"... even in
The germ-cell's primary division
Innocence is lost and Sin,
Already given as a fact
Once more issues as an Act.

The religious conversions of the intellectuals have their low-brow equivalents: Dorothy Sayers and C. S. Lewis, who proclaim Christianity as a Rotarian dogma equally good for ailing souls and worldly troubles and who trot out all the theological paraphernalia (original sin, salvation through redemption) in hearty Salvation Army style; and finally Lloyd Douglas, who concocts profitable fictional miracles in the apparent belief that the Bible didn't provide enough with which to write best sellers.

The Quest for Morality

Yearning for a steady anchor in a terrifyingly uncontrolled world, a group of intellectuals have turned to absolute morality as a secular equivalent of the turn to religion. Though each participant in this quest for the moral grail establishes his own emphasis, there is one supposition common to all of them: the rejection of the social matrix of morality and the insistence upon a supra or extra-historical set of moral values.

Ultimately any sharp dichotomy between "social" and "individual" morality must result in confusion, for it tends to polarize "society" and "the individual" as unimpinging abstractions. Both extremes fail to see the individual inextricably *in* society and society necessarily composed of individuals; they are hence unable to develop a dynamic and active view of morality and its context in existence, or as the current jargon would have it, its existential context. Either extreme must necessarily lead to a static and passive view of morality.

In practice few people can cling to these extremes. Once, however, one admits to an interaction of individual and social or rather once one admits an indivisible coexistence in which both terms are really short-hand descriptive abstractions of linked aspects of human existence—then there is still the main problem: what is the relationship between these two necessary abstractions and what, if any, is their causal sequence? Here, I think, Marxism provides a valid and operationally useful answer: it sees man in context, within limits; *it defines thereby the area of his freedom*. (Since it must be based on complete indeterminacy, "absolute freedom" is no longer actual freedom; there is nothing in relation to which to be "free.")

When Marx said that "man makes his own history, but not out of the whole cloth," he was, I think, saying something along these same lines; he was suggesting that the scope of moral action and the limits within which moral choice is possible are largely conditioned by the situation in which man finds himself, that is the society in which man lives. This does not mean that all moral problems are thereby automatically solved; on the contrary. It does, however, help us to define them and to test their relevance. Nor does it mean that all moral problems are *reduced* to social problems; on the contrary. It does, however, insist upon that connecting link with context without which the moral problem becomes reified and thereby divorced from human situations.

Now the most interesting thing about the turn to absolute morality is that, when viewed in historical perspective, it is itself so clearly conditioned by the very temporal and contingent social conditions from which it tries to free itself. The attempt to discover again absolute morality is in the present historical situation clearly a result of the sense of impotence the intellectuals feel before the social problems of the world. Were the intellectuals engaged in activity which they felt would make a difference, they would not try to climb the cliffs of absolute morality. So there is more than a touch of

irony in the fact that the turn to absolute morality can be explained only by an approach which is its antithesis.

The source of this tendency in the feeling of social impotence is vividly described by a socialist writer.

Justice and Truth are capitalized and it is felt that it might thereby be possible to regain for them a lustre which was lost in the daily grind of earthly contact. This reminds one of the word magic practiced in certain primitive cultures: if a tribesman does a forbidden thing he constantly cries aloud that he is doing the Good and Rightful, thus hoping to fool the Gods. The current cry for Justice and Truth seems to be a related phenomenon; here also word magic replaces coping with the real world. (Digging at the Roots or Striking at the Branches? By Louis Clair, *Politics*, October, 1946.)

Once, however, the categories of absolute morality have been established and capitalized, where then? *What are the consequences?* To live according to the precepts of this morality? But that is impossible, literally impossible. The moralist must live in *this* world, in capitalist society; he must still, like it or not, behave as a unit of a commodity-producing society. He may publish a magazine advocating absolute morality, but all the conditions of his act of publication—from the cost of printing to his ability to pay his contributors—are determined by factors which violate his absolute morality. He has only three choices: to *split himself*; to isolate himself; or to try to change the social conditions in which his dilemma is rooted. If he chooses the last, then he must become a politician; and no politician of *any* sort ever has, ever can or ever will be able to function according to absolute morality.

Apart from the fact that this tendency leads to an impasse for social activity, it leads to something perhaps as unattractive: unlimited banality. Thus Dwight Macdonald, the man who went from Karl Marx to Paul Bunyan, discovers—hold your breath!—that people in big cities are unfeeling and calloused, that in fact cities are too big and that men should *never* hurt each other. If Macdonald urges men to turn the other cheek to society, his co-thinker, Paul Goodman, urges men simply to ignore society. Goodman tells people to stop working for wages, to quit their jobs when they find their work uninteresting. He neglects to mention how people are to eat and feed their children if they follow his advice, but then no thinker can be expected to make his system *completely* foolproof.

The whole matter was once summed up to perfection by Dwight Macdonald before he departed from this world:

The essence of reactionary politics is to try to get people to behave in a class society as though it were a classless society, i.e., to stop "playing politics." (My emphasis—I. H.)

Psychology as a Substitute

While the turn to religion is an atavistic reaction, the recent absorption in psychoanalysis by American intellectuals is a more complex phenomenon. Without question Freudianism is one of the major achievements of modern culture. We may accept as significant contributions to our understanding of human life Freud's broad insight into human behavior while rejecting his sociological by-products. (His specific clinical procedures and methods of therapy should be evaluated *only* by specialists.)

The recent glazed fascination with which American intellectuals have turned to psychoanalysis is, however, not merely an alert reaction to a powerful theory; it is that, but it is also

something else. For if the turn to religion involves an atavistic reaction, then the recent fascination with psychoanalysis involves a *distention* of materials. In the attempt to make psychoanalysis serve where politics presumably failed, a number of its less cautious converts have *distended the discipline beyond its proper limits*.

This distention takes two forms. First, the exorbitant claims made for a theory which is essentially a hypothesis for *individual* therapy and neither a *Weltanschauung* nor a method of social analysis (e.g., the uncritical analogical theory of "mass neurosis" of the German people). Secondly, though less tangibly, the evident element of morbidity with which the theory is espoused, its use not as a challenging tool for self-understanding but as a haven from responsibility and action. The human being becomes a passive and prostrate victim unable to act or react.

The most extreme distention of psychoanalysis is at present practiced by the political followers of the analyst, Wilhelm Reich. Proceeding from the most admirable motives, Reich's writing is immersed in a thoroughly revolutionary spirit which rejects the capitalist status quo. In his book on fascism, Reich displays a historical sense not often found among orthodox Freudians: he attempts a correlation between political authoritarianism and sexual suppression which is suggestive if not conclusive. Yet the basic political effect of his writings, whatever their value for therapeutic practice, is to provide a plausible rationale for the flight from politics.

Reich develops a theory of sexual fabianism: he sees the authoritarian structures of capitalist society leading to a destruction of orgasmic potency among its citizens. From this theory he concludes that before people can become genuine revolutionists they must first restore their orgasmic potency; otherwise any revolution would merely perpetuate in new guise the authoritarian structure of the past and inhibit the development of free sexuality and the creative potentialities of mankind.

Even if we accept the hypothesis of an intimate correlation between political authoritarianism and sexual suppression, there does not at all necessarily follow its converse: that the achievement of sexual freedom will make people into, or is an indispensable prerequisite for people becoming, revolutionists. As has been remarked by critics of Reich, the tyro of the bedroom is not necessarily the hero of the barricades . . . and vice versa.

In the meantime people attracted to Reich's views, especially their popularization by his enthusiastic followers, find a rationale for political abstention: they must achieve orgasmic potency *first*, and one doesn't do that overnight, you understand. . . . To justify this abstentionism, they raise the hoary question: how can a party of neurotics (substitute believers in violence, immoral people, etc., etc.) make a really liberating revolution unless its membership is first sexually liberated?

How, in the light of this question, past revolutions were accomplished—revolutions which certainly fulfilled the social tasks necessary and possible for them (the great French, the Cromwellian, the American, the Russian)—the Reichians do not explain. They are forced into the dilemma either of denying historical validity to all previous revolutions or of asserting that the parties leading these revolutions were composed of unneurotic, orgasmically potent individuals.

Reich has explicitly repudiated socialist political movements, which he sees as perpetuating the present authoritarian

structures. He *calls upon* the proletariat to liberate itself sexually. Whether this liberation is possible under capitalism and *why capitalism is so bad if it is possible*—these problems confront the Reichians. Is it not evident then that, whatever its value for therapy, this theory is a sexual variant of that school of absolute morality which insists that the individual must save himself before he can try to change society? Whether the call be to attain the True and the Good; or to find the Only God; or to achieve sexual freedom, the result is the same: the substitution of individual redemption for social revolution. Men are told what to *be*, not what to *do*. And how palatable is this substitution for those in flight from politics!

The Vogue of Existentialism

The breathless adoption of existentialism by a number of American intellectuals is a striking instance of their desperate *quest for novelty*. They are not really interested, with honorable exceptions here and there, in its philosophical aspects, for the appeal of existentialism is as a mood rather than a doctrine. One must therefore differentiate between the philosophical school which has behind it a considerable history and the current Paris-New York vogue. Whatever the philosophical implications of existentialism—on which I am not in a position to comment—it seems that they are hardly such as to warrant all the excitement that it has provoked in American intellectual circles. Nor does one discern in existentialism proposals for human behavior or social action sufficiently radical or new to warrant so much excitement.

I have neither the desire nor the training to offer here any sort of exposition or criticism of existentialism.* But while refraining from such presumption, I think it is not too risky to say a few words about the existentialist *tendency* in so far as it is related to the contemporary intellectual flight from politics.

The reason for the current existentialist vogue is not a sudden interest in its attempt to upset traditional philosophical edifices; not, that is, in existentialism's views on the traditional epistemological and ontological systems. Existentialist philosophers have attempted to deny the relevance of ontological problems as traditionally formulated—something which should be familiar enough to American intellectuals not to cause too much excitement.

The immediate importance of existentialism seems rather social and psychological: it accurately and *dramatically* portrays the moods of an entire generation and it extrapolates these moods from their social matrix by constructing them into a set of attitudes with which to counter the conditions from which they arose. In the hands of the French writers who are currently the most prominent exponents of existentialism, the theory is largely a matter of developing *attitudes to life* (what the man in the street often believes philosophy to be) rather than dealing with the usual philosophical problems.

In the view of its proponents, the human being is different from all other beings in that he possesses self-consciousness, he is able to feel concern about his own being and he must therefore always be aware of his unavoidable and possibly

imminent death. For this reason his most fundamental attitude to life is "anxiety." As a keen critic of existentialism, Paul Keschemeti writes: "In 'anxiety' existence comes nearest to a complete and adequate understanding of itself, because anxiety contains in itself the most fundamental piece of knowledge that is given to man, namely, the knowledge that his existence is finite. It is bounded by death." This sense of the nullity of life as stemming from its finiteness is expressed by Sartre when he writes that "every existent is born without reason, perpetuates itself out of inertia, and dies fortuitously." To this acceptance of life as a journey from void to void, existentialism, at least in its French version, adds several other attitudes: man's true nature, his "authenticity," is most thoroughly developed when he squarely and fully confronts his "anxiety," which is life's fundamental *heightening* condition; the free individual is thrust into a "situation" not of his own making but he is always able to make a *choice* in his attitudes and actions and thereby possesses the freedom to "engage" himself. Camus, a writer associated with the existentialists though not strictly speaking of them, adds the concept of rebellion as the basis of man's dignity for which the dramatic image is his myth of Sisyphus. He writes of Sisyphus, the symbol of man, that he "is the absurd hero. His scorn of the gods, his hatred of death, and his passion for life earned him the unspeakable punishment of his whole being being employed to achieve nothing."

The connection between these attitudes and the dilemma of the leftist intellectuals within the French resistance during the occupation—a dilemma of having to reconcile political resistance with a fundamental desperation and sense of desolate helplessness—is well known and obvious enough. But what I find most striking in these attitudes of existentialism is that, if taken more in terms of imaginative projections than as factual descriptions of human existence, they express as vivid *dramatic abstractions* precisely the dilemmas of the intellectuals who feel themselves to be the "powerless people." That the proponents of existentialism claim their generalized descriptions of *their own historically caused and limited* situation as a description of all human existence is merely an ironic footnote.

But I think it should be apparent that the obsessive concern with "anxiety" is the result of the historically provoked and *multiple* anxieties of contemporary life. Or that the preoccupation with death *per se* is the outgrowth of the terrifying domination of recent life by the *death-politics* of totalitarian society. One need not go too far back in history to show that men (as distinct from "man") have not always felt death to be the dominating fact of their lives; that at various times men have accepted their death as an event of not too great moment and certainly as an event which did not make their entire lives "absurd"—and this *after* the loss of belief in an after-life. One need only point to as recent a period as that after the First World War, when there was a great wave of revolutionary enthusiasm. It is impossible to imagine the attitudes of existentialism being as readily accepted then as they are today. (The one country, Germany, in which existentialism arose and gained some influence during the twenties was, significantly enough, the most deeply wracked by the capitalist crisis in Europe.)

If we remain skeptical of existentialism's dramatic abstractions as valid descriptions of life "in general" (because we are skeptical of *any* descriptions of life "in general"), we must still recognize that existentialism mirrors in conceptual terms

*The best brief account of existentialism of which I am aware is in an article by Paul Keschemeti in the March, 1947, issue of *Modern Review*. Other references are: William Barrett's pamphlet, published by *Partisan Review*, which discusses mainly Heidegger, an existentialist codifier; Hannah Arendt's scholarly but difficult article in the Winter, 1946, issue of *Partisan Review*; and Jean Paul Sartre's fragmentary "Existentialism," published by Philosophical Library.

the "alienation" of the modern intellectual. Existentialism seems to me essentially a reflection of a period of social defeat and decay. (Sartre's doctrine of "engagement," while it stresses the need of making choices does not yet prove the need for taking action.) It too tells man what to be, not what to do; it is a symptom of our times, related, though indirectly, to the flight from politics.

* * *

I have tried to chart briefly a few of the directions of the flight of the contemporary intellectuals from politics. Once these tendencies are understood, there is little more to say except this: We are living in the midst of a terrible cataclysm, the disintegration of a putrescent society. And the tendencies which have been described here are the result of this disintegration: the collapse and surrender of the human intelligence before the terrors of our times.

But if the intellectuals flee from politics, politics pursues them relentlessly. Ultimately they cannot escape it. Yet it seems reasonably certain that with one or two exceptions and surprises none of the older intellectuals (those who reached their maturity in the thirties) can be expected to resume any sort of active or close relationship with the socialist movement. If the road away is a smooth and gentle decline, the road back is uphill and rocky.

What then will happen when the depression bursts in a few years? Some of the intellectuals will succeed in providing themselves with relatively comfortable cushions to soften the fall; others will lose their marginal jobs and seek out the equivalent of WPA if there is one. But the younger intellectuals of tomorrow, those who are still in college or beginning their work—what about them? Here we can expect a genuine revolutionary ferment, a political rebelliousness which may result in a new leftward trend.

It is to this group that we look forward with some hope for a new flowering of revolutionary intellectuals. We cannot expect that so accomplished or brilliant a group as gravitated to Marxism in the thirties will appear in the near future. But we can work with small beginnings: we can try to build the kind of movement which is sympathetic to the needs and problems of young intellectuals and which by its democratic nature and its lively and undogmatic attitude to ideas will be able to attract them. It is in such elements—one can already discern the first dim signs of their appearance—that we can find a counter-influence to the current flight from politics, a flight which is perhaps the last chapter in the history of a generation of American intellectuals.

IRVING HOWE.

Political Program for South Africa

Conclusion of a Series

The following article is the third and concluding political section to the article "The Plunder of South Africa" which appeared in the July and August issues—Editor.

Freed from the crippling fetters of segregation, color-bar discrimination and race oppression, the non-European masses would rise from their knees to their feet.

Segregation is the life-force of imperialist rule in South Africa, for in segregation is expressed the nature of the national oppression imposed by the mining oligarchy and the semi-feudal farmers on the non-European people. The alienation, the brutalizing and dehumanization of man which capitalism breeds all the world over is factually expressed in the system of segregation in South Africa. It has imposed a grim wardenship over the non-European peoples' lives, whereby the white ruling class tormentors batter and deform their black victims, daze them with their display of superior brute force and violently deny them any fundamental democratic or even human rights.

The ruling class theory of allowing the non-European peoples to "develop along their own lines" of separatism and segregation is no more than a means of obtaining and exploiting non-European cheap labor for the maintenance of the imperialist colonial gold-mining civilization and agrarian economy to the total exclusion of the needs and cravings of the non-European majority.

Segregation is the cement which fuses national oppression with an intense class oppression. Therefore the struggle against segregation is the struggle against the basic core around which is built imperialist domination. The struggle

against segregation demands a revolutionary transformation, striking at every vital part of the economic, political, social and cultural life built by imperialist domination.

That is why to challenge the whole colossus of the segregation structure, a colossus of mass resistance must be organized with a program to batter at every bastion of oppression. First and foremost it must be an anti-imperialist, anti-segregation program. The component elements of the program are:

1. *The Struggle Against Imperialism*: In its broad outline the struggle is to break the death-grip of imperialism over South Africa, to gain the right of national self-determination for the non-European people, who, the leading force of all the oppressed (of the white worker, too), can thereby free the country from the yoke of British imperialism. The struggle for the expulsion of British imperialism, for the expropriation of its economic and political overlordship and the overthrow of its local tools and agents is the spearhead of the assault which must strike at every branch of oppression.

The struggle against imperialism involves breaking the stranglehold monopoly of the Chamber of Mines, unleashing the onrush of industrial development, creating thereby an internal market with which to bridge the gap between European and non-European and lifting both to new peaks of development. Freed from imperialism, South Africa will move out of the vicious net of the British Empire, escape the toils of its predatory wars, the burdens of defense for all its bloody crimes and slave colonies in the Middle East, India and the rest of Africa. The struggle against British imperialism will add its weight to the complete and final liquidation of the British Empire. It will also express the determination of the oppressed people of South Africa to free itself from the bloody

capitalist hell, to strike its own blows against the imperialist powers in their insane drive to atom-blast humanity and reduce our planet to elemental chaos.

2. *The Struggle Against Segregation*, concretized in the following manner: The main slogan must be for full democracy. The struggle for democratic rights, the pivot of which is the right to vote, aims to propel the non-European masses into political consciousness, into an awakening and an awareness of themselves as active political fighters with the right of holding their destiny in their own hands. They must imprint their mark on the political future of South Africa.

The terrible repression which crushes the lives of the Africans in particular and the non-European masses as a whole must be fought on the most decisive front—the political one. Every section of the ruling class—United Party (Chamber of Mines government party), Nationalist (Afrikaans landowners' party), supported by labor (white worker aristocrats) and liberals, are all firmly united and resolved in their determination to exclude permanently the non-European masses from independent intervention in the political life of the country. Because of the unchallenged and supreme control of state power in the hands of the European ruling class, every local or national industrial or agrarian struggle is thoroughly beaten down. The common lack of full political rights has leveled out the non-European masses into a politically enslaved nation.

Therefore the struggle for democratic rights is aimed point-blank at the ruling class power.

The struggle for democratic rights has been a revolutionary struggle throughout modern history. It will and must be a revolutionary struggle in South Africa, too, for it is in the backward and colonial countries most particularly that the struggle for democratic liberties against the reactionary foreign imperialist conqueror and its local agents takes on its most irreconcilable and acute form, which challenges the very existence of the ruling class state power.

It is the task of the non-European toilers today, as the leaders of the vast continent of African oppressed, in this last stronghold of unbridled imperialism and unchallenged white arrogance, to battle for the democratic revolution.

The demand must be for unhampered universal suffrage, for all men and women, of any race or color, for the right to elect as their representatives any candidates irrespective of race or color, and for the establishment of a Constituent Assembly as an instrument of the movement for freedom from imperialism; for the achievement of full equality between European and non-European; granting all the oppressed masses the fundamental right to determine the type of state power they want to set up. An integral part of the program for democratic liberties is the right of freedom of movement (away with all passes), freedom of the press, speech, assembly, complete freedom of trade union organization, the right to strike, inviolability of person and for an end to police terror; full equality for all citizens without distinction of race, color, sex and the total abolition of every form of discriminating color legislation in industry, agriculture and social life; the extermination of all racialistic abominations.

Linked to this struggle for democratic liberties is the struggle for the agrarian revolution, for the overthrow of imperialism, since national liberation is the struggle for the everyday interests of the workers against capitalist exploitation, for the organization of the agricultural laborers against serfdom and slavery on European farms. Today limited to

the simplest and most pressing demands, the struggle will grow in magnitude and intensity with the upsurge of the national struggle to the most far-reaching socialist solutions.

The tasks of the bourgeois democratic revolution can be realized only in the dictatorship of the proletariat as the leader of the millions of oppressed peasants and agricultural laborers, in the transition to socialism.

But to raise the non-European peoples of South Africa to the heights of political consciousness necessary to carry out these indispensable tasks, they must be assembled in one unit and begin to feel and to conceive of themselves as a living historical force. This colossal task of coalescing all the oppressed masses in struggle against the ruling class can be undertaken and achieved at the present stage of their development only through a unity movement of all non-European groups for national liberation.

The National Liberation Movement

The full weight of the balance of power hangs so completely in the scales of the white ruling class (making South Africa comparatively one of the most stable areas of imperialist rule) and against the non-European toilers, because together with all the forces of repression and oppression at its command it is also a thoroughly organized political machine and, although split up into two rival sections, both United Party and Nationalists are conscious of their aims to maintain an iron police grip on their slaves, to spread and maintain division in the ranks of the oppressed. For this purpose it has all the facilities of an iron controlled press, radio, church, etc., to dupe, deceive and poison the consciousness of the masses.

The effect of this power has been not only the enslavement of the body but the chaining of the consciousness of the non-Europeans, their feeling of impotence and subservience before the combined might of the ruling class state.

The white rulers have propagandized the non-European peoples to the effect that they are an inferior and backward race, that they have not the mental ability to equal their rulers, that they are not fit to have any voice in their government and that they are toiling slaves and must remain so. All these hammer-blows are rained so tellingly upon them because they have no means of retaliation, because they have no political leadership that will hurl back the defiance of eight million people against these vicious slanders, these *herrenvolk* stupidities, because they have no mass organization to give strength to this defiance and to retaliate, because their seething hopes and strivings for human and national recognition have not yet been made fully articulate.

On the order of the day is the political organization and mobilization of the non-European masses. Opposed to the force of the ruling class, the thrust of millions stirred to political activity can make the at present ever so firm monopoly of power in the hands of the white ruling class crumble to dust.

The preponderance of political and economic power on the side of the imperialist ruling class has up to the present further been assured by the general division between European and non-European workers (the policy of divide and rule) and by the atomizing of the non-European toilers into three separate camps graded in slight variations of oppression by skin and color and set one against the other by racial myths injected by the ruling class.

The African people have already been reduced to the lowest levels of human existence. When introducing the new In-

dian ghetto bills. General Smuts said: "I think we have decided: I think South Africa [i.e., the ruling class—R. S.] has decided once and for all that our complex society will be dealt with on separate lines. We have done it in the case of the natives and we are going to do it in the case of the Indians." (House of Assembly, March 25, 1946.) The colored people already have their colored Affairs Council and now it is their turn to be robbed of their few last remaining rights and to be placed in their own "separated" camp.

This is the ruling class plan to maintain, in the words of that strutting imperialist hypocrite and pious slave-driver, General Smuts, another three hundred years of white supremacy. This plan must be smashed to fragments.

The most vital task facing the non-European people in South Africa, a task which must be tackled before any shake-up of the present-day political equilibrium is possible, is the merging of these three streams into one sweeping torrent under the banner of a revolutionary national liberation movement. Dropping the separatism which has been fostered by imperialism, fighting against all segregationists in the ranks of the oppressed, all non-Europeans must unite on the basis of a unified aim of national and class liberation. This unity movement is not an anti-white movement, but an anti-segregation movement. It must open its ranks to all the oppressed, including all European workers who have broken with the European *herrenvolk* ideology. In fact, the challenge of a politically organized non-European national movement is the only way the European worker can be forced to break his alliance with the ruling class.

The Africans are a race of toilers, while the non-European people as a whole, in spite of the small clusters of Indian merchants and other petty bourgeois groupings, are composed in an overwhelming majority of exploited workers, tribalist peasants and agricultural slaves. In view of this, the movement for national liberation can only be an organization of the toilers of town and country. It must be a bloc of all the oppressed classes, the workers in the towns, the agricultural laborers on the farms, the reserve dwellers, all joined together in a struggle for national and social liberation. In this bloc the restricted and controlled African worker, the more free Indian and colored worker, occupying the most strategic positions in the national economy and concentrated by the very process of capitalist production, must form the class base and supply the pressure for the national liberation movement. Joined by an intelligentsia united in thought and feeling with all the oppressed masses, these toilers must take into their own hands the solution of all the national and social tasks of the non-European people, to liquidate the barbarism and poverty and primitiveness imposed by the European ruling class.

The Present-Day Political Setting

The tempo of non-European political consciousness and development is increasing. The despotic segregation system is caught in the shackles of its own contradictions and is being assailed by its self-generated elemental forces. In the towns the mass influx of Africans from the starving reserves, the deserters from the barbarity of white-owned farms have spilled over in the form of squatter movements and camps numbering hundreds of thousands, demanding in struggle the right to remain in the town and the right to houses and land. The mine-workers' strike of August, 1946, was a revolt against the greatest economic power in the land and its policy of cheap black labor, and the gunfire of this strike reverberated throughout the land. It led to the adjournment of the government-

sponsored Native Representative Council, with demands for a radical revision of native policy, which, in the absence of mass support and mobilization, has deadlocked both government and Native Representative Council. But the issue today is spreading among the masses of Africans in the form of an embryonic movement for equal political rights and a boycott of all the sham forms of "native" representation created by the white ruling class.

The Indian passive resistance campaign with its mass arrests and world publicity has also been a blow shaking the Indian and non-European people, although it is at the moment petering out in Gandhist pleas to the ruling class to carry out the meaningless decisions of the UN.

Among the colored people, too, the movement toward non-collaboration with the ruling class has been manifested in the anti-Colored Affairs Council and in the traditionally conservative African People's Organization, leading to a desire for non-European unity.

But all these currents of opposition are still isolated one from another. The general political movement is still fragmented and chaotic, rising spontaneously and falling into passivity, lacking cohesion and a clearly defined program and leadership. The existing important national organizations like the African National Congress, the Indian National Congress, are reformist organizations working within the framework of the segregation structure and opposed to real unity. The African trade unions have been weakened and made impotent by a combination of government repression and opportunist leadership.

But controlling and overshadowing all these organizations stands the Communist Party, the agency for Stalinist totalitarianism in South Africa, using the struggle of the non-European peoples to support every new turn and twist of Soviet foreign policy. Their support of the imperialist war destroyed the chances of the non-European people to enter vigorously into the political arena and disoriented their political development. Today, following Stalin's policy of embarrassing British imperialism, they divert any mass struggle into the morass of reliance on the impotent and hollow UN decisions. Afraid of a surging mass movement they stand out against the real unity of the masses in one organization and with a united anti-imperialist, anti-segregationist program and struggle. They represent the chief obstacle and are the main enemy in the unfolding of a mass revolutionary movement for national liberation.

This necessity for a mass-based national liberation movement will, however, break through all the barriers imposed on it by both the ruling class enemies and the CP-dominated misleadership. The whips of economic crises and the increasing tension between the needs of the people and the reactionary rigidity of the ruling class will lash the non-European people into such a national movement. Their very future and existence depends upon its formation. But to achieve this and guide it in struggle, a party based on an advanced revolutionary theory and practice must be organized to fuse with the awakened masses.

This program can be formed only on the foundation of revolutionary Marxism, as developed in the ranks of the Fourth International. But an important necessity is the active support of the international working class. At present the internal forces for a revolutionary upheaval are still undeveloped. The crushed non-European masses require active help from the more powerful working class movements abroad.

The British workers must denounce the inhumanities perpetrated by the financial magnates and monopolists of The City. Today American capital intervenes in the economic life of South Africa to support and reap profits out of the super-oppression of the non-European people. It is opportune for the American working class in general and for the Negro toilers in particular to stretch out a hand of solidarity and to intervene in protest against these conditions.

The plight of the non-European people must be made

known, not through imperialist organizations like the UN, but through the ranks of the working class and oppressed colonial peoples throughout the world. Backed by these protests and concrete signs of support and drawing encouragement from the revolutionary struggles against imperialism in the metropolis and the colonies, the incipient non-European national liberation movement will expand and rise to the strength necessary to wage a successful struggle for democracy, national liberation and socialism. ROBERT STONE.

ARCHIVES OF THE REVOLUTION

The Nature of the General Strike

Critical Observations by Leon Trotsky

We publish below an extract from an article written by Leon Trotsky on September 18, 1935, on the British Independent Labour Party and the Fourth International, under the title "In the Middle of the Road." The section deals with the question of the general strike, the part it should play in the activities of a revolutionary party and in the fight for socialist power. The article by Trotsky was written a dozen years ago and deals with the conception of the general strike as developed specifically by the ILP. Nevertheless, it is not only of universal interest but makes timely reading now. In recent times, the slogan of the general strike has been employed in various sections of the Fourth International with a thoughtlessness and looseness of which no serious Marxist could be guilty. Some groups, notoriously incapable of discerning the clear difference between Marxian politics and revolutionary phrasemongering, have converted the slogan of the general strike into a talisman for solving the problem of the present isolation of the Marxists from the masses and big political problems in general. Others, who have tirelessly immunized themselves against the teachings of Marxism, see in their belligerent advocacy of the general strike the mark that distinguishes them as the only authentic and authoritative revolutionists. Trotsky's comments on the slogan of the general strike reiterate the view of Marxism and should therefore help to eliminate the juvenile absurdities that have recently acquired a new popularity in the movement.—Ed.

In the following critical lines, we intend to dwell primarily upon two questions: the attitude of the ILP toward the *general strike* in connection with the struggle against war, and the position of the ILP on the question of the *International*. In the latter as well as the former question there are to be found elements of a half-way attitude: on the question of the general strike this hesitancy assumes the guise of irresponsible *radical phraseology*; on the question of the International, hesitancy pulls up short of the *radical decision*. And yet Marxism, and Leninism as the direct continuation of its doctrine, is absolutely irreconcilable both with an inclination to radical phraseology, and with the dread of radical decisions.

The Various Categories of the General Strike

The question of the general strike has a long and rich history, in theory as well as practice. Yet the leaders of the ILP behave as if they were the first to run across the idea of general strike, as a method to stop war. In this is their greatest error. Improvisation is impermissible precisely on the question of the general strike. The world experience of the struggle during the last forty years has been *fundamentally* a confirmation of what Engels had to say about the general strike toward

the close of the last century, primarily on the basis of the experience of the Chartists, and in part of the Belgians. Cautioning the Austrian Social Democrats against much too flighty an attitude toward the general strike, Engels wrote to Kautsky, on November 3, 1893, as follows: "You yourself remark that the barricades have been antiquated (they may, however, prove useful again should the army turn one-third or two-fifths socialist and the question arises of providing it with the opportunity to turn its bayonets), but the political strike must either prove victorious immediately by the threat alone (as in Belgium, where the army was very shaky), or it must end in a colossal fiasco, or, finally *lead directly to the barricades*." These terse lines provide, incidentally, a remarkable exposition of Engels' views on a number of questions. Innumerable controversies raged over Engels' famous introduction to Marx's *The Class Struggle in France (1895)*, an introduction which was in its time modified and cut in Germany with a view to censorship. Philistines of every stripe have asserted hundreds and thousands of times during the last forty years that "Engels himself" had apparently rejected once and for all the ancient "romantic" methods of street fighting. But there is no need of referring to the past; one need only read the contemporary and inordinately ignorant and mawkish discourses of Paul Faure, Lebas and others on this subject, who are of the opinion that the very question of armed insurrection is "Blanquism." Concurrently, if Engels rejected anything, it was first of all, *putsches*, i.e., *untimely* flurries of a *small minority*; and, secondly, antiquated methods, that is to say, forms and methods of street fighting which did not correspond to the new technological conditions. In the above quoted letter, Engels corrects Kautsky in passing, as if he were referring to something self-evident: barricades have become "antiquated" only in the sense that the bourgeois revolution has receded into the past, and the time for the socialist barricades has not come as yet. It is necessary for the army, one-third, or better still, two-fifths of it (these ratios, of course, are given only for the sake of illustration), to become imbued with sympathy for socialism; then the insurrection would not be a "putsch," then the barricades would once again come into their own—not the barricades of the year 1848 to be sure, but the new "barricades," serving, however, the self-same goal: to check the offensive of the army against the workers, give

the soldiers the opportunity and the time to sense the power of the uprising, and by this to create the most advantageous conditions for the army's passing over to the side of the insurrectionists. How far removed are these lines of Engels—not the youth, but the man 73 years of age!—from the asinine and reactionary attitude to the barricade, as a piece of “romanticism”! Kautsky has found the leisure to publish this remarkable letter just recently, in 1935! Without engaging in a direct polemic with Engels, whom he never understood *fully*, Kautsky tells us smugly, in a special note, that toward the end of 1893, he had himself published an article in which he “developed the advantages of the democratic-proletarian method of struggle in democratic countries as against the policy of violence.” These remarks about “advantages” (as if the proletariat has the freedom of choice!) have a particularly choice ring in our day, after the policies of the Weimar democracy, not without Kautsky's cooperation, have fully revealed all their . . . disadvantages. To leave no room for doubt as to his own attitude on Engels' views, Kautsky goes on to add: “I defended then the self-same policy I defend today.” In order to defend “the self-same policy” Kautsky needed only to become a citizen of Czechoslovakia: outside of the passport, nothing has changed.

But let us return to Engels. He differentiates, as we have seen, between three cases in relation to the political strike:

1. The government *takes fright* at the general strike, and at the very outset, without carrying matters to an open clash, takes to concessions. Engels points to the “shaky” condition of the army in Belgium as the basic condition for the success of the Belgian general strike (1893). A somewhat similar situation, but on a much more colossal scale, occurred in Russia, October, 1905. After the miserable outcome of the Russo-Japanese War, the Czarist army was, or, at any rate, seemed extremely unreliable. The Petersburg government, thrown into a mortal panic by the strike, made the first constitutional concessions (*Manifesto*, October 17, 1905).

It is all too evident, however, that without resorting to decisive battles, the ruling class will make only such concessions as will not touch the basis of its rule. That is precisely how matters stood in Belgium and Russia. Are such cases possible in the future? They are inevitable in the countries of the Orient. They are, generally speaking, less probable in the countries of the West, although, here too, they are quite possible as partial episodes of the unfolding revolution.

2. If the army is sufficiently reliable, and the government feels sure of itself; if a political strike is promulgated from above, and if, at the same time, it is calculated not for decisive battles, but to “frighten” the enemy, then it can easily turn out a mere adventure, and reveal its utter impotence. To this we ought to add that after the initial experiences of the general strike, the novelty of which reacted upon the imagination of the popular masses as well as governments, several decades have elapsed—discounting the half-forgotten Chartists—in the course of which the strategists of capital have accumulated an enormous experience. That is why a general strike, particularly in the old capitalist countries, requires a painstaking Marxist account of all the concrete circumstances.

3. Finally, there remains a general strike which, as Engels put it, “leads directly to the barricades.” A strike of this sort can result either in complete victory or defeat. But to shy away from battle, when the battle is forced by the objective situation, is to lead inevitably to the most fatal and demoralizing of all possible defeats. The outcome of a revolutionary, insurrectionary general strike depends, of course, upon the rela-

tionship of forces, covering a great number of factors; the class differentiation of society, the specific weight of the proletariat, the mood of the lower layers of the petty bourgeoisie, the social composition and the political mood of the army, etc. However, among the conditions for victory, far from the last place is occupied by the *correct revolutionary leadership, a clear understanding of conditions and methods of the general strike and its transition to open revolutionary struggle.*

Engels' classification must not, of course, be taken dogmatically. In present-day France not partial concessions but power is indubitably in question: the revolutionary proletariat or fascism—which? The working class masses want to struggle. But the leadership applies the brakes, hoodwinks and demoralizes the workers. A general strike can flare up just as the movements flared in Toulon and Brest. Under these conditions, independently of its immediate results, a general strike will not of course be a “putsch” but a necessary stage in the mass struggle, the necessary means for casting off the treachery of the leadership and for creating within the working class itself the preliminary conditions for a victorious uprising. In this sense the policy of the French Bolshevik-Leninists is entirely correct, who have advanced the slogan of a general strike, and who explain the conditions for its victory. The French cousins of the SAP (Socialist Workers Party of Germany, a Brandlerite split-off from the CP) come out against this slogan; the Spartacists who are at the beginning of the struggle are already assuming the role of strikebreakers.

We should also add that Engels did not point out another “category” of general strike, exemplars of which have been provided in England, Belgium, France and some other countries: we refer here to cases in which the leadership of the strike previously, i.e., without a struggle, arrives at an agreement with the class enemy as to the course and outcome of the strike. The parliamentarians and the trade unionists perceive at a given moment the need to provide an outlet for the accumulated ire of the masses, or they are simply compelled to jump in step with a movement that has flared over their heads. In such cases they come scurrying through the back stairs to the government and obtain the permission to head the general strike, this with the obligation to conclude it as soon as possible without any damage being done to the state crockery. Sometimes, far from always, they manage to haggle beforehand some petty concessions, to serve them as figleaves. Thus did the General Council of British Trade Unions (TUC) in 1926. Thus did Jouhaux in 1934. Thus will they act in the future also. The exposure of these contemptible machinations behind the backs of the struggling proletariat enters as a necessary part into the preparation of a general strike.

The General Strike as a Means “to Stop War”

To which type does a general strike belong which is specially intended by the ILP in the event of mobilization, as a means to stop war at the very outset (Cf. “What the ILP Stands For,” a compendium of the basic party documents)? We want to say beforehand: it pertains to the most inconsidered and unfortunate of all types possible. This does not mean to say that the revolution can never coincide with mobilization or with the outbreak of war. If a wide-scale revolutionary movement is developing in a country, if at its head is a revolutionary party possessing the confidence of the masses and capable of going through to the end; if the government, losing its head, despite the revolutionary crisis, or just because of such a crisis, plunges headlong into a war adventure—then the mobilization can act as a mighty impetus for the masses,

lead to a general strike of railway men, fraternization between the mobilized and the workers, seizure of important key centers, clashes between insurrectionists and the police and the reactionary sections of the army, the establishment of local workers' and soldiers' councils, and finally, to the complete overthrow of the government, and consequently, to stopping the war. Such a case is theoretically possible. If, in the words of Clausewitz, "war is a continuation of politics by other means," then the struggle against war is also the continuation of the entire preceding policy of a revolutionary class and its party. Hence follows that a general strike can be put on the order of the day as a method of struggle against mobilization and war only in the event that the entire preceding developments in the country have placed revolution and armed insurrection on the order of the day. Taken, however, as a "special" method of struggle against mobilization, a general strike would be a sheer adventure. Excluding a possible but nevertheless an exceptional case of a government plunging into war in order to escape from a revolution that directly threatens it, it must remain, as a general rule, that precisely prior to, during and after mobilization the government feels itself strongest, and consequently, least inclined to allow itself to be scared by a general strike. The patriotic moods that accompany mobilization, together with the war terror, make hopeless the very execution of a general strike, as a rule. The most intrepid elements which, without taking the circumstances into account, plunge into the struggle, would be crushed. The defeat, and the partial annihilation of the vanguard, would make difficult for a long time revolutionary work in the atmosphere of dissatisfaction that war breeds. A strike called artificially must turn inevitably into a putsch, and into an obstacle in the path of the revolution.

In its theses accepted in April, 1935, the ILP writes as follows: "The policy of the party aims at the use of a *general*

strike to stop war and at *social revolution* should war occur." An astonishingly precise, but—sad to say—absolutely fictitious obligation! The general strike is not only separated here from the social revolution but also counterposed to it as a specific method to "stop war." This is an ancient conception of the anarchists which life itself smashed long ago. A general strike without a victorious insurrection cannot "stop war." If, under the conditions of mobilization, the insurrection is impossible, then so is a general strike impossible.

In an ensuing paragraph we read: "The ILP will urge a general strike against the British government, if this country is in any way involved in an attack on the Soviet Union. . . ." If it is possible to forestall *any* war by a general strike, then of course it is all the more necessary to stop war *against the USSR*. But here we enter into the realm of illusion: to inscribe in the theses a general strike as *punishment* for a given *capital crime* of the government is to commit the sin of revolutionary phrasemongering. If it were possible to call a general strike at will, then it would be best called today to prevent the British government from strangling India and from collaborating with Japan to strangle China. The leaders of the ILP will of course tell us that they have not the power to do so. But nothing gives them the right to promise that they will apparently have the power to call a general strike on the day of mobilization. And if they be able, why confine it to a strike? As a matter of fact, the conduct of a party during mobilization will flow from its preceding successes and from the situation in the country as a whole. But the aim of revolutionary policy should not be an isolated general strike, as a special means to "stop war," but the proletarian revolution into which a general strike will enter as an inevitable or a very probable integral part.

LEON TROTSKY.

The 4th International and the Saar

A Reply to Some Critics

The following appeal to the people of the Saar was issued by the International Secretariat of the League of Communist-Internationalists (Bolshevik-Leninists) on the eve of the 1934 plebiscite to determine the national affiliation of the Saar. The Treaty of Versailles had placed the Saar under the jurisdiction of the League of Nations with the provision that a plebiscite be held at the end of twenty-five years to determine whether the territory would be joined to Germany, France, or remain under League control.

While the political control of the Saar was nominally exercised by the League of Nations, the real authority was wielded by the French government. The latter had been awarded the right to exploit the rich economic resources of the Saar as indemnification for the war-time destruction of French industry. Rapacious French imperialism exercised this right to the hilt. It not only sought to wring each last sou from the territory, but waged a consistent and pernicious campaign to "Frenchify" the population. The aim of the latter activity was to achieve a

pro-French majority that would facilitate the permanent incorporation of the Saar into France.

The French policy in the Saar brought a distinctly hostile response from its overwhelmingly German population. With the exception of a tiny group of propagandists in the pay of the French, all political tendencies among the German population of the Saar campaigned for the return of the Saar to Germany. This demand received equally vigorous support from the Communist Left and the Nationalist Right and was espoused by all parties in between, including the Social Democrats and the Catholic Center Party. Seldom had a population been so united in support of a national demand.

However, in 1933, a year before the plebiscite was to take place, the catastrophe of Hitler's ascension to power took place. The emergence of a regime in Germany which condemned its political opponents to concentration camps required that the anti-Nazis in the Saar re-examine the slogan of "Back to Germany." The international Trotskyist movement, under the guidance of

Trotsky, was one of the first organizations to call upon the Saar proletariat to change the direction of its struggle. Trotsky revealed in this situation, as in so many others, a complete freedom from the fetishism of outlived formulas so frequently encountered among Marxists. Trotsky discarded the traditional Marxist approach that called for support to the slogan of "Back to Germany!" on purely national grounds. Trotsky subordinated the national element in this situation to the demands of the class struggle and worked out the position in favor of status quo, i.e., continuation of League of Nations' rule. Since the latter was but a thinly disguised form of French imperialist rule, Trotsky's position, in effect, was to call upon the Saar population, nearly 100 per cent German, to vote to remain under French domination. The aim of this position, of course, was to vote for the slow poison of French bourgeois democratic rule as against the immediate bullet of the Nazi murderers. The following appeal is written from this point of view.

The document has current importance for

two reasons. The first was highlighted by a recent polemical exchange between our periodical and one Ernest Germain, leading candidate for the mantle of theoretician of the Fourth International, on the subject of Trieste. In support of our position that the workers of Trieste should favor incorporation into Italy as against rule by Tito's political police, we made reference to the example of Trotsky's position on the Saar. As in the latter instance, the most important factor in Trieste was not the national composition of its population, but the opportunity to gain a breathing space for the proletariat under Italian bourgeois democracy, a breathing space in which the revolutionary forces could be reassembled and united with those of Italy in a struggle for a revolutionary solution. Germain's reply to our reference to the Saar in this connection leaves little room for further polemical exchange since the theoretician of the Fourth revealed himself totally ignorant of the facts in the Saar dispute. We ask those readers interested in this polemic to read Germain's remarks in the February, 1947, issue of the *Fourth International*. Such a reading, in the light of the document we reprint below, will substantiate our charge that Germain launched a vicious reply to us on the issue of the Saar without first acquainting himself with the position held by the international Trotskyist movement at the time. That he may differ with Trotsky's position of 1934 is, of course, his right. But the minimum conditions he must first fulfill is to acquaint himself with what he disagrees.

The document on the Saar has current importance for another season. World War II has changed both the map of Europe and its political relationships. All information from the Saar indicates that a powerful movement exists among the inhabitants for immediate affiliation to the French Republic. Some correspondents claim that this movement is supported by the overwhelming majority of the Saarlanders, including the Social Democratic party and the trade unions. This situation raises a new problem for the international Marxist movement. The document we reprint will also contribute to the discussion of this new Saar question.—E. E.

The date of the referendum is set. Everyone is now inexorably faced with the question of the decision. Only a few more months separate you from the fateful hour in which will be decided for some time to come whether you are to have at least a meager possibility of struggling against exploitation and oppression or whether you are to be completely subjected to the bloody yoke of German fascism.

For the Status Quo!

When we, as Communists, call upon you today to vote for the status quo; when we call upon you today to come out fearlessly and unhesitatingly for this slogan, it is not because we regard the present situation in the Saar as ideal and final, but because we do not equivocate because we answer the question as it is posed in actuality and because it seems to us beyond any doubt that this referendum contains to some degree the possibility of protecting yourself against fascism, the worst scourge for all toilers and oppressed.

We are for the status quo; although we

are far from considering your present masters, the League of Nations, as an instrument of peace but regard it as a tool of imperialist foreign policy. We are for the status quo purely for reasons of expediency because we consider it our duty to spare the people of the Saar all that they have seen for the last year on the other side of the border: unbridled terror, mass corruption, pogroms against the Jews, military drill, spiritual devastation, racial insanity, forced labor, ever increasing starvation and need, and danger of inflation.

The workers refuse with thanks the freedom which the lackeys of Thyssen and Roehling will give them.

Since the revolutionary possibilities have been lost for a long time through the utter failure of the Social Democratic party and the Communist party of Germany, it is absurd to advocate return to the Reich. We scorn the attitude of those cowards who join the "German front" through fear, that is, those who give themselves up to Hitler voluntarily and thus commit suicide because of fear of death.

The decision will not be reached on the day of the Referendum! We warn you beforehand of the following grave illusion. The decision will not be reached by the vote on the day of the referendum. The result of the referendum is entirely dependent upon how successful you will be beforehand in freeing your countryman from the spiritual and physical pressure which they experience at the hands of the Nazis.

Extra-Parliamentary Struggle for the Improvement of Living Conditions and Democratic Rights!

Only if the population of the Saar sees that the working class is ready and capable of breaking the Nazi terror in extra-parliamentary action, only if the proletariat of the Saar sees that the fighters for the status quo are at the same time fighters for the improvement of the living conditions of the toiling masses who are ruthlessly exploited by the present régime; only if you succeed in retaining, during extra-parliamentary actions in time of preparation, freedom of association, assembly and press,—only then will it be possible to secure a favorable outcome in the referendum.

No Effective Struggle without a United Front!

The prerequisite for carrying out all these actions with sufficient force is that all organizations which are for the maintenance of the status quo, for the defense against the Hitler terror, enter into a solid fighting front on the basis of a concrete program. Through the stupidity and the intrigues of the various bureaucrats an enormous amount of precious time has been lost. But the fighting alliance must finally come into existence under penalty of defeat. Do not tolerate for one minute longer the sabotage of the United Front. This sabotage is a direct service to Hitler!

Organize a Militia Against the Nazi Terror!

You must not content yourself with joint meetings, demonstrations and even strikes but must organize a militia which will take over the defense against terroristic acts of the Nazis. No one will help you if you do not help yourself. The "impartiality" of the police is already assured. The League of

Nations will not help you if you do not help yourself.

In complete consonance with its whole past the social democracy has been consoling you with the League of Nations while it has at the same time sabotaged the united front. The League of Nations plays the same role in dampening the fighting spirit of the masses in the Saar that Hindenburg played in Germany. Place no trust in these illusions! Close ranks! Act on your own initiative!

The C.P.G. under the influence of the laudatory speeches of Roehling, sowed the greatest confusion. At first they stood unconditionally for return to Germany, then they spouted hollow phrases about a Soviet Germany, and finally, in the last hour, came out for the status quo. The C.P.G. had also completely sabotaged the establishment of a united front and thereby prepared for a defeat as in Germany. You are, therefore, faced with the task not only of building a united front but of creating a new revolutionary party under the banner of the Fourth International for the struggle against fascism.

United Front of all Anti-Fascists!

Both old parties have now finally taken the position of the status quo. There is not another minute to be lost. No excuses will avail now. Irrespective of how fundamentally irreconcilable reformism and communism are, these must immediately make an alliance for the status quo. Only thus can the hesitant ones outside of the working class be attracted to it. When they see that even the workers cannot establish a fighting united front, how can they decide to join the struggle for defense?

Hitler Can and Must be Defeated!

In the coming months the eyes of all Europe will be riveted on the Saar region. Hitler can and must be defeated! Provided that the working class rallies to the struggle in the last hour and pursues correct tactics. No state, no treasury, only the workers can save the Saar!

* * *

For the first time in the Saar region—since national socialism has shown itself, no longer in theory and in criticism, but as an instrument of hunger and war preparations (of a war that is bound to hit the Saar territory especially hard) of murder and corruption, national socialism is put to a referendum which offers at least a trace of freedom. How great this freedom will be depends on the militancy the workers display before the referendum. This means:

Hitler must and can be defeated!

His defeat would be a triumph and a signal for anti-fascists of all countries! His victory would be a success for fascism in the whole world! A great task is entrusted to you, toilers of the Saar! Your efforts and your sacrifices will help not only yourself but millions of others!

We, therefore, call not only on all our sections but on the workers of all countries to follow the events in the Saar with the greatest attention and with the utmost solidarity and to support the Saar at the opportune moment by actions against Hitler's fascism.

The task of defeating Hitler must be solved, it can be solved and it will be solved!

Hitler must and can be defeated!

Do not be frightened by the terrific array of influence, corruption, lies, threats, flattery of the brown bloodhounds. For them too it is a question of prestige. Do not let yourself be lulled to sleep by their monstrous lies and provocations! Do not let yourself be duped by forests of swastika banners. Many of those who live under the present regime will vote for the status quo—only under one condition: that you stand together, that you fight, that you, too, put into motion the power which you command! After the defeat no crawling will help against the bloody fate! It is better to perish in struggle than to be slaughtered without struggle. Vienna is better than Oranienburg! But you do not have to perish. You still have enough time to fight.

Do not forget: Hitler must and will be defeated!

DISCUSSION ARTICLE

Colonial Questions Today

Resolution of the Chinese Trotskyists

The following draft resolution was presented for discussion in the Fourth Internationalist movement by the Communist League of China (Internationalist). So far as we know it has not yet been published anywhere else. The resolution, while extremely short so that there is little elaboration of its views, is important for the way in which it considers the role of China in the 2nd World Imperialist War. Adherents of China's war against Japan in the years preceding the World War, the Communist League withdrew its critical and independent support to the Chiang Kai-shek regime when the war against Japan lost its character as an anti-imperialist struggle and became part of and subordinated to the interests of the big imperialist power bloc.

The Communist League of China, we learn, had a vigorous dispute over this question. A minority, which advocated continued support to Chiang after China had become the junior partner and captive of the Big Three, split from the League, while the official organization pursued the political course contained in the following resolution.

Interestingly enough, though the Communist League of China and the Workers Party were separated by thousands of miles and had no contact whatever with each other, both arrived at the same point of view on China's war with Japan through the two stages of its development. In this respect, we differed sharply from the position of other Fourth Internationalist organizations, and in particular, the Socialist Workers Party, which continued to proclaim their support to Kuomintang China after it had long ceased to carry on an independent, anti-imperialist struggle against Japan.

A language difficulty arose in the publication of this resolution. Our Chinese comrades, not thoroughly familiar with our language, nevertheless wrote their resolution in English,

When you have beaten Hitler you can set before yourself other tasks of the class struggle!

For the maintenance of the status quo!

For the democratic rights of the working class!

For higher wages and better living conditions!

For the United Fighting Front of all labor organizations!

For the building of workers' militia against fascist terror!

For socialism and the final victory of the proletariat!

INTERNATIONAL SECRETARIAT
of the League of Communist-
Internationalists)
(Bolshevik-Leninists)

Geneva, June 6, 1934

knowing the difficulties involved in obtaining Chinese translations. We have made some minor language changes to make the resolution more readable without changing a single thought of the document—Editors.

1. Basing itself on the experiences of the national movements in various colonial and semi-colonial countries during the past twenty years, and especially that of the 1925-27 revolution in China and China's anti-Japanese war from 1937 to 1945, the World Congress of the Fourth International considers the following special decision should be made on the colonial emancipation struggle and the colonial anti-imperialist war.

2. The national emancipation movements, led by the "national" bourgeoisie of colonial countries, can assume a genuine progressive character only when the masses participate in it, and only when the participating masses enjoy full freedom in propaganda, organization and action. These movements can become "a part of the world revolution," assume a revolutionary character and guarantee a victory only when the leadership of these movements is transferred into the hands of the working class.

Without these above-mentioned conditions, the bourgeoisie "emancipation movements" of colonial countries, when not reactionary, are, at least, devoid of progressive meaning. The Fourth Internationalists of the respective countries

should not take an attitude of unconditional support toward these movements. On the contrary, they should mercilessly expose the falseness and uncover the reactionary motives (to "fight" external foes only to keep the internal enemies, the toiling masses, in servitude) of these movements and at the same time appeal independently to the masses, calling upon them to arise, in order to carry on by their own means a genuine movement of emancipation against imperialists and native oppressors.

The Fourth International, therefore, not only discards the Stalinist policy of helping the "national bourgeoisie" to take the lead of the "movement of emancipation" but also discards the lifeless formula of rendering *unconditional* support to *all* national movements led by the bourgeoisie.

The Fourth International is in duty bound to remind all revolutionists of the following fact, that the slogans, "national independence" and "national emancipation," had been utilized more than once by Chiang Kai-shek and the Chinese bourgeoisie as the best pretext and the most powerful weapon in suppressing and butchering the Chinese workers and peasants.

The formula of "*unconditional*" support to *all* national emancipation movements, therefore, must be abandoned. The Chinese workers and peasants have paid a very dear price for this lesson.

3. The anti-imperialist wars (the continuation of national movements) led by the colonial bourgeoisie, in like manner, have not been and will not invariably be progressive under any condition and at any time. Their character should always be decided by internal and international factors. Internal: if the war were waged with the price of terrible oppression of native workers and peasants, then, although it seems to play an objectively progressive role in fighting against an imperialist power, but is in fact impotent, then in essence, in the sense of the emancipation of workers and peasants from enslavement, it is still reactionary. International: if the war were carried on as a war between a colonial country on the one side, and an imperialist power on the other, then it is progressive; but if the war were, or finally became interlocked with, a war between two imperialist powers, and became thereby a part of the imperialist war, as "the interference of a slave in the fight of his masters" (see the *History of the Russian Revolution*, by Leon Trotsky, English edition, p. 38), then it

has lost the progressive meaning which it had originally.

The Fourth International, while giving support to the colonial war which is progressive, should, at the same time, declare that it would withdraw its support to these colonial wars which had become reactionary, that is, degenerated into a part of the world imperialist war.

Needless to say, the above position is first of all concerned with parties of the Fourth International in colonial countries. So far as the Fourth International parties in the imperialist countries are concerned, the correct position they should take is to fight *unconditionally* against any war waged by their "own" country against colonies, regardless of who and how the war on the part of the colony is directed, and with what imperialist rival it is interlocked.

4. Toward the bourgeois-led anti-imperialist war of a colony, especially semi-colonial countries, the correct attitude which should be taken by the Fourth Internationalists must be in strict accordance with the direction made by Comrade Trotsky during the Sino-Japanese war: to participate in the war, but maintain complete independence of action and policy; continue to prosecute the class struggle during the war, so that in time, when strength and circumstances permit, to transform the political opposition to military opposition in order to overthrow the ruling bourgeoisie and establish the proletarian dictatorship (L. T.'s letter to Diego Rivera).

This policy is applicable to all stages—whether progressive or reactionary—in the development of an anti-imperialist war in colonial or semi-colonial countries. But in different stages, the way in which our policy is applied, is, of course, different: when the war is objectively progressive, the basis for our policy is that the ruling class is not qualified to lead the war; when the war becomes reactionary, then our policy is based on the ruling class conducting a reactionary war.

Thus, in colonial or semi-colonial countries taking part in an anti-imperialist war, the Fourth Internationalists should impose upon themselves the revolutionary task of conquering power, just as in imperialist countries during an imperialist war.

May, 1947.

BOOK REVIEW

The Anti-Hitler Plotters

TO THE BITTER END, by Hans Bernd Gisevius. Houghton-Mifflin, Inc. 1947. Translated by Richard and Clara Winston.

It is rare indeed to find a work of contemporary history which succeeds in bringing to life the great drama of the tragedies of our time. The book, *To the Bitter End*, by the German oppositionist, H. B. Gisevius, is such a work; it is both a brilliant picture of the dynamics of the Nazi regime, its leadership and opposition, and a completely convincing analysis of the work and problems of the anti-Nazi elements within Germany.

I believe that this book will be the primary source record of the Hitler opposition for the historians. Certainly no one else was in the position of Gisevius and alive to tell the story. The author was an integral part of the leadership of the military and civilian junta who were actively opposed to Hitler; an intimate of Beck and Goerdeler, the two leading figures of the opposition; and at the same time a man of letters who has carefully recorded the history of that movement.

To the Bitter End is a long book, as is befitting the history of a revolutionary movement. Fortunately, unlike the histories of most defeated revolutions, Gisevius has provided us with the materials for the most detailed study of that revolution and the opportunity to check all the theories and speculations of the Marxists and liberals in the days before the Hitler defeat.

The most striking aspect of this history of the opposition is that it deals almost exclusively with the role of the German generals. No doubt some liberals and vulgar Marxists will raise the cry that the history is therefore inadequate; that since the working class is not discussed at any great length and its role in the opposition to Hitler dismissed very lightly, Gisevius thereby ignores the role of the only viable class in modern industrial society.

This document proves that Hitler's fascism succeeded in accomplishing the complete atomization of the German working class. Trotsky's warning, in answer to the smug complacency of the school typified by Manuilsky's "After fascism, we come," has been proved true. Fascism did mean the destruction of all the working class organizations. The old unions had no existence, legal or illegal. The working class parties had been destroyed. The underground committee of the Social Democrats was little more than a loose, tenuous and undisciplined circle. The underground committee of the Communist Party, riddled at its very top with agents of the Gestapo, played no active role and at its strongest, represented nothing more than the potential power of a bargaining agent for the Russians.

Fascism meant that the German workers

were unable to accomplish their own revolution. The unquestioned leadership of the German military men demonstrated that the German workers found it impossible to play ANY organized role, let alone that of the leader in the struggle against Hitler.

Role of Army

For most of the Hitler decade, the army was the only force in Germany that was never completely taken over by the Nazi party bureaucracy. The army's tradition, organization and prestige proved sufficient to resist integration at the top by the Nazi's, and in large measure, in the lower ranks as well. The dramatic story of Goering's failure in his attempt to take command of the army through the now well known frame-up of the general, Fritsche, and the Blomberg scandal, are examples of the army's resistance to Nazi integration. Germany was an example of the Bonapartist role that can be played by the army when the working class, for whatever the reason, fails to play the role history has cast for her. The fact that the army did not play this role does not disprove the point; Gisevius furnishes us ample evidence to demonstrate that on different occasions, the generals could have succeeded in making themselves masters of the state.

At each crisis in Hitler's rule, the distinct possibility arose of the army's deposing the Nazis. We learn of the frequency of these crises, of the remarkable indecision and weakness at the top of the state. Why then did the conspirators, among whom were the most important figures in the German military machine, fail to accomplish this end? They failed at each crisis and at the very end, the tragic attempted putsch of July 20, 1944, when they headed a conspiracy supported by all the authoritative anti-Nazi civilian figures, their failure cost them their lives at the hands of the Nazis.

The military men opposed Hitler primarily because they were convinced all during the Thirties that he was leading the nation to a war that could only end for Germany in complete and disastrous defeat. This was reason enough for many of them consistently to oppose Hitler's policy before and after Munich; for General Beck to resign his position as head of the army; further, at a later stage, for many of the most important men in the machine to act treasonably in attempted collaboration with emissaries of the Allies. This was part of their policy to bring the war to a quick end at almost any terms before the material superiority of the Allies would bring the country to her knees. Gisevius' revelations here are of the highest importance.

If we can accept the word of the man praised by the chief of the U. S. Office of Strategic Services as thoroughly reliable

and one who was probably the most important witness for the prosecution at the Nuremberg trial, we now have confirmation that the Allies were aware for the last five years and more of Hitler's rule that the bulk of the army leadership was opposed to him. We know now that the Allies turned a deaf ear to the pleas of the German oppositionists and refused to collaborate with them. The reasoning that justified their use of the atom bomb over Nagasaki and Hiroshima, but denied themselves the "moral" right to deal with the German oppositionists is quite revealing. We are justified in drawing the conclusion, if Gisevius does not, that Roosevelt and Chamberlain and later Churchill, feared the possible consequences of local disturbances in Germany so much that they preferred to continue the war rather than risk that eventuality. Another consideration of the Allies was their constant hope and even conviction that Hitler would turn and concentrate Germany's military power upon Russia. A revolution in Germany would have removed that possibility.

Why They Failed

Why did the conspiracy of the generals fail? Given their powerful motives and the strong material forces at their disposal, the answer of the Hitler "mystique" is thoroughly unsatisfactory. The Hitler popularity was not a mystical quality. It was grounded in the successes and failures of the regime. After the victory at Munich, the easy triumph over Poland and after the occupation of Paris, Hitler's prestige was high. The generals would not and could not oppose the seemingly invincible figure of the Fuehrer. But after defeats and the worsening of the military and the material situation, the mystique was mysteriously missing. All of the elements for decisive action were present.

Gisevius' limitation is that at each crisis and consequent failure of the opposition, he sees their collapse as the result of the failure of nerve and of character. The fact of the failure of nerve and character is true. With the exception of Beck, the leading military men were spineless and cowardly figures who drew back each time when the moment for decisive action came. One general after another within the conspiracy revealed the same traits at each emergency.

But to leave the answer at this does not tell the whole tale. The pattern of the generals' behavior is a constant refrain of this book. We can draw the only conclusion; that this was not a wholly accidental variation of history.

Beck was the exception, the only one who was able to break from the lifetime habits and training of the military school. And we should point out that by the outbreak of the war, Beck no longer held any official position in the army. It was part of the pattern of the lives of the officer caste that they should find it impossible to take decisive revolutionary action. To commit themselves irrevocably to steps which might lead to social disturbances and disorder was almost organically impossible for men who spent their lives in the training of the professional German army. It was not inevitable that the military men could not actually overthrow totalitarianism; we can say that it

was highly unlikely that in such a situation more than one Beck could appear from the ranks of the Junker officers.

We can state as a fact that in Germany, the training, old habits and convictions of the generals proved too strong for them to overcome. Their "character" was molded by their life's work; this was the Achilles heel of the generals' revolution.

The role of the dictator within the totalitarian system is here outlined very clearly. From the moment that Hitler took power, his principal task was that of maintaining a balance between the different forces within the totalitarian regime. Oppositions took new forms. Such fundamental forces within the country as the different and often conflicting sections of the bourgeoisie, the clergy, the lower middle class, peasantry and the working class, were no longer represented by the old legal parties, unions, trade associations and church organizations, but found their representation within the figures and tendencies of the Nazi party and state. From the forces of the left represented by such figures as Roehm to the forces of the right as typified by Schacht, every one was involved in the rivalries within the regime itself. Hitler was an adept opportunist, ever shifting the weight of the forces he led.

The complete inability of totalitarianism to solve the military, economic and social problems of the country was the reason Hitler was never able to achieve real stability and was the essential reason why at the end decisive forces within the regime took mili-

tary action against the Fuehrer. Hitler's role as the eternal opportunist, never certain of stability and unable to permit any of the members of his Cabinet to achieve too much power, is a forcible reminder of the weakness of the totalitarian regime, even when it appears to be all-conquering. The nature of totalitarianism in Germany was extremely deceptive; its strength was apparent, but the deep-going weaknesses and cleavages were hidden from most of the world.

This section of the book causes automatic speculation about Soviet Russia. The note in the August 29, 1947, issue of the New York Times reporting the self-exile into France of the Chief of the General Staff of the Russian occupation forces in Germany is one of the few pieces of evidence which have seen the light of day concerning the friction and struggle which may well be raging within the party and military bureaucracy of the Russian totalitarian state. As we now know was the case with Germany, we may be sure that the diplomatic representatives of the U. S. and England have far more concrete information on these struggles than have been permitted to be made public.

This book is a brilliant memoir and a valuable social document. It is rich in the factual material of the last days of Hitler's Reich and its evidence can serve to stimulate discussion on the all-important question of the dynamics of revolution under totalitarianism.

OSCAR WILLIAMS.

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