CAPITALIST BARBARISM OR SOCIALISM
By the International Communists of Germany

The New INTERNATIONAL

Editorials
The P.A.C. and the Elections

FIVE LABOR CONVENTIONS
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Articles on the "Russian Question" and the Critics of Marxism

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Editor’s Notes

As the reader will note, the study of our German Comrades, “Capitalist Barbarism or Socialism,” which we began to print in last month’s issue, is printed this month, complete from beginning to end, in a convenient special supplement. We considered this such a worthwhile contribution to the problems of Marxism today that we went to the extra expense involved in adding so many more pages to the usual thirty-two-page issue.

The publication of this document has left us less room for other material. We are therefore holding over for publication in the next issue or issues a number of articles of special interest. One is the long-delayed continuation of Karl Marx’s historic attack upon Herr Vogt. Another is a first contribution to a study of the latest fashion in politics—“mass psychology”—with special reference to one of its specialists, Erich Fromm. The article is written by a new contributor to The New International, Harris Warner. A criticism of the attitude of the Negro intellectuals toward the Negro problem in the United States constitutes the theme of a review by Freddie Forrest of the study of the American Negro question by the Swedish sociologist, Gunnar Myrdal. Ernest Lund has written an analysis of the relations and conflicts among Russia, England and the United States, with special reference to the “mysterious” Teheran Conference. The twenty-seventh anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution will also be commented on in a special article.

Crowded for space, and compelled to print only those articles which, like the reviews of the five trade union conventions, could not be postponed, we had to refrain most reluctantly from commenting on three of the most important questions of the day: Tragedy and Treachery in the Warsaw Uprising; the Liberation of Paris and the Prospects of France; and Allied Post-War Plans for the Demolition of Germany. Another article we were compelled, just as reluctantly, to hold over was an analysis of the situation in much discussed and little known Argentina, written by one of our comrades in Buenos Aires. Well, all these next month, too.

Finally, we plan another article on the Socialist Workers Party, which is now engaged in a “discussion” which is certainly one of the most curious—and most saddening, as we shall see—in the history of the Trotskyist movement. In view of the fact that the questions under discussion are of great concern to all revolutionists, both here and abroad, and the fact that in spite of this the discussion is not brought into the light of day (in accordance with a practice which the SWP calls, of all things! Bolshevism), a comment on the “discussion” in our next issue will prove interesting to our readers.

Because of the special value of the study of our German comrades, “Capitalist Barbarism or Socialism,” which is published as a supplement to this issue of The New International, we have decided to print an extra number of the supplement itself. Many readers will undoubtedly wish to obtain an extra copy for another friend or colleague. They will be available to all—first come, first served—who write to The New International, 114 West 14th Street, New York 11, N. Y. Price per copy of the special supplement, postage included, is twenty cents.
The P. A. C., the Elections and the Future

On September 25, President Roosevelt opened his campaign for a fourth term. He had chosen to speak to the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, Chauffeurs, Warehousemen & Helpers of America. Not only in the choice of the occasion for his opening speech but also in what he said, the President recognized the significance of labor in modern society. In the course of the speech, he defined three main tasks: (1) the winning of a speedy victory. The speed of the victory, he implied, was necessary in order to relieve the strain and burdens upon the masses of the people. (2) Setting up an international machinery for the keeping of the peace. This also was the unanimous demand of the great body of the workers. (3) Reconversion. All his hearers understood him to mean such a transference of production from the needs of war to the needs of peace that the great body of the workers would not suffer unemployment. It was a proposal of the workers, for the workers, to the workers, but by the President.

President Roosevelt, however, claims to represent not only the workers but all classes in the community. The New International considers itself the representative, first and foremost, of the interests of labor. Our policy for many years past has been the traditional Marxist policy of no support to capitalist candidates in the presidential elections. Let us examine the professions of the President and see how far any proposal, analysis or explanation that he makes should cause any class-conscious worker to support him.

A speedy victory is his first aim. But, for that matter, it is impossible to see what change in the military plans of Eisenhower, MacArthur, of Nimitz and the rest will take place if, for example, Roosevelt is replaced by Dewey. Both of them will continue to urge that speedy victory depends upon the continuance of the no-strike pledge. Both will conduct the military administration with due regard to oil in the Near East, squeezing Britain out of Latin America, air supremacy against Britain, intrigues as to whether Germany should be de-industrialized for the benefit of American capitalism or leaving Germany some strength so as to be able to use her against a possible domination of Europe by Stalinist Russia. Both will continue to support the Badoglio and the most reactionary elements that they can find in Europe to suppress the aspirations for national independence and the "Four Freedoms" of the European peoples. Such has been Roosevelt's policy. Dewey might do it better, but we doubt it. And in any case, to the workers, it is not important.

The President's second point was the setting up of international machinery for peace. Here we have his own record in the past to go by. In 1916, Wilson had been reflected on the slogan, "He kept us out of war." Six months afterward, the United States was at war with Germany. In 1940, the people were deeply suspicious of the course of action which the President had been following in relation to the European war. Therefore, on October 30, 1940, in a speech at Boston, Roosevelt reassured them as follows: "You mothers and fathers, I have said this before but I shall say it again, and again, and again: your sons are not going to be sent into any foreign war."

For our part, this October the President can say again and again (any number of times he pleases) that he proposes to set up international machinery for the preservation of peace. We tell the people of the United States that Wilson led us into the last war, Roosevelt lied us into this one. And twenty years hence another capitalist President, if such unfortunately still exists, will lie us into the third. Roosevelt's record on the war allows no one to trust him on the peace. In 1937, in the Chicago speech, he shouted the challenge to Japan that the "aggressor" should be quarantined. He telegraphed to Hitler and Mussolini in 1938 asking them to accept the compromise of Munich and sent congratulations to the Munich men. When the war actually began, his policy of economic sanctions, of lend-lease, of exchange of destroyers for military bases—all these, carefully calculated to lead the American people into war, were presented as measures which were to keep us out of war. Lenin called the first League of Nations a "thieves' kitchen." History is now proving it in the blood and suffering of countless millions. Dumbarton Oaks is only another League. There is no international machinery of imperialists which can prevent imperialist war and Roosevelt knows it.

The third question is the question of reversion. Senator Truman, Vice-Presidential nominee, has written for the CIO News of October 9 that "to achieve full production and jobs for all, we must have planning, national planning." Yet so far, with the end of the war in sight, no plan has come from all the multitudinous bureaus, agencies, commissions, committees, etc., of the government. We deny that capitalism can plan full production and eliminate unemployment. But what we point out here is the fact that no plan has been placed before the workers by which they can judge of the intentions, such as they are, of the Roosevelt Administration. The President claims that by the New Deal he restored the country to prosperity. The consequences of the New Deal were that after eight years we still had ten million unemployed in the country. Owing to the development of the productive capacity during the war, the contradiction between the possibilities of production and the consumption of the people on a capitalist basis is today infinitely wider than it was in 1940. Yet Roosevelt has told us emphatically that the New Deal is dead. If the New Deal is dead, then what deal does he propose now? Nothing. For the workers to spend their strength, their energy, their money in supporting Roosevelt is merely to encourage these capitalist politicians in the brazenness and impudence with
which election year after election year they continue to deceive the American people.

"I Can Do It Better"

But perhaps Dewey, the Republican candidate, has a positive program. Let us see. Arthur Krock, Washington correspondent, summed up the campaign of Dewey and his tactics so far in the New York Times of September 24. The headlines of the article tell the whole story. Here they are:

“DEWEY TACTICS IN RACE CONFUSE HIS BACKERS
“Politicians in Capital, Anxious for the Governor to Win,
Fear His Position Is Too Close to Roosevelt’s
“EXPECTED SHARP DIFFERENCES”

If the capitalist politicians and the capitalist press cannot find any substantial difference between Roosevelt and Dewey, it is a delusion for workers to think that there is any. In the article itself, Krock points out that Willkie in 1940 had no other program than that he could do "the same things better." In 1944, Dewey puts forward no program simply because he has none. That's all.

This is what explains the course of the campaign. Having no program, Dewey, as the "attacker," has had to concentrate his attack upon irrelevant superficialities. Thus, according to Dewey, what is wrong with the country is that the Administration consists of old, tired, quarrelsome men. Put into office young, vigorous, amiable men and we shall have international peace, jobs and security. He declares, dramatically, "It is time for a change." On this, we agree. But it turns out that Dewey's great change would consist chiefly of restoring to the White House its reputation for truth-telling and integrity. The aim is worthy. But, first of all, it is difficult. The only remote connection which we can make between the White House and truth is the statement by the first President that he cut down the cherry tree, but, sad to relate, historians are now in general agreement that this story is a fabrication. In any case, truth from the White House would demand the President's saying that he had no plan for curing unemployment and insecurity. We do not expect this from Roosevelt. But we do not expect it from Dewey either. The bankruptcy of the two capitalist parties in face of the great problems which confront the United States stands revealed. For the workers to support the one or the other is not only to encourage them in their pernicious politics; it is to take responsibility for the crimes that they have committed in the past, and the chaos, misery and disasters of the future.

What, then, must the workers do?

The course of the election itself gives a clear indication of the correctness of the policy which we have been advocating for many years past.

The distinctive feature of the present election is the emergence of the Political Action Committee as the political reflection of the CIO inside the Democratic Party. Roosevelt and the Democratic politicians are aware of the importance of the PAC for a Democratic Party victory. But the bourgeoisie as a whole is united in its condemnation of this organization because it recognizes that the PAC is a stage in the development of labor as an independently organized political party in the country. This bourgeois condemnation is only to be expected. What is disgusting is the attitude of some so-called socialists and friends of labor, such as, for instance, Louis Waldman, candidate of the Socialist Party for the governorship of New York in 1928, 1930 and 1932. In the Saturday Evening Post of August 26 he states that while labor has the right and "many liberals believe the duty" to take an active interest in politics, the idea of a political junta delivering the labor vote "is repugnant to American psychology." He concludes: "Such a political machine is dangerous enough in the right hands; in the wrong hands, it might become a positive menace to the public welfare and more difficult to defeat than any machines Republicans or Democrats have ever built." Out of the mouth of this hanger-on of the bourgeoisie, now terrified at the vision of a successful Labor Party, have come words of great wisdom. That is precisely what we have been urging and shall continue to urge—the organization of a powerful independent Labor Party which will be infinitely more powerful than any party the Republicans or Democrats have been able to build in the past.

All those who fear the power of labor are now busy trying to prove that an independent Labor Party is contrary to the history, the tradition the political practice, the psychology, of the American people, and therefore inimical to the interests of labor itself. This is just a lot of lies and nonsense. In No. 60 of The Federalist, Alexander Hamilton analyzed the principles of representative government which made the founding fathers in their preparation of the Constitution of the United States. The aim is worthy. But, first of all, it is difficult. The bankruptcy of the political bodies which administered the country and represented according to their strength. But in 1788 there was no organized labor interest. Now, today, we have in this country some thirteen million or more organized workers. They represent the labor force of this country, some sixty million people, the very bedrock and foundation of American civilization. When they hold their conventions, politicians of every stripe swoop down upon them to try to instruct them in what is their duty because their decisions are of fundamental interest, not only to the country as a whole but to the world at large. The President opens his presidential campaign at a gathering of union workers. No important political or social step is taken in the country without consulting the wishes and aims of labor by those who for good or ill are supposed to represent them. It is dinned into their ears from all sides that the American democracy is the greatest democracy in the world.

In 1944 labor has dared to form a political organization within one of the capitalist parties, to see that the interests of labor are represented in the political councils of the nation in the same way as, in 1786, the specific interests of those days were represented by political organizations. Forthwith from one end of the country to another, all writers, politicians, publicists, newspaper editors and what-not, seek to assure labor that this exercise of its democratic rights in full harmony with the economic and social developments of the time, is completely opposed to the ideas and principles of American democracy. Not only that. By means of the Smith-Connally Act and the Hatch Act, even those Democratic politicians who are reaping the benefits of the semi-independent organization of labor in the PAC, seek to cripple, obstruct and hinder this reaching out by labor to its own independent political status. No power on earth can prevent the emergence of an independent party of labor in the United States. In every great European country, the necessities of capitalist production
compelled the workers to organize themselves on the industrial plane and then, politically, as an independent party. Even in backward and autocratic countries, such as Spain and pre-revolutionary Russia, labor organized itself in a politically independent form. Such a development is inevitable in the United States, the most capitalist of all countries. Hillman has delivered the CIO vote to the Democratic Party. But in the minds of the great bodies of workers who support the PAC, this organization, for them, is a means, as Hillman himself has said, "of implementing labor's program to meet its needs and those of the entire nation." For the moment, the masses of the workers who follow the PAC do not quite see the necessity or the possibility of constituting themselves into an organization that repudiates not only the Republican but also the Democratic Party itself. We, however, see it. And we consider it the first necessity of those who see this clearly to prepare the workers for it, not only by urging them to repudiate both the bankrupt capitalist parties in words but also to do so in action, by refusing to support them in this or any other election and devoting all our strength and energy to the creation of an independent Labor Party, either by transformation of the PAC or by any and all other means which the historical and political development may present.

It is just here, however, that the Stalinist Communist Party is committing another of its great crimes against the American working class. Claiming to be the representatives of Marxism and of organized labor, yet at the present moment its whole energies are directed toward crushing the emerging aspirations of labor for its own political independence. If the leaders of the Republican Party are perfectly aware of the dangers which the PAC represents to capitalist society as a whole. In their concentration on the phrase "Clear it with Sidney," they seek to discredit labor organization, the populations of foreign descent, and to raise the specter of bolshevism and communism and socialism as alienisms. But the leaders of the Democratic Party also are perfectly aware of the danger of a PAC. The Southern Bourbons know that the rise of labor inside the Democratic Party means that the position of domination in Democratic councils which they have so long held is now threatened. The city bosses, particularly Kelly and Hague, know that the greatest threat to their corrupt rule is the independent organization of labor. Those cynical capitalist interests who support equally the Democratic and Republican Parties have viewed, not with rhetorical but with genuine alarm the numerous CIO leaders who came to the Chicago convention and the influence exercised at the convention by Sidney Hillman. Their difficulty is our opportunity. But this historical opportunity is to be gained not by truckling to or by threatening the Democratic Party but by the most uncompromising repudiation of it. We must use the opportunity of the election to demonstrate to the masses of the workers the terror of their opponents and the political power that lies in their hands for the taking. The bankruptcy of the two old parties is demonstrated in their lack of program. Labor, therefore, must not only organize itself independently, but must do so with a program. And this program must be a program for the social reconstruction of American society.

If there was any possibility for the capitalistic parties to present a program, we can be sure they would have done so. There is none. It is the war that saved the New Deal from a catastrophic bankruptcy. By placing before the American people a program which will strike at the very root of the social crisis, labor will be able to draw to it the Negroes, who, more than any other section of the population, are aware of the bankruptcy of both parties as far as their special problems are concerned. As the PAC has already shown in the South, labor will be able to draw into the democratic process for the first time in American history those millions of whites and Negroes whom the Southern Bourbon itself has been unable to include. It will be able to pull those millions of rank and file voters in the Republican Party who thought that they saw some solution to the problems of the country in the demagogic words of Wendell Willkie.

These are the perspectives of the labor movement. These possibilities have been posed in embryo by the mere emergence of the PAC, even though as a constituent part of the Democratic Party. The New International feels confident that the Marxist policy of no support to the capitalistic parties is more than ever justified by the existing situation. We urge all our supporters to seize this opportunity to devote their best energies to the clarification of the minds of the working class as to the great opportunities that are now presented to them.

The Workers Party has no candidate in this election, but its transitional program offers a basis for the rallying together of all the forces of labor and for organized labor to place itself at the head of the nine-tenths of the population who genuinely wish an end to the suffering and chaos of capitalist society imposed upon us all by the minority of property-owners and their docile political tools.


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

Before me, a notary public in and for the state and county aforesaid, personally appeared Albert Gates, who, having been duly sworn according to law, deposes and says that he is the coowner of The New International and that the following is, to the best of his knowledge and belief, a true statement of the ownership, management (and if a daily, the circulation), 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 Act of March 3, 1953, embodied in Section 537, Postal Laws and Regulations, printed on the reverse of this form:

1. That the names and addresses of the publisher, editor, managing editor and business managers are: Publisher, New International Publishing Co.; Editor, Max Shachtman; Business Manager, Mary Bell; all of 114 West 14th Street, New York, N. Y.

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ALBERT GATES, Coowner.

Sworn to and subscribed before me this third day of October, 1944.

JACOB P. RAUPHAN, Notary Public, New York County, New York County Clerk's No. 335. (My commission expires March 30, 1945.)
Five Labor Conventions: Politics Among the Auto Workers

One of the outstanding traditions of the American labor movement is summed up in the twin phrase, "No politics in the unions, no unions in politics." Of all the union conventions held this year, the annual convention of the United Auto Workers, CIO, at Grand Rapids was the best example of how this tradition has changed. It showed how far organized labor has gone, actually, if not formally, in discarding a view which, if it ever was valid, is nowadays most certainly obsolete and reactionary. From start to finish the convention was prompted by political thoughts, dominated by political considerations. That its political thinking was still in a primitive stage, that its political considerations did not correspond to its best interests, is another matter. It serves to define more exactly the character and scope of the change, but does not alter the fact that the change has taken place.

A good way to judge the fact is to examine the way the convention was divided. All three forces that could in any way be regarded as decisive or important had a predominantly political character. All of them had a political standpoint—how clear and systematic it was in their minds is secondary for the moment—from which they examined the problems before the union, and political considerations dictated the answers they proposed for these problems. The "pure-and-simple" trade unionism concepts with which Samuel Gompers inspired the old American Federation of Labor did not even have a ghost to represent them at Grand Rapids.

Three Forces at the Convention

To begin with, there was the Communist Party machine. It was far and away the best organized, the most conscious and deliberate and, from the standpoint of the mechanics of operation, the ablest of all three. Politically educated, it knew exactly what it wanted and how to realize an immediate goal as a step toward the main goal. It knew when to strike out and against whom, when to advance and when and how to retreat. It did not come to the convention as a haphazard assembly of individuals, but as a disciplined group prepared in advance not only by organizational measures but by a carefully thought-out program and plan of action calculated for all contingencies. All its actions, all its tactics, were intelligently subordinated to its main goal—the conversion of the labor movement into a political tool of the Russian Commissariat for Foreign Affairs.

The largest force was made up of the "native" union bureaucracy. It had none of the "positive" qualities of the Stalinist group. It is still in the kindergarten of the school of faction politics which the Stalinists long ago graduated to and to which they have added a good deal of postgraduate instruction of their own. It is divided against itself, not least of all by personal envy and bureaucratic rivalry. It ranges from its left wing—if that much abused term may be stretched several points—represented by Reuther, to its right wing, represented by Addes and Frankensteen, and includes such amorphous and indefinite quantities as R. J. Thomas and R. T. Leonard. What holds it together—to the extent that it does hold together—is a common opposition not to a bloc with the Stalinists (all of them have at one time or another made such blocs, some of them are still in a bloc, and some will continue to make a bloc), but to the rule of the union by the Stalinists. Not even Addes and Frankensteen would work directly and consciously for turning the union over to Molotov's subdivision of the Kremlin. To further their bureaucratic aspirations against such rivals as Reuther, they are not averse to collaborating with the Stalinists. When it comes to preventing a victory of the progressive rank and file, they positively glue themselves to the Stalinists. Which brings us to the second thing that holds the officialdom together: common opposition to the more forthright and progressive demands of a rising rank and file movement. Both these factors, in turn, are determined by the basic common characteristic of the "native" officialdom: it is the representative in the labor movement of Rooseveltism, i.e., of bourgeois reformism. This political characteristic dictates—in different degree with each of the "wings" and sectors and individual members of the officialdom—its attitude toward the Stalinists, on the one side, and the genuine progressives and left-wingers, on the other. This political characteristic also dictated its attitude toward all the important trade union questions at Grand Rapids.

The Rank and File Caucus

The third organized force was represented by the Rank and File Caucus, challenging the other two. Previous conventions of the UAW have also had rank and file militants, progressives, left-wingers. The Grand Rapids convention was a real milestone in their development and consequently in the development of the union itself. There the militants were organized, openly and consciously, for the first time. There the organized militants presented a program of their own for the first time, and fought for it in the convention. They no longer trailed along, exasperated but hopeless, behind the Reuther group, but decided policy for themselves and acted as an independent group.

The Rank and File Caucus was not a homogeneous group; much less was it a "monolithic" group, which is as it should be. Not all the elements in it were agreed on all the points in its program or agreed in the same way; not all of them saw the full implications of what they were fighting for. But the leaders, inspirers and organizers of the group were politically-conscious people. Among them were left-wing socialists and supporters of Labor Action. (We modestly note here, however, that both the Daily Worker and the New York Times gave us Trotskyists more credit for the splendid fight of the rank and file militants in the convention than we actually merit.) They understood that their fight, representing the urgent needs of the union, meant a break with Rooseveltism, a break with capitalist politics, with bourgeois reformism. The demand of the Rank and File Caucus program for rescinding the no-strike pledge was a demand for breaking the political agreement with the government by which labor was disarmed and straight-jacketed in face of the growing capitalist offensive. It was a demand that implied an end to the paralyzing dependence of labor upon the Roosevelt government and a resumption of the struggle in which labor would rely on its organized strength, that is, on its class strength. The same...
holds true of the demand in the program for withdrawing the labor representatives from the government's War Labor Board. This, too, was essentially a political demand, a political act. It is no accident that the program of the Rank and File group coincided with the proposal to organize an independent Labor Party.

Given the tremendous size of the convention delegation (some 2,300 of them), the time available for the convention business, and the manner in which the time was organized by the officialdom, it was not possible to bring to the floor and fight out clearly all of the important questions before the UAW. A god deal of the convention time was spent, and wasted, in the now customary flag-waving speeches on the war. Even more time was spent in speeches and parts of speeches to promote the candidacy of Roosevelt. Indeed, these two themes, especially the latter, were dominant throughout the important convention discussions. The political nature of the convention, and of the decisive problems facing the union, was constantly emphasized (and distorted) by every Stalinist who took the floor and by every spokesman for the officialdom's position: How will this or that affect the war? How will this or that action affect the war? How will it affect the election chances of Roosevelt? How will it affect the future of the Great New Deal on which our union was founded (lie), on which it was built (lie), to which we owe our advances (lie), on which we depend for our future (lie)?

The Delegates and Political Action

As a result of these things, plus the fact that the interest of the delegates was centered almost to the exclusion of all else upon the no-strike pledge, the convention did not have the opportunity to discuss seriously the question of independent political action. Roosevelt won in a walk. But even in their endorsement of Roosevelt and of the PAC, the delegates—we have pointed this out repeatedly about the labor movement in general—expressed their growing awareness of the decisively important fact that their economic interests, their class interests, are inseparably bound up with politics, political action. In the past, the kind of government we had was important, in the mind of the worker, to himself as an individual citizen. Hence "no politics in the union, no unions in politics." Now, the kind of government we have is important, in the mind of the worker, to himself as a member of a class organization, his union. Hence, the unions are in politics.

The horrified and outraged admonitions of the bourgeois press against labor, through the PAC, "introducing class politics" into the elections (our elections and our political life have never before followed class lines, you see), left no visible mark on the UAW delegates. Harold Ickes, astute demagogue; appealed directly to the "class prejudices" of the delegates in his speech to the convention. He regaled them with the list of munificent contributions made to the Republican Party by America's plutocracy and monopolists (lack of time undoubtedly prevented him from giving the corresponding Democratic Party list). He poured vitriol on those capitalist forces who would prevent labor from participating in the elections as an organized and distinct force (provided, of course, it supported his chief, Roosevelt). And the delegates cheered him passionately.

The fight over the no-strike pledge, which took up most of the time of the convention, was not so easy a victory for Rooseveltism or Stalinism. If the showing made by the militants was better at Grand Rapids than at any other of the important union conventions, it was due not only to the more advanced position generally taken by the automobile and aircraft workers but to the fact that the militants, while not perfectly organized, were better organized and prepared than they were anywhere else.

The clearest example of how the contending forces in the union acted according to their political lights is afforded by the fight on this question, which became the focal point of all the others.

The No-Strike Pledge Resolutions

The Stalinist resolution could serve as the text for a whole volume. Coolly ignoring their whole record during the period of the Hitler-Stalin pact as if it had existed only in a fevered imagination the Stalinists, along with other signers who probably did not understand what they had really signed, proposed to reaffirm the pledge on the grounds of unwavering support of the War for Democracy, the Commander-in-Chief, National Unity, the Interests of Labor and the Cause of Our Allies, one of which, they have noticed, is Russia. The resolution ended with a highly significant provision. Unexpectedly, it called for a review of the no-strike pledge after the defeat of Germany but before the defeat of Japan.

No doubt some of those who subscribed to this formula understood it to mean that a door was being left open for dropping the pledge in those industries that will go over to peacetime production when Germany is defeated. Our own view is that the formula, employed here by the Stalinists for the first time, is deliberately ambiguous. If it leaves open a door for dropping the pledge after Germany's defeat, then only in order to leave the Stalinists free to adopt a policy in line with the course that the Moscow régime will pursue toward the conflict between Japan and England-America.

Should Stalin find it expedient (on the basis of a satisfactory share of the booty of the Orient) to join in the fight against Japan, that will make it Browder's and Ganley's war, too, and the pledge will be maintained. But if Stalin keeps out because Roosevelt and Churchill do not offer Russia the share of the loot she wants, Browder & Co. may find it necessary to help change Roosevelt's mind by suddenly discovering that... labor has sacrificed enough of its rights, including the right to strike. In a words, the Stalinists at Grand Rapids acted on all "trade union questions" in accordance with their politics, that is, the politics of their Russian masters.

Most of the officialdom supported the all-out pro-pledge resolution of the Stalinists. Not one of them had enough political understanding to grasp the real significance of the CP resolution. They supported it as Rooseveltians. The Reuthers and a few others presented a typical resolution of their own, differing from the Stalinists' only in that it provided for the right to strike where a "reconverted" plant was involved. Attacked, and rightly, from both sides, it went down to the most miserable defeat of all.

What is interesting, however, is that when both pro-pledge resolutions were defeated, and the resolution to repeal the pledge, in spite of a remarkable show of strength (some thirty-seven per cent of the vote), met the same fate, the Stalinists and Thomas and Addes and Leonard and the Reuthers were able to unite in a panic on a simple motion to reaffirm the pledge.

The Reuthers separated again from the Stalinists on the question of a membership referendum. But even here, these most radical of Rooseveltians were true to their political line. They took care that the referendum take place only after the presidential election. Why? So that its outcome should not
alienate from Mr. Roosevelt the votes of the conservatives and labor-haters. Even on this "technical" point, politics decided.

That "politics," that is, political interests, political considerations, should be decisive in the labor movement, is not only unavoidable, but entirely good and proper. One of the leading militants in the Reuther group—and there are many there—complained to me confidentially that he was sick at all the political speechifying at the convention, sick of the talk that the union has no other way out but to vote for Roosevelt; that the union (he continued) was built by organized economic action and could only be restored to its fighting strength in the same way. The complaint was understandable and even warranted, but misdirected. It was warranted in so far as the Rooseveltian agents in the union presented support of Roosevelt as a substitute for the organized economic action of the workers. It was misdirected in so far as it did not allow for the necessity of directing this economic action and power along clear-cut independent working class political lines, with neither of them supplanting the other but rather fusing with the other. That is the right road. It is the only road.

The most hopeful sign in the UAW—and given its position in the country, this is as much as saying "the labor movement"—was the fact that the militants who organized the Rank and File Caucus understood this. At the very least, they understood enough of it to make a first-rate beginning. They challenged Rooseveltism, bourgeois reformism, subservience of the labor movement to capitalist politics, not only on the "economic" field but also on the political field. They understood that their job will last longer than a half-dozen convention sessions, and they acted on this understanding when they decided to build up the group on a nation-wide basis following the convention. This is precisely what militants have failed to do in the past, thanks to which the Stalinists and the other bureaucrats are still having a picnic in the union.

What the militants still lack in experience—and it is not inconsiderable—or lack in stature, they will acquire in struggle. A lot of that lies ahead. The political understanding of the militants who have organized the new rank and file movement is one of the most encouraging assurances that they will gain ground. Their progress will mean progress for the union itself and for the labor movement as a whole.

Max Shachtman.

Lewis Keeps Control in the Miners Union

The coal miners came together in Cincinnati early in September for their first meeting since the great strikes of 1943. At the time of the convention, despite the fact that the WLB had rendered its decision on the wage scale, including portal-to-portal pay, and the mines had been returned to their private owners, there were many grievances that had not been adjusted. There were back wages due. The question of mine safety and the passage of a federal mine safety bill was uppermost in the minds of UMWA membership. While the convention was in session a communication arrived telling that more bodies had been recovered from the Pohwattan mine in Ohio, where a most tragic "accident" had occurred.

Aside from these grievances the convention convened in the midst of a presidential campaign. The fact that Roosevelt was a candidate for re-election was in itself enough to make the November election a paramount issue. The miners came to Cincinnati bitter and convinced that this Administration had directly and deliberately attempted to wreck their union.

The Issue of District Autonomy

An equally important question was the autonomy issue which this year had been intensified through the activities of Ray Edmundson, formerly the appointed president of District 12 in Southern Illinois. This was really the first event of the convention that could be called a contest. Edmundson had resigned as the appointed president of District 12 and it was reported that he had gone back to work in the mines. He appeared at the convention, held a caucus of his forces and announced that he would withdraw as a candidate for UMWA president against Lewis if Lewis would consent to the restoration of autonomy to the twenty-one districts where today the president and secretary-treasurer are appointed.

I do not know all the facts nor the most important facts in connection with the Edmundson campaign. It is clear however, that it was in no sense a movement primarily to restore autonomy to the twenty-one districts. Two pages in The New International are not sufficient for any details in connection with this or other important questions, so only the barest outline can be given. There is every reason to believe that the autonomy grievance was seized on by anti-Lewis forces outside the union to wage a reactionary struggle against Lewis and the UMWA. Coal operators may have been involved. Roosevelt Administration forces were probably active in this alleged autonomy move. There is concrete evidence for the position that Browder's Communist Party Political Association had very jubilantly joined the Edmundson caravan and had as its representative the secretary of the committee, a miner from West Virginia.

Events at the convention confirmed any suspicions that one may have had in advance that this so-called autonomy movement had other purposes. Edmundson's right to his seat as a delegate was challenged. His eligibility was challenged on the ground that he had not worked in the mines during the period required by the union constitution. His right to a seat was challenged on the ground that he was not in good financial standing in his local. None of these challenges was accepted and no one rose in the convention, not even the secretary of the Edmundson committee, to defend Edmundson's right to a seat. It seemed clear that the "autonomy" movement had been initiated mainly as an anti-Lewis campaign and that the legitimate demands of locals for autonomous districts was used in a way that could benefit only those forces bent on a career of weakening the UMWA.

This created an extremely unfortunate situation for those militants, progressives and democratic elements in the union which came prepared to wage a correct fight for the restoration of democratic rights to the districts and locals. It also gave Lewis the opportunity to use irreparable facts in the matter of past delinquencies of elected district officials in the most demagogic and undemocratic manner. While no sensible person will deny that the coal industry and the political, economic and social conditions in the coal fields create great difficulties for the union it does not follow from this that the perpetuation of rule by the national officers is the answer to the dilemma. The only cure for this situation is a combina-
tion of vigilance and competency on the part of the leadership, trade union and political education of the membership and the deliberate practice of internal democracy in the union. This is the answer, and neither Lewis nor anyone else will be able to find any other answer to this question. The autonomy question will arise again. It will continue to rise, and this is as it should be. The issue cannot be met by an increase in bureaucracy nor by the perpetuation of economic and political ignorance.

The Miners and the Elections

This was also evident in the discussion around the resolution "On Political Action." Here was a resolution in which Roosevelt was soundly and correctly castigated. But in the same resolution Dewey was just as enthusiastically praised. At the end, however, the resolution stated that the union should follow its traditional policy and refrain from making an endorsement. The fact is the resolution did endorse Dewey. But this fact was detected by only a few of the delegates. No delegate rose to question the propriety and the right of Lewis and above all the UMWA Journal to come out with an endorsement of Dewey before the convention and without the consent of the membership of the international.

It is a moot point as to whether or not the convention would have voted to endorse Dewey. There were many delegates who were convinced that had the vote been taken, the overwhelming majority would have been for Dewey. We cannot say anything on this except that if Dewey had been endorsed it would certainly not have been a pro-Dewey but an anti-Roosevelt vote. In a measure too it would also have been an anti-PAC vote and an anti-CIO vote. One of the tragedies of this situation is that far too many of the miners have the feeling that the CIO is against them. Many of them actually believe that the sentiment of the rank and file in the CIO is against the miners. Of course, nothing is farther from the truth and the leadership of the miners commits a crime against the UMWA, the CIO and the interests of labor when it does not make every effort to dispel this very dangerous illusion.

Role of the Negro Delegates

It is necessary to say something on the rôle of the Negro delegates at the convention. It seemed that there were fewer Negro delegates than at the 1942 convention. Their main interest seemed to be in the autonomy issue. The overwhelming majority of them were opposed to district autonomy. This was strange and disturbing: Negroes opposed to internal democracy in a union and standing against the democratic rights of a union membership! When the matter was discussed with them, however, the whole problem of Jim Crow in the United States stared one in the face. One was confronted with the results of decades of discrimination, insult and segregation. In the minds of these Negro delegates, their opposition to autonomy was itself a part of the struggle for democracy, that is, a struggle for their democratic rights in the union, a struggle against discrimination.

They were not talking about their national officers, their district officers or about the general situation in the international. They know better than that. They know their union and its history on this point. They were talking about individual white members of the various locals and groups of such individuals in the various locals. This attitude was held most strongly by Negro delegates from the South. These Negro delegates said that they would get more, that is, more recognition, under the present set-up than under autonomy where district officials are elected and where such elected district officials would have the power to appoint people to important paid posts in the district. What they meant was that the white members would, as a rule, confine their support to white men running for office and that white men would be favored in the making of appointments. To what extent this is true I cannot say. All I can say is that the Negro delegates who opposed autonomy were firm in their convictions on this point.

This issue of course is not confined to the miners. It is a problem of the whole labor movement: North and South; AFL, CIO, railroad brotherhoods and UMWA. And just as is the case with all the other crucial problems of the labor movement, it can only be answered by more education of labor, more struggle together on a militant program and more political education and working class political action.

The Question of Strikes

To these adverse criticisms it is necessary to add extremely important praiseworthy considerations. The first is that the convention of the UMWA was the only convention in which no discussion of the no-strike pledge was necessary. The miners had given due consideration to that problem by four strikes in 1943 in which the whole international had participated. Lewis told the convention that on the matter of mine safety it would be necessary for the miners to consider refusing to work in any mine they considered unsafe. The convention instructed the scale committee to include in the coming wage negotiations that: "all explosives, cables, detonators, batteries, fuses and all accessories used in blasting, be furnished by the employers without charge to the mine workers."

Furthermore, "to insert in the next agreement a provision requiring employers to furnish union-made tools and explosives." Also, "that it will not be a violation of the wage agreement for the mine workers to cease work to prevent shipment of coal to a consumer whose employees are engaged in a legal strike."

This, of course, means that the miners are not committed to a no-strike pledge; that if they ever had one they have already repudiated it. It means that the UMWA is committed to proceed with the organization of the du Pont powder empire and other sections of the chemical industry. It means further that the UMWA is committed to the organization of machine tool companies supplying tools to the mining industry.

Finally it is worth while to comment on the fact that Lewis remains the undisputed leader of the mine workers, and with their consent. This does not mean that every miner is fully satisfied with the Lewis leadership or that Lewis is not a bureaucrat. What it does mean is that when the miners look at Murray, Thomas, Green and the rest, they know that Lewis stands head and shoulders above the field. They may be for Roosevelt or for Dewey, but it is always Lewis and Roosevelt, or Lewis and Dewey. It's Lewis first. No one should make a mistake about this or try to fool himself.

DAVID COOLIDGE.
Behind the Shipbuilders' Fight

The recent convention of the CIO shipyard workers (officially known as the Industrial Union of Marine & Shipbuilding Workers of America) opened a new chapter in the history of that organization. The convention marked (1) the appearance of a small but fighting progressive bloc as spokesmen for the widespread discontentment of the rank and file, and (2) the emergence of the Communists as the controlling factor in the national leadership of the union. In order to understand the significance of the recent developments, it is necessary to understand a little of the history of the union.

The IUMSWA has a history that is unique when compared to that of the average CIO union. Unlike the steel workers, the packinghouse workers or the textile workers, the IUMSWA never went through a period of CIO "organizing committee" control. As a matter of fact, the IUMSWA was organized as an industrial union in competition with the American Federation of Labor even before the Committee for Industrial Organization was set up.

The IUMSWA was organized in 1934 as the outgrowth of several years of intensive agitation and organization among Camden workers by the local branch of the Socialist Party. This branch was quite unlike the average SP branch and was usually referred to, by Old Guard and militants alike as the "Camden SLP crack-pots." The contemptuous references sought to belittle the efforts of the Camden Socialists who were not only fanatically convinced industrial unionists, but were also convinced that the AFL was worse than useless. The Camden Socialists, however, took their views seriously and set to work to do something practical about them. The Camden branch was also quite unlike the average SP branch in that it was composed in the main of industrial workers and any number of experienced trade unionists. Without money, without connections, in the depths of the depression when the number of organized workers was shrinking to a new low, the Camden Socialists, driven by a firm faith in the gospel of industrial organization, started a feverish campaign to organize a "dual" industrial union with a socialist outlook. Despite their small numbers and meager resources, they paid scant attention to the "small potatoes" of Camden industry and went out to tackle such industrial giants as New York Shipbuilding Corporation, Campbell Soup Co., and RCA.

Though most of their efforts brought little immediate results, their pioneering work was to bear real fruit in the period of 1935-37, when Camden rode high on the national wave of industrial organization.

However, their efforts did bear immediate fruit among the workers of the Camden shipyards. Here their "dual" industrial union took real root. In large measure the success was due to the indefatigable efforts of two members of the Camden branch of the Socialist Party—John Green, sheet metal worker and an old union fighter from the Clyde, and Phillip Van Gelder, one of the thousands of depression-ridden college students who joined the Socialist Party. (Green had been one of the leaders of the apprentice boys' strike on the Clyde in the First World War, along with William Gallacher, now Stalin's personal spokesman in the British Parliament.)

After several hard-fought strike struggles, the New York Shipbuilding Corporation was unionized and the organization won its first great victory. Soon other locals were organized in the yards along the Delaware and in the New York area. The IUMSWA became one of the largest and most important of the independent unions. Its firm industrial union principles were written into the preamble of the union constitution and when read as a regular ritual at union meetings it serves as a reminder of the pioneer days of the union, when it really acted in accord with its preamble.

Its ability to survive as an isolated industrial union would have been in doubt had not John L. Lewis opened up the fight for industrial unionism at the 1935 convention of the AFL and given encouragement to the industrial union trend. Lewis did more for the IUMSWA than merely give encouragement. During one of its crucial strikes at New York Shipbuilding Corp. the United Mine Workers sent a check of some $20,000, which looked like a fortune to this struggling independent union locked in combat with one of the Wall Street mammoths. John Green was to repay the miners for their solidarity by joining with them and other CIO leaders in stabbing the miners in the back during their 1945 strikes.

Resources of the Union

When the Committee for Industrial Organization left the AFL and organized itself independently, the IUMSWA affiliated with it. This path to the CIO set it off from the run of new CIO unions and explains much in the course of its later development. On the one hand it enjoyed an exceptional independence from the CIO officialdom and the large dominating influence of the miners and clothing workers' leaders in the early CIO. But on the other hand it also suffered from the lack of experienced local organizers and officers which these older unions supplied to most of the new CIO organizations. This was further accentuated by the lack of trade union traditions in the shipbuilding industry. Aside from a brief period of "back-door" AFL organization during the First World War, the shipbuilding industry was as open-shop as the steel industry, which, by and large, controls it. Other factors, such as irregular employment in peacetime and low wages for hard and dirty work, attracted many floaters and workers suffering seasonal unemployment in some other line. Aside from a few crafts, like ship-fitting, most of the work is similar enough to that in other industries to permit workers to come and go in the industry without learning a new trade (welders, machinists, pipefitters, electricians, boilermakers, riveters, painters, sheet metal men, etc.).

All these factors handicapped the development of an experienced and stable union membership which could produce from its ranks first-class union leaders. Though the leadership of Green and Van Gelder compared well with other progressive leaders in the early CIO, the IUMSWA stood in marked contrast to a union like the United Automobile Workers in the development of its rank and file. The IUMSWA had none of those attributes of a really progressive union like a broad educational program, well edited national and local papers, a research department, ladies auxiliaries, social and athletic activities on a large scale, and other activities that make the members union-conscious and aware that they belong to something more than a dues-collection agency. As a result the IUMSWA rank and file was perhaps one of the least union-educated in the CIO. The low level of its national convention discussions and their rowdy character have always attested to this.

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With this the situation in the union, the war suddenly inflationed the industry to more than ten times its size and with it the union grew from some 50,000 members to close to 500,000. Perhaps no other union experienced quite as large an influx of new members. But even worse, from the standpoint of assimilating these new thousands, was the fact that most of them were not only new to unionism, but they were members of new locals. In unions where the influx of a wartime membership expanded the existing locals, it meant that the new membership was being gathered around local groups of experienced unionists. In the IUMSWA this was not the case. The bulk of the shipyard workers were employed in yards that had been shut down since 1918 or in yards that were built since 1940.

This situation made the locals of the IUMSWA a happy hunting ground for all sorts of fakers and scoundrels. Locals were constantly plagued with dishonest officers who embezzled the funds or in some other manner abused their office to make personal gains. In one local an unknown suddenly appeared as a candidate for president on a program of one-half hour business meetings, free beer for everybody, and a reduction in dues. He was elected by a landslide.

Development of Bureaucracy

This situation required close supervision of locals by the national officers. However, instead of acting as advisers, Green and Van Gelder soon acquired the habit of acting as dictators. They lifted charters, they kicked out this group from the leadership and sent "administrators" to install some other group. They committed crimes against union democracy and local autonomy that rivalled those of the most hidebound AFL bureaucrats.

Meanwhile the national officers were having their hands full with "wildcat" strikes. Though the workers who had streamed into the yards with the outbreak of the war were unfamiliar with union procedure, they recognized injustice when they experienced it and were ready to react at the drop of a hat. Green rushed about frantically pleading and threatening amid boos from assembled strikers. (Green, the union president, was seeing things differently from Green, the apprentice boy on the Clyde.) But just as frequently as he rushed from strike situation to strike situation, he rushed to Washington to deal with Knox, Forrestal, Bard and Admiral Land. The sheet metal worker could now pick up the phone and say: "Give me the Secretary of the Navy." He became anxious to please his new "connections." Tea with the Roosevelts left a much greater impression upon him than the innumerable union discussions over open lunch boxes with his fellow workers of the sheet metal department at New York Shipbuilding Corp. His denunciations of loyal union men who had been driven into striking in the interests of the union were filled with fire and brimstone. Following his speech at the 1942 convention of the union, the New York World-Telegram, owned by the union-hating Scripps-Howard chain, praised him and held him forth as a model labor leader. (At the same convention, Green kept quiet while the Communists pushed through a resolution calling for the suppression of Labor Action.) Green, former left wing socialist, member of the Revolutionary Policy Committee, had come far in this world.

As an old union man and a Socialist, Green had learned to distrust the communists long ago. He has never changed this attitude. But being a man who never took principles too seriously when opportunity beckoned, Green was not at all averse to "playing ball" with the Stalinist forces in the union whenever it suited his purpose. During the period of the Hitler-Stalin pact, when the communists were opposing the Roosevelt Administration, Green had a clause added to the constitution of the union which barred communists from holding office. After the invasion of Russia, however, Green found much use for the communists. They proved the most reliable people in the union when it came to striking breaks, ramming WLB decisions down the throats of workers, and rounding up votes for Democratic Party politicians. More than that, the communists in the union were, by and large, able organizers and local officers. With the great dearth of the latter during the big influx of new locals and new members, Green was more than willing to overlook the clause barring communists from office and appoint a number of them to jobs on the national union payroll, mostly as field organizers.

The old political truth that it is policy in the end and not the color of a man's necktie that counts, was once more verified. When Green's chief, Roosevelt, became an ally of Velson's chief, Stalin, political logic compelled Green and Velson to play ball. However, Green was still somewhat illogical. Memories of Stalinist treachery caused him to hold them at arm's length. Not so his partner Van Gelder. After being secretary-treasurer of the IUMSWA for nearly ten years, the one-time socialist college student was being consumed with ambitions for bigger things in life. Green's job as president was one of them. Van Gelder was willing to go whole hog with the communists—above all if it landed him in a better berth.

Danger of Stalinism

The 1943 convention of the union was preceded by months of underground maneuvering, knifing, and double-crossing. The communists were greasing the skids for Green and grooming Van Gelder. Green was taking counter-measures. Whether by design or accident, the fight began to center around the fate of Irving Velson, member of the General Executive Board accused of membership in the Communist Party. A group of anti-communists on the GEB were out for Velson's skin on the basis of the union constitution forbidding communists to hold office. Green was willing to remain in the background while they "did a job" on Velson. Van Gelder saw the importance of the case and became Velson's defender. The convention upheld the GEB majority in removing Velson. As a result of this, Van Gelder received a setback. Green, having achieved his purpose of stopping Van Gelder's campaign, now made a deal with Van Gelder and secured his reelection to his old post. In doing this he broke with those who had led the fight against Velson. As a result, Green helped decimate the forces he had relied upon to stop Van Gelder. From now on Green became to play a delicate game of maneuvering between the Van Gelder-Velson bloc on one side and the anti-communist forces on the other.

In the midst of all this back-stabbing, throat-slitting, double-crossing, Stalinist intriguing, red-baiting and witch-hunting, nowhere was there to be found the voice of a progressive leader. In doing this he broke with those who had led the fight against Velson. As a result, Green helped decimate the forces he had relied upon to stop Van Gelder. From now on Green became to play a delicate game of maneuvering between the Van Gelder-Velson bloc on one side and the anti-communist forces on the other.
sive groups were either elected to local administrations or were threatening election. The old anti-communist group in the union bestirred itself and seeing the rising tide of rank and file opposition quickly fell in line on a program of repealing the no-strike pledge and other progressive demands.

Green became thoroughly alarmed. Rather than "lose face" in Washington by having his union be the first to repeal the no-strike pledge, Green was willing to lift the bars to the communists and give them a free hand to round up a convention majority guaranteed to give a majority for Roosevelt, the no-strike pledge and the War Labor Board. The communists did better than Green expected. They could have controlled the convention even without the Local 16 delegation which the communists secured by violating the union constitution and appointing the delegation without a regular convention election. That Green agreed to this was indication that his fears had carried away his common sense. He became not only a partner in policy with them, but also a partner in crime.

**Growth of Progressive Movement**

The communists were not yet ready to "take over" the union this year. They used their convention majority to grease the skids for next year. Innocent-appearing changes in the constitution, resolutions on red-baiting, etc., plus the election of a GEB that they can handle were considered sufficient as the first step. Toward the close of the convention Green became fully alarmed over his peril. In his closing speech he lashed out at the "intolerance" displayed by the "majority."

If he chooses to fight, he can more than hold his own. Most of the communist stooges on the GEB would cave in under a real fight, if Green chooses to make it. However, finding himself tied to Washington, which is tied to Moscow, which is tied to his union opponents, Green has few issues upon which to fight. He is experienced enough to know that red-baiting more often than not acts as a boomerang.

The only local to send a delegation pledged to a fighting program was Local 42. It found scattered support among several other delegations. However, the fight waged by the progressives opened a new chapter in the history of IUMSWA conventions. It was the first really principled fight over issues and policies instead of personalities and intrigues. It went far to educate the union activists both at the convention and those who had to consider the question in their locals. As the opening gun it did all that was to be expected of it.

The coming year will see the cards beginning to fall for the progressives. Their uphill fight in the locals and at the convention will begin to bear fruit. Disappointment with Roosevelt policies after the election, continued wage controls, cutbacks, declining hours, increasing strikes, growing militancy among the rank and file will all drive home the lessons that the progressives have been preaching. If the communists think they can put the IUMSWA "in the bag" along with the UERMWA the NMU and other of their hog-tied outfits without a real fight, they will be badly disillusioned. The progressive winds are blowing these days—and the old IUMSWA spirit of 1934 is bestirring itself.

**ERNEST LUND.**

### What Happened at the U. E. Meeting

There is hardly another union in the CIO quite like the United Electrical, Radio & Machine Workers of America. First, there is not another big international so thoroughly dominated and controlled, lock, stock and barrel, by the Communists, like the UE. Its chief officers, those who really count and determine the policies of the union, are well known Communist Party (now politically referred to as the Communist Political Association) members.

This control has extended over many years and is the one important reason why the UE represents such a sharp contrast to other CIO unions, even those bureaucratically controlled, in militancy of ideas, program and practice. Developing under Communist domination, the UE has been a laboratory for the changing Stalinist policies on the domestic front. Its political line has varied with the changing line of the CP. Its trade union strategy and tactics has patterned this changing line.

Since this review of its recent convention is limited, let us confine ourselves to the recent policies of the union. It is, without doubt, the most rabidly pro-Roosevelt, pro-war union in the CIO. In sharp contrast to the unbridled hatred of the President by the Stalinists during the period of the Hitler-Stalin pact, when Roosevelt was characterized as the outstanding war-monger of the world, Roosevelt is today, next to Stalin, the world's greatest benefactor. Stalin's international interests are paramount to the UE leadership. Thus the union is closely tied to the Administration, and if the Administration has better "fair-haired unions" in the CIO, it does not lack the devotion of the UE leadership.

Does Stalin's alliance with the United States dictate a new police for the CP in this country? Then the UE immediately reflects it in this way: it carries out Roosevelt's domestic program to a degree unmatched by other internationals. It signs wage agreements and agrees to union conditions that are a scandal. It manipulates the union with the single purpose of preventing genuine rank and file democracy. The Sperry local in New York is a case in point. By its constitution, membership meetings are held only twice a year! And by the same constitution, nominations for officers may take place only by the steward body!

### Issues in the United Electrical Workers Union

Recount the important issues which confront the labor movement and then examine the position of the UE on these issues. There is the question of the no-strike pledge, the wage freeze, post-war planning, the bosses' anti-union offensive, the WLDB, and independent labor politics, and you will find that the UE, while in many respects adopting a position which is formally like many positions adopted by other CIO unions, in each case, goes a good deal further more often in a direction which is unquestionably anti-union.

a. On the no-strike pledge, it is not merely in favor of retaining this infamous, one-sided agreement which has aided big business in profiteering from the war, but it is surreptitiously fostering the new Communist policy of extending the no-strike pledge for the post-war period. Why Communist? It is the new Communist line that the struggle for socialism is out; now is the time to cooperate with capitalism (read: big business) to help it prosper and profit, and to help it in its imperialist aims. To pursue that policy in the labor move-
ment means to keep the workers in check, to prevent "labor struggles," to maintain peaceful relations with the boss, who is apparently having a devil of a time trying to make ends meet.

b. Its policy on the no-strike pledge is immediately reflected in its attitude toward the bosses' offensive against unionism. Whereas the ordinary labor bureaucrat recognizes the dangers inherent in the no-strike pledge when carried over into the post-war period, i.e., knows that the unions face a struggle for life against the industrial giants, the UE is now preaching "cooperation" with industry, "unity" and "partnership" with the anti-union employers. All that this does is to develop a policy of glorified company unionism.

c. While formally adhering to the CIO position which demands a revision of the Little Steel formula the UE has really little interest in the matter. It has no wish to interfere with or make difficult the President's attempts to maintain inviolate the wage stabilization law and his seven-point program, none of which has been carried out except the wage freeze. Judging by the wage agreements signed, no one can possibly doubt this.

d. While the crying need of labor is the development of an independent labor reconversion program seeking to aid the workers, the UE has already endorsed Baruch's big business reconversion program.

e. It has rejected independent labor politics and a Labor Party in favor of capitalist politics and adherence to the Democratic Party machine. Grievances of the workers are replied to in typical Stalinist style: elect Roosevelt!

f. The just grievances of labor against the WLB, which is an employers' body shrouded in the fiction that its balance of power is held by the "public," is countered by the UE's unstinted support to that body. For example, in the numerous consent cases of the UE, that is, cases where the company and union reached an agreement, which the WLB rejects, the UE is practically silent. If it is not silent, its protests are practically unheard and no fight is made by it against this infamous anti-labor body.

Is There No Opposition?

Is it then that the UE has no opposition within its ranks? No, there is opposition to the policies of the union administration. The opposition is widespread but effectively bottled up by the bureaucratic control of the administration, by the disorganization and duality of the opposition. The stranguating control of the Communists could easily be broken, but only on the condition that the opposition was nationally organized and had all the accouterments of a unified opposition with a program. The last convention demonstrated that the possibilities of mobilizing the progressives and militants in the union are present. These progressives and militants need leadership. This leadership will undoubtedly arise, but it is not yet present.

There is no doubt that such a fight could have been made before if the former president, James B. Carey, whom the Communists removed from office, had waged a struggle. It seems inexplicable that one of the founders of the union, its first president and now national secretary of the CIO, could be so divorced from his union. But so effective was his removal that, for all practical purposes, he might never have been a member of the UE or present at any of its conventions. Yet he is known nationally in the UE, is respected by the rank and file, has good standing and a good record in the CIO. The story is that after Carey's removal as president, his retention as CIO secretary was part of a deal. Naturally we cannot vouch for this story, but the facts of life speak for themselves. It is bruited about that Carey's retention as CIO secretary was the result of a deal between Murray and the Stalinists: they guaranteed not to fight him as secretary, to vote for him, if, in turn, Carey would refrain from any interference in the affairs of the UE. Perhaps there is no basis to this story. But if there isn't, Carey conducts himself in the UE as though it were true. Everyone knows he is against the present leadership, is opposed to its administrative methods and its anti-union policies. Yet he regularly attends conventions but hardly makes a peep at them. Often it is at a time when the bureaucrats are in deadly fear of his intervention, knowing that he could, if he so desired, upset their well-laid plans.

The latest convention of the UE showed the rising tide of rank and file opposition to the bureaucratically entrenched leadership. The convention, like all previous Stalinist-dominated meetings, was carefully rigged and so run as to prevent the opposition from presenting its views effectively or following through its opposition to the administration. An examination of the issues in dispute reveals that the UE, despite the bureaucratic control, could not avoid a clash over those problems which are acutely affecting the lives of the mass of workers in this country, especially the militant and class conscious elements which make up the labor movement. In this sense the UE convention was like all other conventions which the CIO has recently held. Like the other conventions, this one had to take up the question of rescinding the no-strike pledge, the question of the wage freeze and the WLB, incentive pay, the thirty-five-hour week, etc. In each instance, the officialdom was characterized by the reactionary positions it took against the various groupings which opposed it.

The fight against the no-strike pledge in no way resembled the mass uprising at the UAW, or the large minorities in other internationals. But that a fight could be made at all against the no-strike pledge at a UE convention shows definite progress. The proposal to rescind received only five votes, but there is no question that the sentiment in favor of this proposal was many times larger. Only a wild, hysterical, flag-waving campaign of the Stalinists succeeded in damping the wide opposition to the pledge.

It Is Possible to Defeat the Stalinists

In anticipation of an even sharper struggle over the WLB, the resolutions committee was compelled to bring in a fairly strong-worded resolution on the WLB—this, for the first time since the issue became an important one in the labor movement. But the practical day-to-day conduct of the officialdom precludes any effective actions that the union might take to enforce the views of its resolution.

A fight over incentive pay and the thirty-five-hour week also developed. Here the bureaucratic manipulation of the chair by the union's president, the Stalinist stooge, Fitzgerald, prevented the opposition from even speaking up effectively. A similar thing happened on the proposal to increase the salaries of international organizers from seventy to eighty dollars a week. The reaction of the rank and file delegates was unmistakable. And when the vote revealed little support for the administration, Fitzgerald adjourned the session to prevent a rollcall vote. Thus, the measure was passed.

The administration got a real scare when Fitzgerald was opposed for the presidency by Martin J. Hogan, one of the opposition leaders. Running without a program, with practically no organization and no previous plans, Hogan mustered...
about one-fourth of the convention vote against the incumbent president. On this issue alone it was possible to see what an effective struggle, program and organization might have accomplished in the UE.

The opposition at this convention was not confined to progressive Local 425 of New York, as in the past. It was joined by other forces from District 4 and from New England. Had these forces been prepared prior to the convention, had they been organized around a progressive program with national ramifications, the fight at the convention would have been ten times as effective, with excellent results. More important, however, it would have laid the necessary basis for the organization to oust the Stalinist union-wreckers at the next convention. In any case, the convention revealed that a struggle for progressive and militant unionism in the UE is not a hopeless proposition. The Stalinists' control of the union is tenuous. It was obtained essentially because the UE was one of their concentrations and they conducted themselves in the union as a unified, disciplined caucus against an open field. The course pursued by the union under their leadership is so blatantly against the best interests of the labor movement and the rank and file membership that any well-organized opposition based upon a program of progressive unionism could number the days of Stalinist control over the UE. This is indeed the important lesson to be learned from the last convention. The scattered progressives have a big task ahead of themselves: to gather their forces, formulate their program, unify their fight and develop their own leadership in the course of this struggle to oust the Stalinist union-wreckers.

ALBERT GATES.

Progressives at the Rubber Convention

The United Rubber Workers of America was one of the first offsprings of the CIO and was nursed on heroic and violent organizing struggles in the cradle of sit-down strikes in Akron, Ohio. Since the war, the union has expanded to over 180,000 members. While in comparison with the unions of the miners, steel or auto workers, its numerical strength is small, its strategical importance is great. This fact is due not only to its militant record, but to the vital role of the industry in both peacetime and wartime.

As a microcosm reflecting the general unrest of the American labor movement over the no-strike pledge and War Labor Board restrictions imposed by the labor officialdom, the rank and file in the "Big Four" Akron locals carried on a five-day strike in May, 1943. The strike, following that of the miners, influenced by it and accompanied by mass picketing and skirmishes at the plant gates, was due to the War Labor Board's refusal to grant the wage increases asked by the union. It was stopped only by the intervention of President Roosevelt. The strike-breaking role of Sherman H. Dalrymple and his Stalinist and run-of-the-mill bureaucratic consorts on the International Executive Board in that strike, started an active tide of opposition to him in the ranks of the union which grew with his subsequent actions on behalf of the corporations.

Last January, Dalrymple undertook an action which aroused the entire Akron labor movement. When a strike of the bandbuilders occurred at General Local over company cheating on wages, transfers and other abuses, Dalrymple expelled the strikers, who were then fired by the company. He also expelled two past presidents of the union who took the fight on behalf of the expelled strikers. The latter were then fired, blacklisted, had their draft deferments withdrawn and were immediately ushered into the army. This outrage moved Goodrich Local to expel Dalrymple from his own union, an action that may have been constitutionally questionable but one which placed Dalrymple in a judicious and precarious position. He was reinstated by the General Executive Board and the case was to be brought up by the Goodrich Local under "appeals" at the convention.

A weakness of the fight subsequently waged in behalf of the General strikers was that it was conducted not on the forthright basis of the right of these men to strike for redress of their grievances and in opposition to the no-strike pledge, but on the basis of "unconstitutionality" on the part of Dalrymple, and the fact that not all the expelled "instigated" the strike. It was an oblique defense of the right to strike, made at a time when the defense should have been a head-on collision with the policies of the officialdom.

The Nature of the Opposition

Goodrich Local, under the presidency of George Bass, then began its campaign for the international convention. This local was the core of progressive sentiment among the big rubber unions and was on record against the no-strike pledge. At the 1942 convention, Bass led a lively minority group opposing the pledge, labor-management collaboration, labor participation on the War Labor Board and standing for a general program of union democratization. He did not challenge the leadership for office, however, nominating Dalrymple instead! At the 1943 convention his fight was not so aggressive, although (and because) he was closer to declaring himself a candidate in opposition to Dalrymple. At the convention just concluded, where he ran finally against Dalrymple, he soft-pedalled all issues.

We are not concerned with Bass' personality save as it is an indication of his politics and a reflection of the movement he leads. A leader who rose from the ranks and still has their interests at heart, he is described, not without justice, by the government agencies and the Stalinists who characteristically but erroneously call him "an agent of the Trotskyites and John L. Lewis." To call him a minor John L. Lewis has some aptness.

This year the opposition to the international leadership spread rapidly in all the Akron locals. It was consciously organized for a fight at the coming convention. Goodyear Local, long languishing under the domination of the Stalinists, overwhelmingly elected a progressive slate for the convention. General, smarting under the blow dealt it by Dalrymple, joined the movement. Firestone was in the majority sympathetic.

In the last stages of preparation for the convention, city-wide caucus meetings were held. The opposition was united.
on rescinding the no-strike pledge, opposing the Dalrymple administration with a slate of their own, contesting the reversal of the ouster of Dalrymple, appealing the General Local's cases and a sheaf of demands to curb the bureaucracy and democratize the union. Some attempts were made to circularize the out-of-town locals with the case against Dalrymple involving the General firings and the program of the opposition.

What Happened at the Convention

Came the convention. Dalrymple, in effect, appointed his own trial committee by using his constitutional authority to appoint all committees, including the one on appeals which would hear the case against him. A test vote came in the early sessions over a motion by the progressives to have locals approve international representatives and to prevent international board members from being representatives at the same time. It was defeated, two to one, and this figure became the typical one on all contested questions throughout the convention. The Akron delegation, with one-third—and the most substantial third—of the convention assured in advance, failed with few exceptions to make any inroads on the out-of-Akron locals.

One reason for this failure was the above-mentioned tactic of Bass, to soften his resistance the nearer he comes to power. This was evidenced in the convention by the fact that he did not lead the opposition; rather, he let other progressive spokesmen speak first and exhaust the main arguments on most questions, thereby drawing fire from himself. This was a poor stratagem for a man who was bidding for the presidency on the basis of a program. His device did not fool the wavers, who saw him nevertheless vote with the Akron bloc on all questions. Another reason the pro-Dalrymple locals could not be won over was the amateur and opportunistical corridor and hotel-room procedure employed by the Bass supporters to garner votes for their candidates. With their own ranks critical, the Bassites were out to gain executive board posts, not to discuss the program of opposition to Dalrymple.

Another important factor prejudicing the other delegations against the Akron caucus was the pre-convention campaign of the Dalrymple machine itself against the Akron group. Many of the delegates from other locals refused to speak to the Akron members in the first days of the convention. These other locals, being outside the main center of the rubber union, are more dependent on the international and have its representatives, either Stalinist or machine-men, stationed in their unions. Their delegates also included southern locals and representatives of unions in the "war babies," i.e., plants whose unions were new and inexperienced in the fighting traditions of the labor movement. These things forced the Akron bloc to remain a minority throughout the convention.

Struggle on Appeals

The minority report of the appeals committee, condemning Dalrymple for his action in the General affair, might have gained the Akron candidates some votes in the elections, since the evidence of Dalrymple's high-handedness and flouting of the constitution was amply supported. However, the union leadership had set the time for elections in advance of the report of the appeals committee, a characteristic bureaucratic trick. Also, the two contending sides agreed to a compromise on the two major appeals. Goodrich Local agreed to drop the appeal on the expulsion of Dalrymple. Dalrymple agreed to restore the expelled members to their former status, return fifty per cent of the fines imposed on the strikers, while back pay claims were denied.

Although it is probable that Dalrymple with his mechanical majority could have made the penalties on the strikers stick and, even more easily, thrown out the appeal on his own expulsion, he could have done it only by having the report on his behavior and the damaging testimony of many of the members against him made public to the convention. The opposition would have lost any restitution for or vindication of the strikers. But the compromise was therefore really weighted in their favor. It was, in effect, an admission of guilt by Dalrymple.

Despite the fact they remained a minority, the Akron delegates did not break ranks throughout the convention. Bass ran against Dalrymple and lost, 394 to 756. There was a high esprit and a will to continue the progressive caucus based on the unity of the convention and founded on a progressive program. The defects of the opposition were that it was on the instinctive-progressive level: while it opposed the no-strike pledge it supported the candidacy of him who demanded it—Roosevelt. The idea of a Labor Party is almost totally lacking from the consciousness of the rubber workers. What the opposition in the rubber workers needs is a leavening of conscious rather than instinctive action, in its political as well as its economic program. When the rubber workers struck for higher wages, it was Roosevelt, whom they support through the PAC, who broke their strike and upheld the WLB. Inside their union, it is Dalrymple's upholding of the no-strike pledge, supported by Roosevelt and the corporations, which hinders their progress.

What About the Future?

The struggle in the URW is by no means over, for the simple reason that the issues which confronted the convention will remain with the union. No matter how many times votes may be obtained to reaffirm the no-strike pledge and to support FDR, the sponsor of the wage freeze, the Little Steel formula and the WLB, these issues constantly recur. With each passing month the effects of Roosevelt's policies become increasingly disastrous for the rank and file union member. The fight against the policies of the President and his Administration thus becomes a matter of life and death for the average worker.

Dalrymple won a victory over Akron. He succeeded in creating an antagonism between the small locals which dot the country and the large Akron locals which constitute the flesh and blood of the union. Only a little intelligence will reveal to one that in the coming post-war period it will be the Akron unions which will continue to be the strongest defensive and offensive weapon the union has in its fight against the bosses' drive to destroy the labor movement. Without the Akron unions, which make up the strongest single section of the URW, the union would be doomed. Does Dalrymple understand this? Maybe. But he conducts himself as though the Akron militants are the greatest danger to the union, rather than the rubber barons. In the coming struggle, however, the Akron locals will wield the great power in defense of the Rubber Workers Union.

The defense of the union will depend upon the kind of policies that are developed to fight for the maintenance of the union standards won after many years of heroic struggle. This is the decisive question and it is on this question that Bass and his followers present their weakest side. They failed to understand that a clever evasion of a dispute on issues, on
the ground that they might be “unpopular,” played into the hands of Dalrymple. This was foolish because, as already pointed out, on the differences which existed between the bureaucracy and the progressives, Bass and his followers voted against the former. But in failing to make a clear and uncompromising struggle on issues, Bass aided Dalrymple in his strategy to present the progressives as a power-mad group seeking only to win offices. That is why it is doubly important for the Akron progressives to wage their struggle around the important issues which divide them from the conservatives, who, if allowed to continue in their course, will run the union into the ground. A great responsibility rests on the Akron militants, the men who made the Rubber Workers Union and whose struggles have won them the plaudits of the entire labor movement. That responsibility is to prepare now a program for revitalizing the union, for strengthening it in preparation to meet the bosses’ anti-union offensive.

MARY BELL.

An Epigone of Trotsky—II

Ignorance as a Substitute for Marxism

(Continued from the August issue)

We have already seen that our critic does not know what the “heart of Trotskyism” is, what are the sources of our criticism of Trotsky’s theory of the “degenerated workers’ state,” and that he does not even know what a trade union is. We have also established that by Frankel’s involuntary admission, Trotsky’s conception of a trade union (which Frankel attributes to Shachtman alone) “is clear, it is consistent, it is harmonious with the Shachtmanite point of view on the Soviet Union.” There remain two of the original five points to deal with: the question of the roots of class rule and the question of the historical place of the Stalin bureaucracy.

The “ABC of Marxism”

Marxists view classes as the product of historical development, in other words, all classes have a past and a future, as well as the present. Shachtman’s “new exploitive class” is, in Shachtman’s own words, “without a past and without a future.” (Max Shachtman, The Struggle for the New Course, page 247.) Lenin insisted that the roots of all class rule are to be found in the productive foundations of society. He said: “The rule of the class is determined only by the relationship to property.” To explain the rule of his “new class,” Shachtman points not to the foundation but to the political superstructure. It thus turns out that Shachtman’s “indispensable correction” applies not only to Trotsky but to Lenin and Marx as well. But Shachtman simply forgets to mention such trifles.

“Wherein does the rule of the class [the proletariat] express itself?” asked Lenin. And he answered: “The rule of the proletariat expresses itself in the abolition of landed and capitalist property.” Not the introduction of nationalized property and planning but the abolition of the old property forms sufficed for Lenin.

How does Shachtman get around this? Very simply. He denies that his new class needs either to abolish previous property forms or institute new ones of its own.

Shachtman’s class that has no past and no future possesses for its “fundament” not property relations but the “ownership” of “political power.” Needless to add, this “ownership” in its turn has neither a past nor a future. Such tripe is, according to Shachtman, “the worst commonplace of Marxism.” (Fourth International, May, 1944, page 150.)

This is typical Frankel: x parts ignorance (principal ingredient), x parts falsification (never omitted), x parts insolence (the style is the man), and x parts plain, ordinary, anhydrous muddleheadedness; the solvent is not even water.

This chemical analysis requires demonstration. Here it is.


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Stalinism and the Roots of Class Rule

1. For Lenin, the roots of class rule are to be found in the productive foundations of society; Shachtman, however, who simply forgets to mention (note: “forgets to mention”) such trifles, points not to the foundation but to the political superstructure.

That Shachtman, who is in his way as human as Frankel, may forget to mention one trifle or another, is more than possible. But the trifle of which Frankel speaks with that mastery of sarcasm which marks him out from a world of dullards, was not forgotten by Shachtman. Not only was it not forgotten, but it is to this very trifle that the origin of the new ruling class in Russia was traced. In The Struggle for the New Course it says:

At bottom, classes have risen and come to power throughout history in response to the developing needs of production which preceding classes were unable to satisfy. This is the case, also, with the new ruling class in Russia. The Russian bourgeoisie had ample opportunity to prove that it could not, or could no longer, develop the productive forces of the country. It came upon the scene too late to play the historically progressive role it played in the Western countries...

But if the bourgeoisie came too late, the proletariat of Russia came to power, so to speak, “too early.” It is of course more proper to say that the rest of the European proletariat did not come to power early enough. The results of this retardation of the world revolution are known. The isolated Russian proletariat, in a backward country, could not satisfy the needs of production, either. It could not satisfy them on a socialist basis. That was the quintessential point made by Trotsky in his theory of the permanent revolution. It was with this conviction in mind that he contradicted the bureaucracy’s theory of “socialism in a single country.” The bureaucracy won, the revolution degenerated. But not in accordance with the predictions of Lenin or Trotsky. The revolution did not turn to capitalism. (Pages 241.)

The reader, we think, is getting some idea of who it is that “simply forgets to mention” the “trifles.” Let us continue.

“All modern nations,” we noted on page 219, “experience the need of an economic organization and strength that will enable them to survive.” The Russian bourgeoisie, however, was unable to develop the productive forces, an inability which conditioned its social impotence and the triumph of the Russian revolution under the hegemony of the proletariat. (A contrary view is a capitulation to Menshevism.) The proletariat, in turn, was able to develop the productive forces— in Trotsky’s words, make possible an “authentic rise of a socialist economy”—only with the state aid of the victorious Western proletariat. (A contrary view is a capitulation to Stalinism.)

The old prediction said: Without the world revolution, Russia will inevitably stagnate and then succumb to capitalism.
in the form of foreign imperialist exploitation; also, Stalinism is turning the country in that direction. The prediction, however understandable, was erroneous. A tremendous economic advance was made under Stalin's "planning." It was not a socialist advance—this prediction of Trotsky was absolutely borne out. But neither was it capitalist! It was not accomplished by restoring private ownership in the means of production and exchange or by abolishing the monopoly of foreign trade.

The productive forces were not developed by way of socialization (which implies a trend toward socialism) but by way of bureaucratic collectivism. The new bureaucracy was born, grew, and took power in response, not to the needs of society as a whole—the soviet proletariat is sufficiently capable of satisfying those—but to the organic needs of a backward, isolated country, existing in unique and unprecedented world conditions. (Page 242.)

Let us temper the verdict with charity, and say: Frankel "simply forgets to mention" that he wrote his review before reading the book: Impossibly the reader may protest. Impossible or not, the statement has the virtue of mercifully avoiding the right name for Frankel.

Political Power and Property as Fundaments

2. For Lenin, the rule of the class is determined only by the relationship to property; Shachtman, however, tries to get around this by arguing that "his new class" establishes no new property forms of its own, and does not have property relations but the ownership of political power as its fundament.

That looks bad—but only if there lingers in you a faith that Frankel understands what he reads, or even reads what he reviews and condemns. It does not look so bad when you understand that the rule of the class is determined in the same way in Lenin's conception and in Shachtman's. The latter wrote in The Struggle for the New Course: "It is of the ABC of Marxism that the fundaments of all social relations (that is, relations of production are property relations. That holds for the old slaveholding societies, for feudal society, for capitalist society and for the proletarian state." (Page 233.) "How," asked Frankel, "does Shachtman get around" Lenin's conception? Very simply: by sharing it.

But it is necessary to know what conception it is we share. Lenin speaks of property relations, of the relationship of a class to property, that is, to the means of production and exchange. Let us present a little more of the speech by Lenin at the 9th Congress of the Russian party in 1920, from which Frankel takes his quotations.

When the question of property was decided in practice, the rule of the class was thereby assured: thereupon the constitution wrote down on paper what life has decided: "There is no capitalist and landed property," and it added: "The working class has more rights than the peasantry, but the exploiters have no rights at all." Therewith was written down the manner in which we realized the rule of our class, in which we bound together the toilers of all strata, of all the little groups...

The rule of the class is determined only by the relationship to property. That is precisely what determines the constitution. And our constitution correctly sets down our attitude to property and our attitude to the question of what class must stand at the head. (My emphasis—M.S.)

"And it added"—what Frankel failed to add: The working class has more rights than the peasantry, but the exploiters have no rights at all. "Therewith was written down the manner in which we realized the rule of our class." Class rule is determined only by the relationship to property. "Our constitution correctly sets down our attitude to property and our attitude to the question of what class must stand at the head."

Today, the working class does not have "more rights than the peasantry." The capitalist exploiters have no rights at all in the Stalinist state, but neither have the workers or the peasants. The working class does not "stand at the head." It is in the prison house that—so Frankel says—Stalin has made out of Russia.

In Russia in 1917, the proletariat first took political power. Then, the proletariat-in-power "did abolish property and abolished it completely." The "rule of the class was thereby assured." The constitution then gave the proletariat ruling rights;it provided that the proletariat "must stand at the head." The means of production and exchange became the property of the workers' state. The setting up of a new class state by the Stalinist counter-revolution was accomplished by wiping all this out, by establishing fundamentally different property relations.

All wiped out? This is where Frankel is baffled. Isn't it a fact that property is still nationalized, still state property? Do not the property forms set up by the Bolshevik revolution still remain? Isn't it a fact that "the abolition of the old [capitalist] property forms sufficed for Lenin"? and that these old forms have not yet been restored by the counter-revolutionary bureaucracy?

Here we approach the nub of the problem.

The Nub of the Problem

The "abolition of the old property forms" would not have "sufficed for Lenin" if these forms (capitalist private property) had been burned out in a fire, inundated in a storm, or bombed into rubble by Flying Fortresses. The abolition sufficed because it was accomplished by the proletariat-in-power which converted capitalist property into the property of a proletarian state. By this action, the proletarian state completed (the first stage of) the transformation not only of the old property relations. What is the meaning of this distinction between "forms" and "relations"? Does it exist in reality or is it purely verbal?

Under capitalism, property exists in the form of capitalist private property. This simple sentence already shows what are the property relations under capitalism. Regardless of the political regime (be it monarchical, democratic, militarist, Fascist or even semi-feudal), the capitalist class owns the property (means of production, etc.) and the proletariat works, as Marx would say, "with conditions of labor belonging to another." That is how we find the relationships of the classes to property. The state exists to maintain these relationships. The minute, therefore, you say "capitalist property forms" you have already said "capitalist property relations." Similarly, under slavery and feudalism, and in general wherever property is privately owned. The class that owns the property is the ruling class.

But what about the society in which property is not privately but state-owned? Trotsky wrote about the Stalinist bureaucracy that "the very fact of its appropriation of political power in a country where the principal means of production are in the hands of the state, creates a new and hitherto unknown relation between the bureaucracy and the riches of the nation" (Revolution Betrayed, page 249). Let us reemphasize: a new and hitherto unknown relation. This thought, however, needs supplementation: the seizure of political power by the proletariat in a country where it turns over the principal means of production to the hands of the state also creates a new and hitherto unknown relation between the rulers and the property. For the third time we emphasize: a new and hitherto unknown relation.
Why new? Why hitherto unknown? Because the proletariat, its revolution, and the social order whose establishment is its historic mission, differ fundamentally from all preceding classes, their revolutions and their social orders. The proletariat is not a property-owning class under capitalism; and it does not become a property-owning class when it takes power! When it takes state power, it turns the property over to its state. Its relations to property are then expressed only through its state. It "owns" the property only inasmuch as it rules the property-owning state. That is the only way the proletariat ever did own property, ever will own it and ever can own it. It owns it through its state, the workers' state, through its political power!

That is why there is such lamentable ignorance in the sarcastic question: "Since when did a ruling class have for its fundament not property relations but the ownership of political power? Are the Fascists a new ruling class? Is an absolute monarch a new ruling class?"

No, the monarch was not a ruling class; the feudal lords were, because they owned the landed property. The Fascists are not a ruling class; the bourgeoisie is, because it owns the means of production and exchange. The proletariat, however, is not merely "another" class, but a fundamentally different one: It does not and cannot own property. It can only "own" the state when it takes power. By that "ownership" it establishes state property which it organizes and operates so that it ceases to be state property and becomes social property. The state itself ceases to be.

**Property Relations Under Stalinism**

The complete expropriation of the political power of the working class by the Stalinist bureaucracy only makes this point clearer. The property forms seem to be the same as they were before: property exists in the form of state property. Therefore, cries Frankel triumphantly, it is still a workers' state, even if politically degenerated!

But hold on a moment: What are now the property relations in Russia? That is, what are the relations of the various classes (or, let us say, the various social groups) to the state property? We have been told by Lenin, through Frankel, that the rule of the class is determined only by the relationship to property. Granted. But just how shall we now determine what the relationship is?

In a society where property is privately owned, the question answers itself: this class (or social group) owns the property, this class does not. Such an answer is obviously impossible in a society where property is not privately owned but state owned. To determine then the relations to property of the various social groups, is it not clear that we must first find out what are their respective relations to the state-which-owns-the-property?

"From the point of view of property in [ownership of] the means of production," wrote Trotsky, "the differences between a marshal and a servant girl, the head of a trust and a day laborer, the son of a people's commissar and a homeless child, seem not to exist at all." (Revolution Betrayed, page 238.)

That's just the point, although Trotsky did not draw the right conclusion. If you look at Russia from the standpoint of ownership of the means of production in the same way you look at a society in which these are privately owned—the trust head and the laborer have exactly the same property relations. Yet, in reality, their respective relations to property are as fundamentally different as the respective relations to property of the bourgeoisie and the proletarian under capitalism (except that in Russia the gap between the classes is so much greater!)

The bureaucracy is the ruling class. It has all the political power, the proletariat has none.

That is why Frankel's "irony" about Shachtman because the latter "points not to the foundation but to the political superstructure," is so utterly out of place. He does not understand the historically unprecedented nature of the proletarian state power, the peculiarity of the proletariat as a ruling class. He does not understand what is unprecedented about the class rule of the Stalinist bureaucracy. He derides its "ownership" of "political power" as something quite secondary, because he cannot grasp the simple idea that where property belongs to the state, the "ownership" of the state power means the monopolization of all economic and social power. The bureaucracy is the ruling class because its "mere" political power makes it the owner of the conditions of production. It is always the relation of the owners of the conditions of production to the actual producers that shows us the real basis of a class society and establishes the true class character of the state. The Stalinist state is no exception to this rule.

**What Depends and What Determines?**

This is the nub of the problem, we said. Without understanding this essentially simple idea, the Stalinist counter-revolution will remain an enigma and a source of confusion. We wrote that our criticism of Trotsky's theory "introduces into it an indispensable correction." The key to this correction is given by Trotsky. If we quote Trotsky himself, this may be of help to Frankel, whose Marxism consists, in Lenin's excellent phrase, of "swearing by God."

In the Revolution Betrayed, Trotsky shows how bourgeois society has maintained itself and developed in spite of different political regimes and bureaucratic cases. "In contrast to this, the property relations which issued from the socialist revolution are indivisibly bound up with the new state as their repository. The predominance of socialist over petty bourgeois tendencies is guaranteed, not by the automatism of the economy—we are still far from that—but by political measures taken by the dictatorship. The character of the economy as a whole thus depends upon the character of the state power." (Page 250. My emphasis—M.S.)

Our whole difference with this basically unassailable statement of the problem lies in the fact that we draw the consistent conclusion. The new state is the repository of the property relations and is indivisibly bound up with them! The character of the economy depends upon the character of the state power! And that in contrast to bourgeois society! Once this is understood, the rest follows.

It is this conception that lay at the heart of Trotsky's first theory of Russia as a degenerated workers' state: the state is the repository of the property relations; the character of the economy depends upon the character of the state power. In this first theory, Trotsky, as Frankel would put it, "pointed not to the foundations but to the political superstructure." That is why Trotsky used to repeat and repeat that Russia is still a workers' state because the political power, the state power, does not and cannot own property. It is so utterly out of place. He does not understand the historical unprecedented nature of the proletarian state power, the peculiarity of the proletariat as a ruling class. He does not understand what is unprecedented about the class rule of the Stalinist bureaucracy. He derides its "ownership" of "political power" as something quite secondary, because he cannot grasp the simple idea that where property belongs to the state, the "ownership" of the state power means the monopolization of all economic and social power. The bureaucracy is the ruling class because its "mere" political power makes it the owner of the conditions of production. It is always the relation of the owners of the conditions of production to the actual producers that shows us the real basis of a class society and establishes the true class character of the state. The Stalinist state is no exception to this rule.

**What Depends and What Determines?**

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With the abandonment of the program of reform and the adoption of the view that the Stalinist bureaucracy can be overthrown only by a revolution, Trotsky was compelled also to...
abandon his first theory and to develop an altogether different one, namely, Russia is still a workers' state because property is still nationalized. This complete change has been demonstrated by us in detail and in several places, including *The Struggle for the New Course*. Frankel just acts as if he never heard of the point. His silence encourages the belief that our demonstration is irrefutable.

The second theory of Trotsky is radically different from the first. Originally, the state was the repository of the property relations; now the "property relations" (nationalized property) are the "repository" of the state. Originally, the character of the economy was determined by the character of the state power (Frankel's "political superstructure"); now the character of the state power is determined by the character of the economy.

If you understand and hold to the first, and only correct, conception of Trotsky, you understand why the counter-revolutionary bureaucracy, in conquering state power and establishing itself as the new ruling class, did not need "to abolish previous property forms or institute new ones of its own," at least not in appearance. By completing its conquest of state power, the bureaucracy established new property relations. Thereby (will Frankel ever understand this?) it established property forms of its own, if by that is meant social property forms. When the proletariat was in power, property existed and was exploited in Russia in the form of property-of-the-workers' state. With Stalinism in complete power, property exists and is exploited in the form of property-of-the-bureaucratic-collectivist-state. Stalinism has wiped out all the conquests of the proletarian revolution.

The trouble with Frankel, at bottom, is that he accepts and his party repeatedly disseminates the *fundamental sophism of the Stalinist doctrine*, which, in the new Russian constitution, legalizes the lie that state property equals "the possessions of the whole people."

**A Ruling Class Without a Past or a Future?**

3. A ruling class without a past and without a future? In a terse, but all the more devastating reply, Frankel says: "Such tripe is, according to Shachtman, 'the veriest commonplace of Marxism.'"

Neither the commonplace nor the complexities of Marxism are made up of tripe. This we will grant. But only if we are allowed to add that discussions of Marxism should not be made up of forgeries. In the chapter on the bureaucracy as a new ruling class, Shachtman analyzes the hopeless contradiction into which Trotsky's theory drove him in 1939 when he presented us with a proletarian revolution carried out in Russian-occupied Poland by the "counter-revolutionary workers' state." (Brave Frankel, like his friends, has *not one word to say in defense of Trotsky on this point!*) At the end of his analysis, Shachtman writes that "In contrast to this, our theory of the Stalinist bureaucracy as a new and reactionary exploitive class, and of Russia as a bureaucratic-collectivist class state, neither proletarian nor bourgeois, is the veriest commonplace of Marxism" (page 241). Several pages later, at the end of the volume, Shachtman writes, *in an entirely different connection*, about "the new bureaucracy, without a past and without a future" (page 247).

Frankel, who belongs to the "only moral people," simply cuts away the couple of thousand words that separate the two quotations, pastes together the two unrelated clauses with a little trip, and passes it off on the public as a genuine check written "according to Shachtman." Following right after this clumsy little forgery appears a sub-heading over another one of Frankel's stern indictments of us. It reads (O Coincidence!): "A Petty Bourgeois Counterfeit." The only comment this requires is two punctuation marks: !!

However, we did speak of the Stalinist bureaucracy as being without a past and without a future. It is a question that is best dealt with—in so far as it can be adequately treated in an article—in connection with the final point raised (i.e., muddled up) by Frankel:

According to Marxists, the historical justification for every ruling class is the ability under its particular system of exploitation to raise the development of productive forces of society as a whole to a new level. Does Shachtman grant this ability to Stalinism, i.e., his own "new exploitive class"?

The gist of Shachtman's 128-page argument boils down to a representation of the crimes of Stalinism as the birthpangs that marked the rise of a new class to power. No more, no less. It is an elementary principle of Marxism that ruling classes rise in society through the operation of forces beyond the control of men's consciousness, reason or will. The rise of new ruling classes can be retarded or facilitated but never prevented—until and unless these classes have exhausted their historic mission. In the light of this, what is Shachtman's version of the evolution of the Soviet Union if not an attempt to supply an historical justification not for the ascendancy of a new class but actually for the abominations of the Kremlin?

*Ex ungue leonem*—you know the lion by his claws. Another species of animal, however, you know by its bray. From the braying, we gather that Shachtman is not only trying to provide an historical justification for Stalinism, "but actually for the abominations of the Kremlin." Obviously a detestable creature this Shachtman. Much deeper he cannot sink.

However, if we fumigate the air a little and reflect a little, things look more cheerful.

**The Historical Justification of Stalinism**

In the first place, the two accusations are in conflict: Shachtman says the bureaucracy has no past and no future, and he gives the bureaucracy an historical justification. If it is historically justified, it has both an historical past and an historical future.

In the second place, Shachtman nowhere speaks of an historical justification of Stalinism, nor does he suggest that it has one. Here we have not a forgery, but an invention.

And in the third place, the only one in our movement who ever spoke of an historical justification of the Stalinist bureaucracy was—Leon Trotsky. As in the case of the definition of a trade union, Frankel does not know where Trotsky ends and where Shachtman begins (this is his only qualification for writing on either one of them)

On December 28, 1934, Trotsky wrote: "Indeed, the historical justification for the very existence of the bureaucracy is lodged in the fact that we are still very far removed from socialist society." *(The Kirov Assassination, page 10)* Further, he notes that the Stalinist dictatorship is both a heritage of past class struggles and an instrument for preventing a new class struggle. "In this and in this alone rests the historical justification for the existence of the present Soviet dictatorship." *(Ibid., page 11)* Again, in the same work: "It would be criminal to deny the progressive work accomplished by the Soviet bureaucracy." *(Ibid., page 25)*

*(This Trotsky pamphlet was translated by J. G. Wright. Wright is editor of the Fourth International. Without a murmur, he prints Frankel's ignorant and venomous observations on "historical justification." What does it matter? Who will*)

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*It can only be touched on here. It really requires and warrants a separate treatment. We hope to deal with it another time.*
read the answer to it? Is it against the “petty bourgeois opposition”? Is it true and harsh and tough and vicious? Well, so much the better! That’s how we rough-and-tumble proletarians (i.e., J. G. Wright! i.e., H. Frankel! i.e., J. Hansen!) write, and if you don’t like it you can lump it! Let’s print it, dammit—all!)

In a sense, we are able to accept Trotsky’s characterization of the bureaucracy. That is why we are able to speak of the new class without a past and without a future—that is, without an historical past or future. If Frankel had resisted his penchant for treading phrases out of their context, the meaning would have been clearer.

We say the Stalinist bureaucracy is a new ruling class because it is the “owner of the conditions of production.” Despite similarities in certain aspects with other class societies (the capitalist, for example), it differs basically from all of them in its own unique mode of production, in the “specific economic form in which unpaid surplus labor is pumped out of the direct producers,” in the distribution of the means of production and of the products of economy. As a result of unforeseen historical circumstances, it arose out of “the needs of production”; it did develop the productive forces in a way that no other class could under the given conditions.

We say this class is without a past. We seek thereby to distinguish it from the great and durable classes of history which, for various objective reasons (economic, geographical, etc.), went through a long evolution and decisively directed the course of social development. What Frankel says about “every ruling class” is true only in a manner of speaking, that is, with the necessary historical limitations. In other words, it is not true as an absolutely valid dogma. History is studied with the record of classes under whose rule society stagnated and which could not be fitted into Frankel’s rigid formula. Whoever does not know this had better rush to a serious history before he even pretends to speak about Marxism.

Marxism does not say that the world, and everything in it, marches straight from primitive communism to slavery, then to feudalism, then to capitalism, then to the proletarian dictatorship and communism, with no reversions, sideleaps, combinations or “oddities” whatsoever. This is an utterly primitive conception of Marxism.

Marxism is No Supra-Historical Dogma

“My critic,” wrote Marx to the Russian Populist, Danielson, “must needs metamorphose my outline of the genesis of capitalism in western Europe into a historic-philosophical theory of the general course, fatally imposed upon all peoples, regardless of the historical circumstances in which they find themselves placed, in order to arrive finally at that economic formation which insures with the greatest amount of productive power of social labor the most complete development of man. But I beg his pardon. He does me too much honor and too much shame at the same time….

“…Strikingly analogical events, occurring, however, in different historical environments [lead] to entirely dissimilar results. By studying each of these evolutions separately and then comparing them, one will easily find the key to these phenomena, but one will never succeed with the master-key of a historico-philosophical theory whose supreme virtue consists in being supra-historical.” (My emphasis—M. S.)

Marx often repeated the same thought. All classes and all ruling classes are not the same and do not always have the same characteristics. They cannot always be measured by the same criteria. The same obviously holds true of all societies, for in each of them, as Marx points out, the “prevailing element” is a different one. To apply the same criteria to the present ruling class and the present social order in Russia as is applied, for example, to feudalism, simply makes no sense from the Marxian or any other standpoint. “By studying each of these evolutions separately, and then comparing them, one will easily find the key to these phenomena.” This is what we have sought to do in our analysis of Stalinist Russia. A supra-historical master-key does not exist. Not even a thinker of Frankel’s stature can, if we may say so, forge one.

We say, further, that this new class has no future. Why? Because it arose at the stage of the final decay and crisis of class society. It has given no sign of an ability to resolve the crisis which the combined forces of world capitalism have failed to resolve. It is historically conditioned by the concrete circumstances of its origin. One of these circumstances is the existence of its origin. One of these circumstances is the existence of a modern proletariat which, on a world scale (but not on a national scale), is capable of breaking the fetters on the productive forces, on social development, on freedom, and thus resolving the last social crisis of humanity.

That is how it stands historically. Theoretically, it is conceivable that this new class may have “a future” and that on a world scale. Such a perspective might open up for it if, for example, it was conclusively demonstrated that the proletariat is organically incapable of resolving the crisis, of taking and holding power and employing it to inaugurate a classless society. Nothing of the sort has yet been demonstrated, much less demonstrated conclusively. There are some dilettantes and ex-radicals who confine themselves to just such speculations, and even make them their program of “action.” We for our part find little interest in them, and less need for them. Our task is the mobilization of the working class for the revolutionary assault against decaying capitalism. Our task is not ponderation over the growth and “future” of Stalinism, but the struggle against it for the future of the proletariat.

Successful struggle against a foe requires an understanding of his nature. That Frankel and his like do not understand, is already bad. That they refuse to understand—and a precondition of understanding is intelligent and loyal discussion—be it ever so vigorous—is worse. Frankel is only a minor epigone of Trotsky. Trotsky’s whole New Course is an instructive protest against the type of methods, outlook, procedure that Frankel and his friends represent. That is why Frankel speaks so cavalierly of Trotsky’s work. That is why he does not give the reader as much as an inkling of its contents. We have already suggested that he does not know much. But he knows enough to see that what Trotsky wrote in 1923-24 is a timely and thorough indictment of what he stands for. In this sense, a reading of The New Course may be recommended all over again as an excellent preparation for a fruitful discussion of “the Russian question.”

Max Shachtman.

A COST-PLUS WAGE
An Answer to the Wage-Freeze
By MAX SHACHTMAN
PRICE: 5 CENTS IN BUNDLES: 3 CENTS

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The Anti-Marxian Offensive--II

On Some New Critics of Scientific Socialism

III—PROGRAM

Third, the critics assure us that the state is not, as the Marxists contend, an organ of class oppression, but merely a “broker,” negotiating among various groups. In democratic countries it has a “usable” tradition and is responsive to “democratic” pressures. The Marxian theory of the state, moreover, has no validity especially today when we are already living under a “transformed” economy.

(1) This supra-class concept of the state explains the political-economic “plans” which the critics present as alternatives to the Marxist analysis and program. The “plans” are labeled with such titles as “mixed economy,” “permanent NEPS,” “pluralistic economy,” etc. In essence, the critics deplore the contemporary fusion of political and economic power and the presence of monopolies; some recommend a “partnership” of all classes in a “mixed economy” of private and public enterprise; others, the conversion of monopolies into public corporations under a “people’s” or “functional socialism.”

The “plans” of the former group, of course, are actually proposals to freeze the status quo, since a “mixed economy” is already in existence, the automatic result of capitalist development. Just how a country which now consists of small and large business, public utilities, government ownership, cooperatives, viz., the “pluralistic” ideal, can move toward a fuller “democracy” is never made clear. The anti-statists repeat their nebulous formulations of “decentralization” and “regionalism” associated with the schemes of Borsodi, Mumford, Huxley and various members of the SP, but never do we hear of anything concerning the socio-economic and political relationships existing among the “pluralistic” units of the economy or the possible future of such units in an era of rapidly-developing statism. Or, how the private (competitive) and public (“socialized”) sectors of the country are to be compartmentalized so as to prevent conflicting encroachments not only in terms of economics but of class and group interests.

(2) The “pluralistic” economy is offered as a “democratic” alternative to socialism which in its alleged state control of political and economic power possesses a “totalitarian potential.” Russia, of course, is always used, especially by the revisionists, as the historical example of “socialism.” It is interesting to note that the very anti-statist critics who are recommending “permanent NEPS” have overlooked the minor detail that the NEP was introduced by those who had first captured state power and who were, therefore, in a position to command the economy. (What the Bolsheviks, incidentally, considered a retreat, necessitated by internal and international factors, the proponents of “pluralism” present as a progressive “plan.”) The “totalitarian potential” as a by-product of socialism has never been historically validated. What has been proved is that it is an inherent tendency of capitalist development. The “decentralizers,” for all their apprehensions of statism, are merely preoccupying themselves with derivative, economic minutiae without ever coming to grips with the fundamental nature of the state. Only those who divorce politics from economics and are, therefore, unable to locate the locus of power or to comprehend its functions write sterile “pluralistic” programs; (8) those who own and control the corporate interests of the capitalist state formulate the practical strategies projected, for example, by the NAM, the WPB, the CEC, the Federation of British Industries, and by men like Swope, Baruch, Batt, Sloan, et al. “Pluralists” permit themselves the luxuries of constructing utopian blueprints, for instance, of hemispheric democracy and abundance, whereas monopoly power establishes an Inter-American Developmental Commission or an Anglo-American Caribbean Commission to perpetuate its rule. Not only do these utopians seem to be oblivious of contemporary predatory politics but they seem to have no comprehension of those historical forces which have shaped the world in which we are living. They would do well to consult the factual data (not necessarily the political conclusions) assembled in the works of R. Bradley, K. Simpson, F. Neumann, O. Nathan, S. Haxey, etc., where they will find incontrovertible proof—if proof can convince them—that economic power means social oppression and political domination.

(3) In spite of their own avowed anti-statism, the “pluralists” reveal another bit of characteristic petty bourgeois inconsistency. Not only do they call upon the “government” to perform its alleged functions of “arbitrating,” “co-ordinating,” etc., but to supplement the economic mechanism whenever the “autonomism” of the market ceases to function. (15) Since, according to the managerial-technical theoreticians, control and not ownership is the paramount factor today, government “planning” and “control” are logical procedures in our “transformed” economy. Thus, the Marxian contention that planned economy and the private or state ownership of the means of production are contradictory categories is refuted by the simple device of inventing new classes, new productive modes and relations. And for further proof that what is necessary today is socialization not of the means but of the “purposes” of production, the critics appeal both to authority and to fact.

In the first case they find support in the Keynes-Hansen proposals of governmental controls in savings, investment, low interest lending, tax programs, public works, social services, etc. This super New Deal-WPA which collapsed even under the most propitious conditions and had to be superseded by a war economy is now intended to solve the crises of post-war capitalism. But even the “pluralists,” like some Brookings Institute economists, at times have their less sanguine moments. The anti-Marxists of The Nation, for example, following the Laski group in England, propose a revolution “by consent” to the Union Leaguers who are warned that if they do not follow Keynes they will have to “choose” Marx and, what is still worse, they may not be here to do the “choosing.”

In the second case, those who justify governmental intervention in our economy point to the war as proof that capitalism can under similar “peace time” co-ordination provide full employment. Even such “left wing” capitalists as Senators Bone, Kilgore and LaFollette argue along these lines. Since the purpose of an economy, according to these men, seems to be full employment—which, by the way, is not achieved even under war conditions—there is nothing wrong with a system

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which implies intensive exploitation, huge profits and disparities in living conditions. The constant references, therefore, to such abstractions as "democracy," "justice," "freedom," etc., goals with which the "pluralists" are ostensibly concerned, would appear to be entirely irrelevant, if not superfluous. Contrary to these people, a war economy does not prove capitalism's ability to plan but merely to coordinate and control in the interests of the capitalists as a class, to preserve, in other words, existing property relations even if individual capitalists have to be "disciplined" and small business driven to ruination. The war economy also necessitates the release of scientific, technical and managerial skills which under "normal" conditions are restricted in the interests of a scarcity economy. Measures, however, are already under way to suppress the inventions released by the war demands in order to protect investments in pre-war products and technical methods. The capitalist conscience knows no imperative but that of profit. Patriotism is of secondary consideration, as was strikingly illustrated in the cases of productive restrictions dictated by such interests as aluminum, synthetic rubber, magnesium, etc. The fundamental error, of course, in the idea of a war versus peace economy consists in treating war as an unfortunate interruption of "normal" functions instead of viewing it as an integral part of the capitalist system, let alone as capitalism's major industry. From the standpoint of humanistic values, war is naturally the most catastrophic aspect of capitalism; from the standpoint of political economy, however, it is the most illuminating manifestation of those capitalist categories, which under less dramatic conditions, appear to possess "freedom," "autonomy," "fluidity," viz., wage-labor, the market, class interests, property rights, and state coercion. (4) The state, according to the anti-Marxists, exhibits protéan qualities. Not only can it be an equal partner in a "mixed" economy, but it can assume the rôle of a disinterested judge. (14) Just how or under what conditions these functional reallocations take place is never explained. What appears to be possible, if one is to accept bourgeois political science, is that fundamentally the state or "government" is a mechanism deliberately balanced above all classes. (17) Thus, what the Marxists would describe as Bonapartist or crisis-government is considered by the bourgeois theoreticians to be a political principle underlying normal societal functions. A natural corollary of this concept is the "democratic" society with its "functional" groups not classes. Whereas it was easy for the ruling classes during the early days of expanding capitalism (class fluidity, territorial expansion, sectional differences, etc.) to perpetuate this ideology, it becomes relatively difficult today to continue the same theme without necessary variations. If, as the different national polls reveal, the average American seems cynically indifferent to Atlantic Charters and Four Freedoms and dubious about post-war security, perhaps new formulas must be found. And who, after all, can provide better formulas for the bourgeois than renegades like Corey or Hook with their "people's" or "functional socialism."

(5) Corey, for instance, advises us to utilize our "democratic, usable tradition" in behalf of socialism. "Democracy" naturally is never defined in terms of class or group struggle but in terms of vague, hypostasized concepts. At no point does he ever differentiate between the "democratic tradition" of the bourgeoisie, whose "democracy" has always meant freedom to conquer markets, to exploit and to defend property; and working class democratic rights, by-products of class struggle in opposition to that bourgeoisie. Which "tradition" is to be exploited? He argues against socialism which allegedly socializes all property; he, on the contrary, proposes (besides the conversion of monopolies into public corporations) the preservation of private enterprise in agriculture and small business. If his proposals are to be considered as something more than a refurbished popular frontism or "folk socialism" (a Sollman-Jaksch variety) within the petty bourgeois framework of a Jeffersonian democracy, then Corey is actually calling for a peaceful cessation of the class struggle, since he is asking the bourgeoisie to liquidate their own monopolies. (18) Just what we are to do in case they refuse to be expropriated (or "compensated" perhaps?) or, as is their wont, even take the offensive while Corey's liberals are educating the "public" is not made clear. It comes with rather poor grace from him to castigate German Social Democracy for not having employed more resolute measures; they also prattled about "democracy" in general, about the intangible line of demarcation between capitalism and socialism, and about not "alienating" the middle classes, the very classes who should have been won over to an audacious socialism and not abandoned to fascism, whose demagogy was expressly designed to "cater to" petty bourgeois ideology. Corey's strictures, moreover, against the absolute socialization supposedly advocated by Marxists is pure renegade rationalization. He knows, of course, that even under such complete statification as exists in Russia, small peasant property is permitted. Marxists have always considered the practicable aspects of socialization and of other economic measures as part of a post-revolutionary situation, related, therefore, to such factors as the development of technology; the state of the economy under conditions of civil war, counter-revolution, and intervention; the class psychological relationships, mass political development, etc. Corey's appeal to Kautsky's statement that "in a socialist society there can exist . . . the most various forms of economic enterprises" has relevance only if we assume first, the capture of state power by the working class and its allies (not, incidentally, by itself, as the anti-Marxian distortion insists upon repeating). All other problems become derivative after that important fact. Corey's appeal for small business and farm support is based upon arrant deception, and lends support to the possessive-competitive impulses of these people. In pure a priori and fascist manner he is guaranteeing them complete inviolability of their property interests under his type of static "socialism." The Marxists, on the other hand, attempt the more difficult but necessary task of showing these classes, first, that during the transition periods subsequent to the capture of power varieties of economic "pluralism" will always be theoretically permissible, provided society keeps developing in the direction away from an exchange toward a use-economy, and second, that only under such use-economy can these and other classes competently fulfill themselves, by ceasing, in other words, to be classes altogether.

(6) The reductio ad absurdum of the "open arena" concept of "pressure" politics upon the state is to be seen in the most recent position of Sidney Hook. His first basic revisionism of Marx with regard to the state (which provided him with a rationale for supporting the war) stated that no one could ascertain the nature of the state—or anything, for that matter—by merely defining it. One could determine that only by studying its specific "functions" within given historical contexts. The state, according to this Deweyan "instrumentalism," must be approached on the basis of what it "does," and since it does what "pressure" forces it to do, it is anyone's state. If a ruling class yields to pressure, says Hook, this is "just as significant to understanding the nature of the state as its reason for yielding."

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(a) This is a logical confusion of the general and the specific. A state defends the propriety of the ruling class; the kind and extent of its "yielding" depends upon the given nature and intensity of its opposing class forces. If Hook is offering this epigrammatic gem in order to draw a distinction between the "pressurable" democracies and the "nonpressurable" totalitarians so that he may feel justified in defending the former, he still has to prove the absence of class struggle in the latter. To Hook, Nazism is a counter-revolution against the principles of the French Revolution, which we are now defending.

(b) All those who disagree with him on the nature of this war are labeled as "mad," psychopathic, "cowardly" and "socially irresponsible." (Eastman calls them "bogots.") This kind of belligerency need fool no one. Neither is it to be interpreted as bad manners. It is merely a psychological defense to conceal a collaborationism, made doubly suspect by repeated references to Marx's alleged pacifism and gradualism. Part of this defense, for example, are Eastman's uncouth warnings about the necessity for a return to "moral character and principle" and Hook's challenge to Marxists to "subject their methods of achieving democratic socialism to serious and scientific criticism."

(c) Apparently dissatisfied with his gross revisionism, Hook has decided to refine it still further. He has now decided that even "pressure" upon the state is not necessary to get us what we want. All we have to do is to "pressure" President Roosevelt himself and all will go well. Proof? Why cannot the democratic forces do what the Catholics did during the Spanish Civil War when the President showed himself to be amenable to suggestion by refusing to send aid to the Loyalists? President Roosevelt, in other words, could just as well have shipped arms to Spain, even though there was a civil war raging which could have, with those very arms, as well as with developing revolutionary forces, brought the working class to power. The President, a mere automaton, will no doubt defend the work of the state. The institution of his office could not be more embarrassing. It would release human potentialities, not degrade and enslave them. If the "arena" concept means this, then no rational mind could quarrel with it. But the "instrumentalist" is not content to defend this as an ideal; he looks at present reality and offers his approval, since he sees "democracy at work." Kallen's "equal liberty for different doctrines" in actuality means the liberty of one class to monopolize the means of propaganda and to alienate the majority from the means of livelihood; the liberty of totalitarian groups (tools of class rule) to employ lies against racial minorities; the liberty of vested interests to inculcate the virtues of regimentation and slavery.

No, it is the Deweyites, not the Marxists, who are the metaphysicians superimposing abstractions upon a recalcitrant reality. They can afford the dubious privilege of the "open arena" ideology only because they never knew or have conveniently forgotten its historically-conditioned class roots. In the struggle between capitalism and feudalism this ideology served as a weapon. In terms of a new class morality it stressed the superiority of reason over faith and of man's "natural" goodness over the corrupting institutions of church, monarchy, and nobility. If the "instrumentalist" need further proof that within their "open arena" the civil and political "rights" of the working class now as always have to be fought for in opposition to and not alongside of the bourgeoisie, they can study the contrasting opinions handed down by the U. S. Supreme Court on the one hand in the Minneapolis Labor Case and on the other in the Nazi-Hartzel-Baumgarten cases. The decisions in connection with the latter are already being hailed by our liberals as a "brilliant new chapter" in our juridical history. In this they are consistent, because, according to their "democratic" assumptions, rule by myth, fraud and coercion is also part of the "arena" concept.

(d) On the home front, it can show similar successes. None of your Marxian united fronts for the Hookses, Deweys, Kallen's et al., in order to combat reaction and fascism. This is to be accomplished by cooperating with those very forces themselves in order to preserve "democracy." Just as the "instrumentalists" have refined their "pressure" theory, they have also improved upon that of the "open arena." Under the latter concept all groups compete ideologically with the hope of winning adherents to their particular programs. But even this method apparently smacked too much of "sectarianism" to the philosophers, so they decided to combine forces with their competitors (shades of the Red Referendum). True, Hook had been accusing his opponents continually for subscribing to "authoritarianism," "reaction," "corporate thinking," "faulty logic," "fundamentalism," "irresponsibility" and "obscurantism," and Kallen had warned that tolerance of illiberalism would spell "suicide," but that did not prevent these doughty "instrumentalists" and their followers from participating in the conglomerate "Conference on Science, Philosophy and Religion in Their Relation to the Democratic Way of Life." (18)

At this assemblage Mortimer Adler, contrary to Hook and his associates, took the initiative by drawing what he thought to be a line of demarcation between his own group and that of his adversaries. Thinking probably in terms of eventual institutional practices and political programs, he labeled Hook's group "atheistic saboteurs... more dangerous to democracy than Hitler." Hook at this point defended himself and called upon the "democrats" to leave the conference. Had Adler, in other words, not taken the offensive, the "instrumentalists" would still probably be attempting to effect "democratic" programs with reactionary totalitarians "Humanistic" clergymen and academicians of "good will." After all, as Kallen concluded, the "democratic way is the way toward equal liberty for different doctrines."

(e) These prigish "instrumentalists," constantly admonishing the Marxists in the name of "means and ends," do not even possess the virtue of logical consistency. Their "open arena" concept applied specifically, for example, in the case of civil liberties would seem to imply that all contestants, like competitors in any fair game, use the same procedures, obey the same regulations, and aim for the same goal. The arena should be a place where only accurate data are presented, where only one method is employed in such presentation, i.e., sober logic, and where only one democratic goal is involved, viz., the liberation of the human spirit. Free speech, for instance, under such conditions, would be "free" because it utilized democratic means for the realization of democratic ends. It would release human potentialities, not degrade and enslave them. If the "arena" concept means this, then no rational mind could quarrel with it. But the "instrumentalist" is not content to defend this as an ideal; he looks at present reality and offers his approval, since he sees "democracy at work." Kallen's "equal liberty for different doctrines" in actuality means the liberty of one class to monopolize the means of propaganda and to alienate the majority from the means of livelihood; the liberty of totalitarian groups (tools of class rule) to employ lies against racial minorities; the liberty of vested interests to inculcate the virtues of regimentation and slavery.

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(7) As far as John Dewey himself is concerned, he too has counterposed his own "scientific" reasoning to Marxian "metaphysics." According to him, the Marxian theory of the state and of class struggles as the motivating forces in history is almost anachronistic. The Marxists are guilty of not employing the inductive-experimental method to ascertain causative factors but of merely assuming in a priori fashion that class struggles exist and then proceeding to read these back into history.
(Max Eastman seems to have earned quite a reputation for many years by peddling this and similar gibberish.) The whole concept of class struggle, to judge from Dewey's caricature, is a foregone theory of mechanical "reaction" which it is the Marxists' duty to convert into a state of classless harmony. The trouble, for instance, with the Bolsheviks (liberalism, like Nazism, also needs its scapegoats, the Bolshevists having introduced all the sins into the garden of our "democratic" Eden) was that instead of first exploring possible avenues of cooperation with the peasantry, they dogmatically assumed that these were reactionary classes and acted accordingly. Marx, as well as his followers, you see, never studied history; only Dewey has done that. They simply awoke one fine morning and decided to invent a class-struggle theory, the result of which is that they have subscribed parasitically to it in the face of refuting realities.(20)

The whole experimental-pragmatic approach to societal problems of the Dewey-Hook-Eastman school is, of course, another figment of petty bourgeois imagination. The ideal of objective experimentation is possible only in a truly democratic community and not in a class society whose science is subverted to specific vested interests. Under present conditions, the by-products of such an experiment will provide a philosophic rationale for class collaboration and "peaceful" mediation. "Instrumentalism" is perfectly explicable in terms of an earlier expanding capitalistic technology. It also developed its own political philosophy, expressing itself in various forms of social meliorism championed by the Deweys, Beards, and Parringtons. What these men failed to recognize was that their tangential tinkering were actually concerned with the by-products of a more fundamental class struggle whose reality they always denied.

JAMES BARRETT.

[Continued in next issue]

(8) The revisionists persist in their pre-war enthusiasm for the cooperative movement as a panacea. Recent articles by Chamberlain, Barnes and others point once more to the glories of the Scandinavian middle way without realizing the huge differences which separate the predominantly agrarian economies of Sweden and Norway from a highly industrialized organization like ours, viz., Scandinavia's politicalized trade union movement, her favorable trade agreements and large profits resulting from not having been involved in the last war, her relative social stability based to a great extent upon territorial compactness and cultural homogeneity, etc., factors, however, which it is difficult to reproduce in the cooperative movement itself, not only can it offer no solution to the problems related to capitalism but it contributes to their aggravation by adopting, of necessity, the commercial techniques of all other huge business concerns (wages, profits, competition, management, etc.). To expect the cooperatives by themselves (as so many pseudo-socialists imply) to effect an emancipation of the working class behind the back of society, as Marx stated, is to subscribe to sheer Utopia.

(9) The works of Beard, Hazlitt, Nevins, Commager, etc., dealing with the crisis in our governmental machinery, represent a similar schizophrenic tendency in the field of political science.

(10) Business as a System of Power.

(11) Big Business, Efficiency and Fascism.

(12) Behemoth.


(15) They show a tender regard not only for the middle classes but for the working class as well. An interesting corollary of their delirious prediction is their attack upon centralised union leadership which, like the state, deprives the worker of liberty. The solution, they maintain, is not to have these leaders share responsibility not only to its members but to management and government as well. Thus under the guise of this happy family pattern the plutocrats are to be found among our younger generation of union leaders, are helping to tie the trade unions closer to the state.

(16) John Chamberlain, who prefers the term broker, has committed something in the nature of a Freudian slip. In an attempt to show how the state in subjecting itself to group pressure can therefore become anyone's state (John Doe's apparently as well as Aloea's, du Pont's or Standard Oil's), he refers to the democratic state as a "limited racket." Such terminology is more than sprightly journalism; it aptly expresses, in spite of the writer's intentions, the inherent gangster ethics of a competitive society. Another terminological regret is that Mr. Chamberlain is afforded by his notion of "legitimacy." Drucker, Chase and Chamberlain, who are disturbed about the problem of "legitimacy" of revolution,etc., seem to consider that "managerial" societies, need worry no longer. Lippmann assures us that any group or nation which can "rule" or "hold power" possesses "legitimacy." Others write pref- er the euphemism, "realistic," in place of "legitimation." Fortified with quotations from Talleyrand and Clemenceau, they urge the necessity for curbing "unrestrained power," which is the alleged cause of present world chaos.

(17) This synonyous use of these terms is not merely semantic confusion. The failure to define the state in an historically conditioned type of government, to differentiate, in other words, between administration and coercion, is a rationalistic device to distort the harsh realities of a class society. It is much more comforting to speak of a "mixed" economy of harmoniously "functioning" groups including "management, unions, consumers and government" (emphasis mine).

(18) It is interesting to note that Corey unexpectedly adds as a self-contradictory afterthought, "Justice, in the final analysis, is not simply a product of institutional arrangements." I. Lippkowitz, who in Monopoly and Big Business also argued some years before Corey that the state is the "servant of the majority," adds another of controlling an industry provided we have a truly democratic form of government." Corey, somewhat like Jesting Plata, pleads to clarify his pet theory, which his non-sequitor remark can be paraphrased to read "We could have democracy, provided we had democracy."
Supplement to
The New International
October, 1944

CAPITALIST BARBARISM OR SOCIALISM

On the Development of Declining Capitalism, and On the
Situation, Tasks and Perspectives of the Labor Movement

By
The International Communists of Germany

INTRODUCTION

We welcome the opportunity to publish the study of our German Fourth Internationalist comrades. It merits the closest attention of every reader who is interested in the question of the evolution of capitalist society and of the problems it raises for the working class and revolutionary Marxist movements.

In past issues of The New International, and in the political documents of the Workers Party, we have set forth and developed the theory that decaying capitalism, of which fascism is only the most brutal yet logical expression, is hurling society back to a new barbarism.

In this process, nations and peoples which long ago solved the problem of national independence and political democracy are once more faced with the need of fighting for national freedom and democratic rights. For millions of people in the modern parts of the world, class oppression becomes multiplied by national oppression, or, more accurately, becomes fused with it, and the economic and political status of these people is brought closer to the status of the peoples in the “classic” colonial and semi-colonial countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America. The relentless tendency in capitalism of a decreasing number of monopolists ruling over an increasing number of the oppressed, is coupled with the tendency of a decreasing number of imperialist nations ruling over an increasing number of oppressed nations. These tendencies manifest themselves in a general restriction and destruction of democratic rights and institutions, directed primarily at paralyzing the working class, or rather at aggravating a paralysis which permitted the development of these reactionary tendencies to take place without effective resistance.

However, precisely because class rule over the proletariat is intensified by the fusion of class and national oppression, it is not only galvanized into action once more but is able to proclaim a program which can rally all the oppressed classes around it more easily than ever for an assault upon the ruling state power. This tendency, too, has been amply and conclusively revealed in the growth of the revolutionary “underground national” movements of Europe during the war. The Marxian vanguard can be reconstituted and become a decisive force only in so far as it becomes part of such movements, becomes the most vigorous champion in the fight for democratic rights, infuses the masses in these movements with revolutionary class-consciousness, makes the proletarian class method of struggle prevail in them, and demonstrates in practice how the genuinely popular aspirations for democracy are fully realizable only in a socialist society.

The views of the German comrades, as elaborated in their document, are in fundamental solidarity with those summarized above. As the reader can see, the Germans present a motivation of their own. To be sure, the establishment of a common standpoint between us on the tasks of the proletariat and the revolutionary vanguard in the present period—and this is now decisive—does not necessarily imply literal agreement with every single word in the German document. Indeed, so far as the section on Russia is concerned, our differences with the views of Trotsky, which the German comrades still seem to accept, at least by implication, are too familiar to need special emphasis. However, as the authors write, they are not “proclaiming unassailable truths,” and, like ourselves, they are ready to participate seriously in a serious discussion.

The same cannot be said, unfortunately, for the leadership of the Socialist Workers Party, which has found pretext after pretext, each less subtle than the other, for not bringing the German contribution to the attention of its membership and the readers of its press. We publish it gladly, and thereby maintain the tradition of The New International with respect to the discussion of the problems and tasks of revolutionary Marxism. Upon those to whom Marxism is a closed book—in both senses of the term!—the contribution of the German comrades may have a little effect as have other serious contributions to the development of Marxian thought and action. Happily, they are in a minority among the supporters of the Fourth International. One of our aims is to keep them in that state.

The New International

The reader will note that we reprint in this supplement the first section of the document, which was first printed in last month’s issue of The New International. This is done not only to make the entire document conveniently available, but because we have had the opportunity since last month to make a number of corrections in the translation that make for clearer reading.
Capitalist Barbarism or Socialism

FOREWORD

The following study on the development taking place in declining capitalism and its significance for the labor movement was written between the end of May and the beginning of September, 1943. The presentation revolves around certain opinions that we have of the essence of imperialism, and which (for the purpose of speedy mutual understanding among us and because everything must be given a name) we have called for the past twelve years "the theory of the retrogressive movement." By this we mean: In the last stage of imperialism, the economy, the politics and so forth of bourgeoise society develop backward in a peculiar manner. The course, the results, the perspectives of this "backward development"—these are the themes with which we deal.

Originally, this presentation was directly bound up with the discussion over the so-called "national question." Two years ago (in the December, 1942, issue) our "Three Theses" appeared in the Fourth International. Comrade Max Shachtman referred repeatedly to these "Three Theses" in The New International (they were reprinted in our London still "unassailable" group of the Workers International League). When they were finally published in the Fourth International (they actually date back to October 19, 1941) they were accompanied by a criticism of Comrades Morrow and Morrison. In his article, Comrade Morrow explicitly called upon us to answer his criticism and to think out our position "to its ultimate implication." Although belatedly, as a result of unfavorable conditions, we fulfilled his request gladly. In this sense, consequently, our work had its origin in the request of Comrade Morrow. After its completion, however, we abbreviated it considerably and eliminated the entire polemic for the most varied reasons (obstacles placed in the way of its translation, difficulties encountered in publication, daily increasing gulf between the criticism and the reply, etc.). In so far as certain objections are still dealt with in general, they are of an anonymous, general, illustrative, and not particularly polemical nature. In brief: we confine ourselves here to presenting our position as a whole as well as we can. The entire document should be considered simply as an essay, such as may be written at any time in the interests of theoretical orientation.

That the questions dealt with here are of the greatest importance for the socialist movement is beyond doubt. Naturally: we lay claim neither to the perfection of the presentation, nor to having proclaimed "unassailable truths." Our views may be wrong, mistakes of fact may have occurred, etc. But on this score, we can be instructed only if we submit to open criticism. In this respect, a few words remain to be said:

Thirteen months—the period between the termination and the publication of our study—is a long time. The leadership of the Socialist Workers Party could not be persuaded in this period to assist us and to take over its publication. For our part, we have no intention of breaking out into loud complaints about the "bureaucratism" of the Socialist Workers Party leadership. Rather, we are of this opinion: Bureaucratism is always the symptom of a great political weakness and can be overcome only politically. Events are placing on the order of the day political decisions of the greatest purport. Whoever wants to remain behind must take the consequences upon his own shoulders. The SWP leadership's superciliousness toward the stepchildren of the movement in Europe who are weighed down by "defeat," is no proof of its ability to endure the trial by fire. In any case, we do not mean to seek the debate in the present document over the so-called "Three Theses" as far back as the time when they were written down (that is, in the autumn of 1942); and (b) pursued these questions energetically and worked out what is in our opinion a correct position. And that is all that is involved.

COMMITTEE ABROAD OF THE IKD.
(International Communists of Germany.)
London, September, 1944.

I—DECLINING CAPITALISM OR...?

Imperialism is declining, disintegrating, rotting, agonizing capitalism. The purely verbal acknowledgment of this definition is general. If, however, it is taken for what it is, i.e., a declaration that is concrete, well defined in content and explicit called upon us to answer this criticism and to think out our position "to its ultimate implication." Although belatedly, as a result of unfavorable conditions, we fulfilled his request gladly. In this sense, consequently, our work had its origin in the request of Comrade Morrow. After its completion, however, we abbreviated it considerably and eliminated the entire polemic for the most varied reasons (obstacles placed in the way of its translation, difficulties encountered in publication, daily increasing gulf between the criticism and the reply, etc.). In so far as certain objections are still dealt with in general, they are of an anonymous, general, illustrative, and not particularly polemical nature. In

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Imperialism is declining, disintegrating, rotting, agonizing capitalism. The purely verbal acknowledgment of this definition is general. If, however, it is taken for what it is, i.e., a declaration that is concrete, well defined in content and weighty in consequences, substantial difficulties are most often immediately encountered. The most common objection that is then raised against a formula like "retrogressive development of economy," brings along with it out of its midst also those conditions that disintegrate brings along with it out of its midst also those conditions that disintegrate its rise as well as in its highest development. As a matter of fact, every organism, upon reaching maturity, brings along with it out of its midst also those conditions that disintegrate brings along with it out of its midst also those conditions that disintegrate it, that bring about its decay and putrefaction, and "re-develop" it more and more toward its original state. In the course of this process, to be sure, it brings certain features more plainly into relief again; and while, on the one hand, these features had never left it, on the other hand they were more characteristic of the period of its origin predominates in it almost exclusively again in the period of its decay.

The Question of the Quality of the New Forms

In view of the neglect of economic questions, this point is important enough to scrutinize a little closer.

Lenin's definition of imperialism is affirmed: the "overripeness" of capitalism is spoken of in a thousand articles and resolutions; documents (written by Trotsky) are sworn by in which may be read: "Capitalism has ceased to increase the material wealth of humanity; after the seizure of power, the proletariat will have to pay for the work of economic destruction of capitalism," etc. This and much more already enjoys the status of the commonplace and —therewith everything apparently seems to be in the best of order. For when the attempt is made not to leave the "work of destruction" simply to itself but to grasp it as a retrogressive development or "retrogressive movement," you run right into the pedantic-schoolmasterly forefinger in the shape of the "new forms."

Due deference to the new forms. They have their place and their significance. The question is what position do they occupy and can they alter the situation? If they could, then everything would be fine and simple.

"As is known," however, the superiority of Marxism over bourgeois science is based precisely upon first disregarding apparent or real exceptions from the rule, upon considering the process as a whole, and only then showing how the observed deviations are nevertheless subject to the fundamental laws.

What is taking place before our very eyes and slipping into "ever new forms" is nothing but the "daily practice" (if you please) of the historical tendency of capitalist accumulation that Marx de-
scribed. All that must be remembered is that this description, like all schematic illustrations, represents the so-to-speak "ideal" and not the real course of development. In dialectics, Marxism, in conformity with the methodical method, is a doctrine of quality which explains the development as well as the decay of the capitalist mode of production by its internal contradictions. In doing so it endeavors constantly to fix the point where the quantitative growth of a phenomenon becomes decisive for the appraisal of the situation as a whole, that is, where quantity turns into quality.

**Negative Definition**

This other quality does not necessarily have to be of a "positive" nature, as in the investigation of a given organism, in our case, of imperialism— we come to the conclusion, anticipated in general by Marx and concretely drawn at least by all Marxists, that monopoly has become a fetter on the mode of production which bloomed with it and under it, that therefore the "productive forces have ceased to grow" (Trotsky), then we are obviously confronted with a turn of things on the "negative" or declining side. To put it differently: The definitive disintegration, putrefaction, stunting or "retrogressive development" of the organisms starts at the very moment when they have passed their highest degree of maturity. This is then experienced as uttermost accentuation and must destroy them.

Applied to capitalism this means: If in its "transformation period" it cannot be delivered at the right time from its antagonisms, if it is transformed into its opposite and when its further development must be considered and evaluated solely and exclusively from the standpoint of its inner decomposition. And what is then to be studied, and provided with practical conclusions, are only the forms in which the decomposition is carried through and consummated, despite the frequently contrary appearances.

**Retrogressive Development and Two Objections**

In point of fact, there will be a great difference in conceptions, depending on whether the theory of imperialism as capitalism in decay is based on a firm foundation, or one simply does without foundations altogether.

We proceed resolutely from the self-decomposition of monopoly capitalism and arrive first of all at the recognition of those economically and politically equally important phenomena of decay that were already enumerated (even if far from completely) in History as diverse as it is extensive. The process of self-decomposition, which is free from economic crises and subject only to "political" crises, if any, and which is therefore driven into the bargain, which turns the wheat with solid thoughtlessness and absurdities, you cannot tell what quantity is actually supposed to have been transformed into self-decomposition already increased. If you can only accentuate, it was transformed into the "theoretical" egg-dance and presented precisely these absurdities as the "contradictions" belonging to the dialectic.

2. Mised by the contrary appearance, an opponent may come forward at this point with a "better" argument and declare: The assertion of an "unequivocal," unconditional decomposition is "undialectical." In retrogression is found also progression, as is demonstrated practically by a whole series of accomplishments (for example, the synthetics industry).

This argument has at least a glimmer of justification in so far as the decline, just like the rise, is not at every given moment a transparent, rectilinear, uninterrupted process, but a complicated, contradictory, relapsing and skipping process. Examined more closely, it stands exposed, however, as a tactically modified attempt at inconsistency and to save the "development in ever new forms" through a corroboration. For, however much history even must be regarded as a retrogression in another connection, and in the same way every retrogression also is an advance, all this tells us very little about the self-movement of a thing itself. There is certainly more genuine dialectics than is dreamed of in the "common sense" of a Burnham, in an ordinary sentence like: "With his conception, Man takes the first step to his grave." Such general knowledge has practical value precisely because it gives us a better approach to the essential investigation of the movement of Man, child, youth, adult, and gray head turned child again (etc.), will also grope in the dark with respect to the tendency of its future development. He may succeed in making his way through all crises, all effort, all difficulty, or without difficulty and by means of much routine. But faced with essential questions, he will remain just as helpless as the "common" Burnham.

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To illustrate our position, let us take the following sentences from the first thesis:

"The prisons; new ghettos; the labor, forced labor, concentration camps and war prisoners, who are in fact only transitional political-military establishments, they are just as much forms of exploitation which accompanies the economic development toward a modern slave state and are intended as the permanent fate of a considerable percentage of mankind. To this modern slavery is accomplished by a callous destruction of human lives and values and a migration of peoples of colossal extent. 'Resettlements,' transfer of workers, etc., which amounts to hundreds of thousands, follow the movement of armies of millions. So mechanization with progress creates the 'socialist' one's own death itself among the methods of destruction which are supposed to solve the crisis and lead to a solution, force production of further means of destruction and cause tremendous economic disproportions which subject the whole world. England and America answer German expansion with a rearmament which is to surpass any previously known and again set back the production of consumption goods... Uneven development is recapitulated in the whole world and along with it, agricultural production decreases constantly."

Among this and other descriptions, it then says explicitly: "... All this is the result of a process which began a long time ago and only increases in intensity in the present war. Far from being 'planned organization,' this process follows laws of compulsion and seeks to break through by force, where it cannot shake off, the competition on the international scale."

**First Objection**

Against this one can raise two objections, the treatment of which carries us a step further even though they rest upon well-known quibbling. The first objection refers to the expression "slave state." We are given lectures on the Egyptian slave state, which go right past the mark for the sufficient reason that, in distinction from the Egyptian and other slave states, we talk about the modern slave state. However, we will make a preliminary concession. Cross out the words "modern slave state" and simply read: "...forms of an exploitation which accompanies the economic development and is intended as the permanent fate of a considerable percentage of mankind."

What has been altered by this manipulation? Nothing! A designation, for which one may find a better, has disappeared — the thing itself has remained. Here, too, the inherent difficulty will be overcome only if we think back upon the impossibility of pure economic forms. The minute the proletarian (for that matter, not he alone), who is rightly characterized under capitalism too as a "wage slave," loses his right to strike, his freedom of movement and all political rights, he ceases to be the classic "free" proletarian whom rising capitalism required for its development and whom he "established" with the epoch of violence in numbers sufficient to its purpose. Although it continues to remain capitalism, putting on the characteristics never in decline all the features which make up its "impurity" and point back toward its earlier stage, it transforms itself into a modern proletarians and must destroy them. It is the process from economic crises and subject only to quantitative growth of a whole, that is, where quantity turns into quality.

The modern slave differs much less politically from the slave of antiquity than appears at first glance. Deprived of his political rights, robbed of his possibilities of organization, the lash-turned-revolution at his back, chained to a prescribed place, he no longer appears as the free seller of his labor power (this becomes increasingly the exception to the former rule). He is either barricaded or subjects direct state exploitation on a mass scale (and only because this is the case can "the phenomenon of violence in numbers sufficient to its purpose" tell us something about the character of the state and the economic development), or else "placed at the disposal" of private exploitation under state compulsion and at compulsory rates set by the state.

What is involved is an inescapable consequence of the whole process of development. The "lack of development of slavery" that was long ago established in Europe will simply come to a halt before the gates of the U.S.A. The virgin American workers (and again, not they alone!) have already lost a great deal. They should be taught that within the framework of the general Retrogression they are nevertheless being shoved along the solid, well-grounded European roads. In other words: the development toward the modern slave state is a world phenomenon which arises out of capitalist putrefaction. You can call this phenomenon...
whatever you judge best—but that will definitely not rid you of the matter itself.

Second Objection

The second objection is an attempt to get rid of it nevertheless. It is directed against the economic-political significance of the concentration camps, the forced-labor camps, the war-prisoners' camps, etc., themselves. The existence, and even the “significance,” of these phenomena cannot be denied. But they are treated as what they are not—economic-political phenomena, not the political-military establishments, simply measures and institutions for war preparation. They have nothing to do with economic development—at most only as war preparation. The contention that they are intended as the permanent fate of a considerable percentage of mankind, is ridiculous. As usual, an “exception” is discovered which, in the imagination of the naive, annuls all. The alleged exception is the word “war prisoners.” Because there were already war prisoners in the previous war; because they were utilized for labor at that time too; because the war-prisoners' camps were nevertheless dissolved at the end of the previous war. But then the same contradiction and the contention of exploitive forms as concomitants of the development to the modern slave state, including the contention of its “durability,” is absurd.

The story of the war prisoners is, to be sure, one which is promptly liquidated by showing that it does not terminate at the point where the schoolbooks give no further answer. We have seen how the development to the modern slave state takes place also quite independently of the particular phenomenal forms out of which we adduced it (as conversely correct proof). In exactly the same way, the special forms of exploitation and enslavement exist now quite independently of whether we were mistaken about the “war prisoners” or not.

Cross out the war prisoners. What has been altered by this manipulation? Nothing! One of the forms has disappeared—the phenomenon and its significance for the “enlargement” remain.

It is known that the German “economic miracle” (primarily the elimination of unemployment) was accomplished as a preparation for the Second Imperialist World War, by means of the extension and intensification of the so-called industry of destruction. It is known that America, too, at the cost of the so-called “industrial reconstruction” has entered into the war, has almost succeeded in making unemployment “disappear.” But on the one side, much too little attention is paid to the importance of the role that the German camp-system played precisely in the matter of “enlarging unemployment.” On the other hand, however, it would be a crass blunder to regard the German camp-system as a specifically German affair. On the contrary! Germany had many models (in Italy, in the Balkans, in Russia) for the modern methods of oppression and exploitation. It is a question of the two world wars, of the First World War and taking on the ever greater mass character, which have spread throughout the earth and like everything else only increase in the present war (as, for example, in America, where the measures taken against the Japanese appear as a direct consequence of the war).

We live in the epoch of imperialism, which is, par définition, the epoch of expansions and of the ever-growing counter-revolutions. We can explain absolutely nothing and only move in the familiar “vicious circle,” if we deny the “permanent” character of the camp-system, as well as its growing significance as a future form of enslavement, and depict it as a measure taken for the preparation of the war or else as a purely war measure in general.

A fine circle indeed: to refer to the war for the measures, and to the measures for the war! It follows from the mere definition of imperialism why counter-revolution and war become ever more exclusively the “normal state” of humanity, the further the putrefaction proceeds: a consequence of revolutionary weakness. Right after the First World War, which sped the general breakthrough of the “great sickness,” imperialism reproduced and increased everything that could be explained up to then as mere war measures or as occasional, isolated political measures.

The social antagonisms are always operative, war is always their consequence; hence, measures and their abolition, pressure and counter-pressure, follow in constant succession. However, it is only imperialism that brings both measures and pressures into a form, as an instrument of power, as an international phenomenon (belonging under this heading) and inundates the earth more and more with “phenomena” such as concentration camps, political prisons, solitary prisons, labor service, forced labor, forced migrations, punitive expeditions against workers and peasants, mass executions, extermination of all (and therefore also of bourgeois) opposition, eradication of all rights, bureaucratic command and bureaucratic arbitrariness, spymen and stoolpigeonry, police-military surveillance of the people, etc., ad infinitum. These phenomena may be distributed in accordance with the state of the (always uneven) development of the political or the national coloration of the different countries. They are nevertheless omnipresent, and short of the socialist revolution they can no longer be conceived of as non-existent in the life of the modern nations. What were formerly “measures” or isolated cases now become lasting institutions and mass phenomena. They are equally significant from the political and economic, the social and military standpoints, and can be separated from each other, at most, in the “mind,” but no longer in the reality.

It is a veritable transformation of quantity into quality that has occurred. For just as the war becomes the “mode of existence” of such and such classes and is more total, universal and invasive, so naturally also do the measures that prepare it, the consequences that accompany it, the far-reaching changes that it produces. “With reasoned understanding and understanding reason,” it will therefore be necessary also to count precisely the war-prisoners' camps among those institutions that are becoming permanent and whose economic significance has been transformed profoundly in comparison with the First World War. The war prisoners nowadays are put at the service of total warfare in an entirely different manner than in the previous World War, when they were almost exclusively employed for more auxiliary services.

II—THE HISTORICAL TENDENCY OF CAPITALIST ACCUMULATION IN PUTREFYING CAPITALISM

The next step in the elucidation of our position consists in the treatment of a point which plays an enormous role in the “Three C’s” as the “minisession” of our conception. This point is theoretically anchored in the question of capitalist accumulation. It will permit the basic tendency to appear clearly and so bring the “retrogressive development” and the feature of enslavement into the proper light.

In this we simply assume that the more specific problem of accumulation has been clarified. The dispute over this problem has, it is true, continued unabated since the appearance of Rosa Luxemburg’s book. But for Marxists there is good reason for this (regardless of the absolute necessity of participating in the discussion). It is a complex problem for all its simplicity, and the conscious and unconscious lackeys of the bourgeoisie (the Stalinists included) have been hard at work to muddle it up. We will yet strike the trail of the mystery when we turn to the “historical tendency of capitalist accumulation” described by Marx, and follow it concretely.

Marx’s Presentation of the Question

In the famous, and therefore all the less understood, passage on this subject, Marx says:

“As soon as... the capitalist mode of production stands on its own feet... the further expropriation of private proprietors takes a new form. That which is now to be expropriated is no longer the laborer working for himself, but the capitalist exploiting many laborers. This is a question of the absolute necessity of participating in the discussion. It is a complex problem for all its simplicity, and the conscious and unconscious lackeys of the bourgeoisie (the Stalinists included) have been hard at work to muddle it up. We will yet strike the trail of the mystery when we turn to the “historical tendency of capitalist accumulation” described by Marx, and follow it concretely.”

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the one given. The center of gravity of the investigation lies, with Marx, in the following assertion: "Capitalist production begets, with the inexorability of a law of Nature, its own negation."

Marx rightly sought to fix the "knell of capitalist private property" naturally, and placed the negation at the point where, in his own words, a handful of usurpers confront the masses of the people. And in the historical reality, the development has indeed long ago reached the point where not only does one capitalist kill off many, but where the point of negation "ideally" defined in Marx's analysis likewise finds practical confirmation in the victory of the Russian Revolution.

The question arises: What happens if, in this stage of monopolycapitalist maturity, the world revolution is crushed or—regardless of what the reasons for it—cannot be accomplished? Does the development stand still then, or does it proceed in undefined directions?

The mere putting of this question is sufficient to show the absurdity of all attempts to resist the conception of the "retrogressive movement." For it is then that the historical tendency of capitalist accumulation forces its way through in a new stage of development (which Marx was neither required to foresee nor to take into consideration in the theoretical analysis) with an even greater brutality and intensity which makes everything that went before it look like mere prelude, because everything that hitherto hammered its "blindingly operating average" is now trampled under foot by the few, the "universality of their individuality," their freedom.

In considering this new stage—it is the stage of imperialist putrefaction and agony that generally preoccupies us—we can less than ever overlook the fact that Marx traced the collapse of the capitalist mode of production to accumulation itself, by demonstrating that consciousness that constantly narrows the living space of capitalism out of its own self (independently of the question of the extension of the market). It is therefore no foreign force that devours capitalism, but (to use a term from Hegel) "its own nature.

When this is grasped and held to firmly can we avoid the most common mistake, which rests upon a complete misunderstanding of Marxism, and which consists in conceiving the negation of capitalism only as the task of the proletarian revolution (although capitalism "generates" it, to be sure). The creation of an imperialistic proletariat by capitalism, called upon to overstep it, is certainly part of the material premises, through which and with which the capitalist mode of production also generates its own negation. But this is only one side of the question. The expropriation of the capitalists that accompanies itself through the interplay of the immanent laws of capitalist production; the monopoly of capital as a fetter on this mode of production, which flourished with it and under it; the natural necessity of the process of its own negation, etc.—these are the other sides, which must be understood entirely in terms of the historical movement as just so much the organic part of the process of expropriation, expropriation is not the historical negation, but the centralization of capital and the killing off of the many capitalists by the few. Marx's presentation can now be resumed from the start and followed up in correspondence with the new stage of development. Then it must be said:

As soon as this process of transformation has sufficiently decomposed monopoly capitalism in depth and scope (and that has been taking place from the outbreak of the First Imperialist World War up to the Second), the further expropriation of the private proprietors once more takes on a new form. What is now to be expropriated is no longer the capitalist exploiting many workers, but the nation exploited by a handful of monopolists. This expropriation is accomplished by the interplay of the immanent laws of monopoly-capitalist development itself, by the centralization of the most important industries in the highly-capitalist countries. One capitalist nation kills off many. Hand in hand with this centralization or the expropriation of many nations by the few, the state-compulsory-regulated form of the labor process develops on a constantly growing scale. So does the conscious technical application of science for the purpose of limiting and destroying certain branches of production that threaten the maintenance of monopoly on this level at home and abroad; the limitation of means of work that can be employed only in common, only to means of work permitted by the state; the economizing tendency of production for the production of means of destruction, defense and domination; the entanglement of all peoples in the net of capitalist decomposition; and therewith the internationally destructive character of imperialist rule.

Accompanying the constantly declining number of monopolycapitalist nations, which usurp and monopolize all the advantages and destroying precisely those branches of production that threaten the masses of the people in these countries, like the masses of the other peoples, are violently thrust back by it into those conditions from which the development of capitalism once redeemed them (in great part exaggerated by the false mixture of national independence, industrial dependency and backwardness, into industrial backwardness and dependency, lack of national independence, bondage and slavery.

The rebellion of the working class, which has been hurled back by the mechanism of imperialism into a state of unorganization, must grow more conscious and more effective in its various strata, politically demoralized, internationally isolated and controlled (and whose organizations have been eviscerated, corrupted, paralyzed, decimated with the aid of their imperially-controlled degenerated leadership, and which are finally only entwined along with every kind of bourgeois organization and opposition), likewise assumes a new form under the new conditions. It becomes more comprehensive and general; it finds a mighty prop in the rebellion of the peoples and nations who are suppressed, thrust back, oppressed, enslaved and levelled through the monopoly of the few nations, but by the same token also united against this monopoly and schooled by its mechanism; and it restores the shrivelled internationalism of the movement upon a more universal plane. Still more: it prepares the ground for the "classic ideal" of the expropriation, expropriation is the direct source of destruction of the proletarian revolution as a simultaneous world-revolution. The centralization of the means of production and the socialization of labor reach a point where they invade the foundations of the capitalist mode of production itself, where the capacity of accumulation collides with the internal limits and external entanglement of the whole social body from top to bottom. They become incompatible with the co-existence of developed capitalist nations. They burst their international integument and prepare a further step in the material self-abolition of capitalism by "transplanting" the important industries of the subjugated nations to "subjungates" and conversing capitalist nations into a "hinterland" in a colonial and semi-colonial sense. The knell of monopoly-capitalist private property sounds. The monopolistic expropriators are expropriated. The capitalist mode of production begems its own negation with incomparably more violent, sanguinary, cruel, destructive and difficult than the transformation of liberal capitalism into imperialism. It is a process that appears before us as the horrible battle for the New International - October 1944 - Supplement
self-preservation of a society doomed to death, and harks back in
reverie order to the end of the Middle Ages, the epoch of "primitive
accumulation," the Thirty Years War, the bourgeois revolutions,
etc. In those days it was a question of smashing an outlawed econ-
omic form and of winning the independence of nations—now it is
a question of abolishing independence and of shoving society back
to the Middle Ages.

It is not for nothing that the "Three Theses" begin and end with
the assurance: "This is a war of long duration, which must com-
pletely destroy all human culture, if the rebellion of the masses does
not end it." The socialist revolution has always been placed before
the proletariat as a task whose solution was to save humanity from
ruin. As a result of the "half-way measures, weaknesses, pa1triness
and who understood the living spirit of the times as if
it were (in Goethe's words) the miserable "Gentleman's own spirit,
in which the times are reflected as in a mirroir." For the last time,
guided by Marx: There it is a question of the expropriation of
the mono-polyists, which is theoretically founded on the knowledge that the develop-
mation of capitalism, as a factor of production, inevitably returns to its
points of departure. That is, despite all the alterations of the
founding nations, their accentuation: it now appears as a
saving solution, which is the direct task of humanity itself.

The war has "in ever-increasing tempo changed the economic,
political and social face of the earth." Thus the "Three Theses." Profound convolutions follow profound changes. Woe to those who
remain backward in the additional half-way measures, weaknesses,
paltriness and who understand the living spirit of the times as if

The bewilderment which in our experience usually overwhelms
the reader confronted with such unusual formulations resolves it-
self as a rule into positive understanding upon more detailed obser-
vation.

Basic Direction of Capitalist Development

Historically, capitalist development begins with the compact
unevenness which contains all the economic, social and political
formations from primitive communism to feudalism, both in inde-
pendently preserved and combined forms. Capitalism now continues
to preserve them in part, and in part to develop them unevenly and
in a combined form. Broadly speaking, capitalist development itself
proceeded on these existing foundations from the West to the East,
from England through France to Germany and Russia; just as in
general the capitalist mode of production subjugated the world
from Europe, and its destiny was decided in Europe.

For, what takes place outside of Europe—say, in America
and Japan—is no more than the especially eloquent and of a drama
which in its main outlines has been finished. The epilogue intro-
duces no really original feature, not a single essential alteration,
into the picture. It does not even reach the level of the new tech-
nological revolution in Germany; it imitates it. It only sets its seal
even upon the real drama and introduces itself from the beginning as
a mixture of the most extreme unevenness and the most extreme
technical progress, of skyscrapers and caves, of high capi-
talism and semi- or complete feudalism, of man's devastation of
the system emanating from the beginning as

III—THE ECONOMIC-POLITICAL BACKGROUND
OF THE RETROGRESSIVE MOVEMENT

In so far as we have followed the historical
tendency of capitalist accumulation in decadent capitalism, we have
also already described a part of the "retrogressive movement," which
is theoretically founded on the knowledge that the develop-
ment of capitalism, on the grounds presented (the laws of motion
of the capitalist mode of production), inevitably returns to its
points of departure. That is, despite all the alterations of the
foundations, and the preservation of the connection with what has al-
ready been achieved, these foundations narrow. And from the
attained (through which the whole process receives its peculiar
lawfulness and its specific stamp) it must nevertheless create con-
ditions in economics, politics, social relations, etc., which are like
the conditions of the epoch of the origins of capitalism, at first in a
highly delayed and further developed form. From here it was
ever more explicit, ever more general, ever more backward-reaching
features. The theory of the retrogressive movement is therefore

more than the theoretical grasp of the laws of motion of the
capitalist mode of production at the point of transformation into
their opposite, in the reversal determined by its contents, in which
they become concretely demonstrable laws of its collapse inde-
pendent of the proletarian revolution.

We have not separated the basic theorem for a single instant
from the combined uneven development. Hence, we have always
conceived the retrogressive movement as being uneven and com-
bined. Hence, we have made the proletarian revolution, as a factor
which is both objective and subjective, both positive and negative
(necessarily unleashing the counterrevolution, if it stops half-way), a
paramount as a discussion of the historical mode of production itself.
Hence, we have fixed the beginning of the retrogressive move-
ment quite concretely in the Russia of the victorious October revolu-
tion. Hence, we have incorporated the victorious October revolution
in the retrogression, considering it in its inner contradiction as an
intersection of two movements, country and world, temporary transi-
tion. Hence, we have explained the collapse of capitalism independently
of the proletarian revolution as only a theoretical indepen-dence,
which appears in its historical form as dependence upon the revolu-
tion. (To define it even more exactly: the capitalist mode of pro-
duction could not develop independently of its overthrow by the revolu-
tion, but the revolution enters as an integral part in the historical
process of its collapse.)

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society through slavery and feudalism) and it preserves during its decline the same connection with what is already achieved. This is why the assertion that nobody has conceived of the retrogression of the bourgeoisie, which is why the assertion that nobody has conceived of the retrogression of the bourgeoisie as the breaking up of the pre-capitalist forms of production, must be understood only as a denial of an absolute dissolution. The law that no connection can ever go lost is a general dialectical law of every development in general, which progresses through qualitative and qualitative increase (alternatively simultaneous) and under certain conditions turns into its previous opposite.

Historical Limits of Capitalism

Thus imperialism finds already at hand the political prototype for the retarding influences in those places where its inner ability to disturb the economic “sleep of the world” has ceased to exist. We do not need to go far to seek this prototype. It is already there in the sphere of interests of British imperialism, in those parts of India which British imperialism could never actually subjugate, being restricted not least of all by the instinctive fear of unfettering forces which would prepare its own premature end. Here England and the other imperialisms have nothing to seek economically or only something very indirectly. Here (and in other areas of the world) nothing has changed economically qualitatively, and the old production forms remain which correspond to economic conditions of a thousand years ago. Nevertheless, these areas provide the general background for the retrogressive movement. They are the historical limits in which the inner limit of the capacity to abstract, i.e., the breaking up of the capitalist into its primitive course and manifests itself, precisely historically, concretely and actually, as the inability to colonize the world thoroughly. As we have seen, the historical tendency of capitalist accumulation is the executor of the breakdown of the capitalist mode of production, which in its historically concrete shape long before the abstract-theoretically conceivable extension of capitalism all over the world is reached. Thus these “untouched” areas are a symbol of the future of capitalist humanity. They are the reverse image of capitalist development which must lead to the same putrefaction in the concrete property, if humanity does not find the way out through the abolition of private property which capitalism has for the first time made possible.

Undeveloped Countries as Precursors of Fascism

Against this general background of the retrogressive movement (its historical pivot in the framework of uneven development) its concrete forms stand out all the more distinctly, the closer we move from the prototype of economic-political petrification, to the highly capitalist countries. In the colonies and semi-colonies there persist, as the dissolution of capitalism into pre-capitalist forms, the primitive methods of suppression, or methods of suppression combined with the “primitive” forms of rule (they are strengthened according to need and often relaxed under pressure of the conditions, but never altered) which capitalism introduced through the breakdown of the capitalist property. From back from the colonies, the undeveloped capitalist countries, on the basis of the existing “mixture” and of what has been achieved at any given time, carry on the already defined vanguard battles for the form of rule which corresponds best to declining capitalism. Each in its way in a blind alley, each economically disintegrated by its peculiar conditions, they seek to stabilize the putrefaction by recasting the feudal-monarchical system, with or without royal approval, support and toleration, into open military dictatorship, into semi- and wholly fascist systems.

All the Balkans, Hungary, Poland, the Baltic countries and Spain are overlaid with such dictatorial systems. The noble “democracy” of Masaryk keeps to an intermediate course, living on Allied help and the suppression of the national minorities, until these minorities, like those in the Saar region, throw themselves into the arms of German fascism and the rest of Czechoslovakia can be annexed. In this way, profound devastations are heralded, forcing the ruling classes to “overcome” the helpless economic situation by political measures which in their turn are again directed to transformation of social and economic life, i.e., which allow of no other way out save by the road back.

The Position of Italy

In the chain of these countries, a country like Italy assumes a position highly characteristic of the lawful consequences of the retrogressive movement. It was the earliest precursor of capitalist production (which first became definitive and world-transforming in England) and then was thrown back by the further development and transformed into the eternal imperialist camp-follower. Too important to content itself with the pretensions of small nations, too inglorious to be regarded as the executor of the breakdown of the bourgeoisie, Italy was the first to face the decadence of capitalism in the post-war imperialist era. In this situation it again assumed among the great European powers the position of precursor of a development which the time allowed in the opposite direction, clearly backward, into the past. That is, it first illustrated the narrower or special retrogressive movement and typified the political system, which is, on the one hand, the political expression of economic decline in the advanced capitalist countries themselves; on the other hand, the special form of rule which imperialism now needs above all also for the solution of the actual imperialist problems. However, the second imperialist war did not yet stand in the foreground but rather the social question which arose before the ruling classes in a series of revolutionary uprisings and heralded the “natural end” of capitalism. It is the social question whose counter-revolutionary solution in its peculiar conditions, they seek to stabilize the putrefaction by recasting the feudal-monarchical system, with or without royal approval, support and toleration, into open military dictatorship, into semi- and wholly fascist systems.

Division of the World

First, by the necessity to divide the world among the capitalist nations. In this again, uneven and combined development plays the major role and gains for the stronger or especially favored nations (e.g. Holland) an appropriate cut. The division obviously does not proceed without force. In addition to colonial conquest and the economic arm of competition, the competition with arms appears from the beginning, asserting itself in a series of wars and building up the relation of the stronger nations among each other and toward the weaker nations. But, in this whole period, which lasts until the first imperialist war, there is a growth of the productive forces which increases the material wealth and the line of ascent is, on the whole, maintained.

"Regulation" of the Labor Movement

The second moment is the necessity of holding down and rendring innocuous the proletariat and its movement, produced by capitalism as the living negation of itself. In the ascending period this is achieved not so much by force but rather through a system of "accommodations" (concessions, social legislation) and by material and ideological corruption which, on the whole, advance capitalism, for up to a certain point the labor movement is a necessary for the development of capitalism as are national independence and political freedom. As soon as the bourgeoisie, with the help of the proletariat, has attained enough freedom of movement for its own ends and for the greater pretensions this infection problem is restricted more to liquidating the labor movement’s aspirations to political independence and power, and to confining the matter within administrative-trade-union limits.

In England, the question was resolved more easily because of the material wealth of the Empire, i.e., by virtue of the politically-corrupting participation of broad sections of the workers in the so-called surplus profit: present and future seem equally assured, and exert a debilitating political effect.

In France, after the war with the stronger rival, Germany, and the heroic intervention of the Paris Commune, the situation was changed for the better. However to start with the competition and the luxury industries which opened up a broad perspective of broad sections of the workers in the labor movement with the petty-bourgeois "ideal of the coupon-clipper." Socialism in France is more a rhetorical threat (the pre-
vailing syndicalism) than a politically organized power.

In Germany, on the other hand, the problem was already more difficult. After the overthrowing of the initial obstacles to both sides (founding years and anti-socialist law), the problem was mastered by virtue of the imperialist perspective that appeared at the time, mastered mainly ideologically, with the help of revisionism. German revisionism was predominantly a postdated note on what was current in England. The corrupting kernel of this ideology was: capitalism will grow and with it the power of the labor movement, which, in the person of its leadership (for the most part also already materially corrupted), will grow into the state and conquer it peacefully (guarantee: freedom of suffrage). It was the invasion of petty-bourgeois thinking into the labor movement and, as such, a typical reflexion in the heads of the labor leaders of young German imperialism at its optimistic beginnings.

German revisionism was the theoretical culmination and systematization of all other “methods of paralysis,” done with German thoroughness and joyfully greeted internationally as the “supplementary” method for the “regulation” of the labor movement. Everywhere it found its corresponding expression: In Russia in “economicism,” in France in Millerand’s “mineralism,” in England among the Fabians, who, with deeper significance, called themselves a “reformism.” But only in Germany did it have a decisive and fatal function. In Russia, neither the one nor the other method caught on. There all relations were so sharp that the revolutionary method of the proletariat could rout all other forces from the field and make the solution of the problem impossible for the ruling classes.

Free Competition Among Workers and Capitalists

The third moment is generally determinant: Free competition among the capitalists and workers. Competition among the workers, as a rule of proletarian struggle, is a method of splintering the movement, but it is temporarily decreased both by further development (which produces leveling as well as differentiation) and with the aid of trade unions, until it rises again in its most horrible form in the world crisis following the First World War, when the military power of the tempo has become the main arm of the class struggle into, so to speak, an active and a passive section. Under mass unemployment, competition among workers already assumes the form of a split of society as a whole. For wide layers of the petty bourgeoisie, of the independent artisan, of the intellectuals, etc., are drawn in and confront society threateningly. Out of the declassed elements of the intellectuals, petty bourgeoisie and workers, out of the alun proletariat, fascism recruits the storm troops with which it threatens the demands of the workers, strikes down their movement and stabilizes it.

Free competition among the capitalists is likewise temporarily mitigated by the formation of monopolies, i.e., so long as the development progresses upward. But free competition persists by the side of and above monopoly (nationally and internationally, as on the one hand it is further constituted above and by the side of free competition out of which it grows).

From the co-existence of free competition and monopoly, from the competition of monopolies among themselves, develops a “series of especially crass and harsh contradictions, frictions and conflicts” (Lenin), which react powerfully upon all social institutions. For the anarchic of social production under the rule of free competition is deepened by the devastating economic disproportions which monopoly creates.

The highest expression of such disproportions is the armaments industry whose development becomes compulsory with the development of monopoly because the whole capitalist development, propelled by free competition, drives toward the most violent conflict of monopoly, the imperialist war. The relation of the stronger nations to the other is shifted by the course of industrial development, especially in heavy industry, which becomes obsolete in the “more saturated” countries and therefore makes their industrial basis too weak for their foreign possessions.

The disproportion which arises in this way is extended by the industrial camp-follower, Germany, which utilizes all the advantages of its post-war, immediately speaks the last word in industrial development, and, paradoxically, becomes rich and powerful enough as the “armaments factory of the world” to be able to climb up the back of its English competitor equipped with the most modern weapons.

**Intervention of the Social Question**

The social question, in its modern form, not as bourgeois reform, etc., but as proletarian revolution, is already essentially involved in the constitution of this inherently unavoidable development. The problem regards the growing power of Germany with mixed feelings, but its forces remain bound by the question which henceforth is a weighty element of its “balance of power” policy. What will the now revolutionary party of the proletariat and the strong German working class, in general, do, if its immediate demands cannot be satisfied and its “taming” is frustrated? The answer is clear, and wisdom of class interests demands that the day of reckoning be postponed to a more favorable time. Growing tolerance of German industrial and military armament is the price which England pays for the taming of the German labor movement.

Meanwhile the disproportions grow in length and breadth throughout the whole world. The industrial and agricultural development in North and South America press down upon conditions in Europe and deepen the industrial and agricultural antagonisms. The undeveloped and dependent countries, especially the Balkans, Greece, and Turkey under a financial system which makes them the foot-ball of imperialist interests and involves them in the armaments race as dependents of the great powers.

All the especially crass and harsh contradictions cut into and cut across the Balkans—all the frictions and conflicts stemming from industrial monopoly with a compound which has justifiably given them the name “power keg of Europe.” When the sparks catch fire and England, with the knife at its throat, decides to fight, it is, however, already certain that the German working class will not intervene. This main danger temporarily excluded, the war itself makes the disproportions unadjustable and incurable.

Depending on the social question which rises again revolutionarily as the result of the especially crass contradiction between possible well-being and actual destruction, the disproportions become autonomous and drive in the direction of the Second World War which is to solve all of the now intensified problems on which the First World War broke down internally. They bear down again upon the whole of economic life, upon competition among capitalists and workers, and create that situation which splits the population into employed and unemployed (including the rural population and the peasantry). The epoch of war, revolutions and counter-revolutions is opened. The main question is whether Marx’s prophecy has been fulfilled that it will bring itself to the point where it must feed its slaves instead of being fed by them.

V.—ASCENDING DEVELOPMENT IN CONTRAST TO RETROGRESSIVE MOVEMENT

The historic limit for the ascent of the capitalist mode of production was supplied by the building up of the British Empire. The position of England as the classical country of the capitalist mode of production in agriculture and as the early industrial monopolist (a position which for its part it attained in the framework of uneven and combined development) influenced the whole development of capitalism. This occurred in a manner which proved decisive in the last analysis, in all spheres of economic, social, cultural policies (educational, etc.), etc. The latter were engendered by the English development itself and introduced concrete ramifications into the whole line of development. By that very fact, they prepared the collapse of capitalism in its seed, or better, contained it embryonically.

**Question of Method**

Here, where we are considering all sorts of concrete facts and forms almost only in so far as they are important for knowing and presenting fundamental characteristics, for the rest deriving the concrete conclusions (deductions) from the general premises and understand all correlative phenomena. Let us present the scheme of the retrogressive movement as a result of a general development, which occurred actually and historically in this manner and in no other.

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5. The historical succession and the national peculiarities of revisionism agree exactly with the capitalist development in the four most important countries (England, France, German, Russia). In England, the history was fundamentally shaped by the cotton industry, which was not brought to an end until 1938, but then by the cotton industry, which was not brought to an end until 1938. In England trade unionism is more characteristic of revisionism than the Fabian appendage. Revisionism in England is organique. In France, Millerand became Minister of Commerce in 1889. There revisionism is moderate, pacifistic. In Germany, Bernstein began the revisionist campaign in 1894. There revisionism is the ascendant. Then for the first time Russia followed, already under the direct influence of the Bernstein controversy. There revisionism is impossible.
Thus, in the presentation, we derive the general lawfulness not so much from the historical result, as we do the particular historical result from the general lawfulness. It may take this or that historical phenomenal content, but in so doing, it remains essentially unchangeable. The so-called inductive method, however, much as it belongs with the deductive, tells us little about the tendency of development because it is lost in a mass of details and accidents. The deductive method, however, derives the tendency from the laws of motion themselves, puts the details in their proper place and works them in as unessential modifications of the one basic tendency.

The historical result of the retrogressive movement is, to be sure, realized in the concrete ways which capitalist development has once taken. Therefore it has the ascending development of capitalism as its historical premise and its inevitable. We summarize the ascending development in a series of historical facts which need not be proved anew. What the adding of such facts makes necessary and fruitful for our investigation is the simple fact that in their mere succession they yield qualitative variations in the basic moments which lead to the transformation and call forth the retrogressive movement.

**England**

In this sense: Only one drop of genuine capitalist blood sufficed to permeate the world organism and to establish the reign of the new mode of production on land and sea, in the air and under the earth. An island realm, a spot in the seas and oceans, stretching being its continent like a watchdog, came by means of that capitalist blood to attain an empire of unprecedented dimensions and to assure itself strong points, spheres of influence and markets throughout the world.

**France**

A second drop of the same blood was already enough to saturate the organism. The French attempt to get the upper hand over British imperialism went to pieces. Thereafter, France's rôle was limited essentially to filling the gaps which the previous development had left and no longer to endanger seriously England's international position. From the fall of Napoleon to the second imperialist world war, France can no longer escape dependence on England and must—bon gré, mal gré—rest content with playing second fiddle to English politics.

**Germany**

The third drop already brought the world organism to the fever stage of super-saturation. Industrial competition found the important channels clogged and permitted no other significant sideline development (as in France). A sideline remained—industrial armament on the basis of the arms industry. The products were taken by the whole world, not least of all by England which needed them to consolidate its world domination and thought she would utilize them one day against their dangerous producer.

Thus was the situation. The slogan had become the main line and posed the problem of imperialist capitalism for the first time in history, i.e., war on the basis of industrial competition. Germany faced this problem from the time of national unification on (which incidentally was accomplished almost simultaneously with Italian unification and permitted Italy to appear as third or fourth ranking power among the imperialist countries). Her entire domestic and foreign policy revolved around the way out by means of capitalist expansion through imperialist war.

**Recapitulation**

It is self-evident by now that the same picture may be drawn for the development of political freedom, of the labor movement (it is undeveloped in England, second-rate in France, threatening in Germany, decisive in Russia), political economy, theory, etc. Summarizing the sequence presented here: From whatever side we may regard the life-course of the capitalist mode of production, its laws of motion are always and everywhere also the laws of its collapse. Of the large industries especially, we can say: Industrial monopoly, from which modern capitalist development proceeds, appears as the predominance of one country over all the others. In it is imbedded therefore from the beginning, "like a nut in its shell," the ultimate problem of capitalist development, to which it must return after full development. We shall see later what form the return takes, following the temporary dissolution of monopoly.

**VI—INNER CONTRADICTION OF THE FIRST IMPERIALIST WAR**

When the imperialist war is placed on the order of the day, further qualitative alterations appear which are all affected by the mass of preceding processes. "The division of all the territory of the earth among the greatest capitalist countries" is practically concluded. This division, no sooner completed, is already outlived. It is economically "unjust" and corresponds in no way to the industrial and other significance of the four strongest capitalist countries, which, of the economic leadership, and direct the whole of the world (Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Italy, etc.) for the notorious redelinagation of the world which could not but be the logical result of the war.

However, here logic strikes a snag. The course of the war shows that in the general state of things the problem can not even be attacked, let alone solved. The contradiction of industrial monopoly which rests upon free trade and free competition, is at the same time the contradiction of free competition. It thus abolishes the industrial monopoly of one country over others and leads to the formation of monopolies in industry in other countries. The result was a world's international contradiction of monopoly, and it led to the imperialist war. So far everything is in logical order. But now at one stroke the war reveals that monopoly has called forth a new contradiction, which is more essential than the old, and has transformed the war for the redelinagation of the world into a contradiction in itself, into an absurdity per excellence.

**Effect of the International Division of Labor**

On one hand, capitalist economy had long outgrown all national boundaries and thereby first established the international capitalist world market in all its glory. In strict dependence upon the old forces, which lie at the basis of all class society and operate to the fullest extent in capitalist commodity economy, the social division of labor has been broadened into the international division of labor and has become its ruling form. Moreover, the anarchy of social production and uneven development assume the explicit form of industrial and agricultural disproportions, and drive the national economies into all the greater dependence upon the international division of labor, or what is only another term for it, upon their international connections.

On the other hand, the transcending of the national boundaries which has practically taken place, raises the distinctly visible sign of international trusts. The indubitable progress which lies in the formation of a super-national economy through trusts, with its increase of the productive forces, shows a catastrophic converse side when private property is maintained in the means of production. The international trusts have the peculiarity of organizing the disproportion to the utmost, of which the disproportion arising out of the arms industry is the most prominent. Scientific progress is the direct servant of this disproportion. Through the changed significance of the so-called basic industries (coal, for example), it produces another disproportion which operates in favor of the war industries. As soon as coal becomes scarcer instead of a plentiful article (and it becomes such through the development of heavy industry, particularly the chemical industry), a struggle flares up for this industrially vitally important substance.

The competition for coal ends naturally in a victory of the most powerful heavy industrial and chemical enterprises which mono-
polize this "article of use," thus establishing a particularly pro-
disproportion in its consumption and driving forward the
disproportions in heavy industry, etc. The whole process reveals
its origins in the international trusts which thus, first, reproduces
the contradiction of competition on a higher level (competition of
international trusts among themselves, running vertically and
horizontally through all countries), and second, discloses the incur-
able contradiction between the international character of the econ-
omy and the national-state character of the war today.

False Posing of the Problem

"The entanglement of all peoples in the net of the world market
and therewith the international character of the capitalist economy
are so great in this stage of complete imperialist maturity—which
brings the line of ascension to an end, that the economy, like the
conduct of the war, is already wrecked on the very premises on
which it is based. All countries are in large degree dependent upon
one another, and the international trusts are the personification of
this dependence. The redistribution of the world among the strongest
capitalist nations is under such circumstances a Utopia. For it is
posed practically as the problem of the final "division of the world
among the international trusts," which, with all the will in the
world to gain the upper hand, must see to it that their material
bases within the individual nations are not undermined.

How is this problem to be solved in the framework of the nation-
al state without abolishing the national boundaries? In the nature of
things this...would be the only "logical result" if there were any-
thing else in capitalism besides the logic of contradictions and the
effective lunacy. For this is how absurdly the whole problem is posed: The war of economic competition is to be fought out
within the framework of the national states, without eliminat-
ing the economic domination of the international trusts in the indi-

cidual countries. In practice this is the attempt to solve the economic
problem of monopoly capitalism with predominantly military
measures (predominantly military because while the military ma-

chine, the economic measures and pressure of blockade, etc., also
paralyze the opponent economically and force him to his knees, they are not intended to destroy the economic system). It is war on the
divide dividing maturity and collapse, a mixed form of war
which already fore shadows all the elements of the transition to
total war but does not yet itself have, nor can it have, the radical
character of total war. It is the squaring of the economically self-
enclosed circle—an impossible problem whose impossibility is pro-
claimed in certain striking features.

First Characteristic

Whichever may be the areas "intended" for annexation by the warring
nations, in our preserved capitalist terrain can easily be
incorporated completely into the economic life of the conqueror.
What is certainly beyond serious discussion in reorganization, in-
dustrial transplantation, shutdowns in the interests of industrial
centralization, resettlement of the population in remote areas, pro-
duction changes in industry and agriculture, etc., over and beyond
war measures.

By and large, the aim of conquest is the achievement of super-
iority; there is no a priori aim to change for the sake of destroy-
ing and to destroy for the sake of change. By and large, the efforts
are confined, with the necessary "excesses," to extracting what can
be extracted under conditions of war. This apart, the hallmark of
the war is forbearance (especially industrial)—the whole status
is "provisional," "pacts" are concluded in the midst of the war—
the "peace-dictate" will make the final decision. Everything still
rests on much unyielded "international," legally, financially,
relations, on the gold currency, the creditor-debtor relations, etc.,
whose destruction would cut off the countries hopelessly from
imports, shatter the whole apparatus and result in the immediate
collapse of economy.

Second Characteristic

In consequence, nowhere is a serious effort made to abolish the
national-state boundaries. The national boundaries are to be shifted
but not eliminated; the national, political, social, economic, juridical
and economic relations maintained in general—the "methods of
war" and the military administration alone concern themselves
with the encroachments which are necessary but which are not at all
organic to the goal set. And just because this is so, and because
the war cannot in any respect jump out of its economic skin, it is
conducted astigmatically and is felt by the whole chauvinisties
(despite "racism" the Second World War separates the "peoples"
from their "leadership," is characterized more by complete economic
"practicalities"). It ends, regardless of the aims of all participants,
with a substantial increase in the economically and politically effect-
et national-state boundaries.

Third Characteristic

The labor movement as such remains intact even in the conquer-
ed areas; it remains for a time that can be described as "incipient." (We
give it the special mention, because it has capital significance
which speaks for itself. In the second world war German imperial-
ism "solves" the question of the labor movement in those countries,
as in France, where the bourgeoisie, due to its internal weakness,
could not itself destroy it. In different forms, America seeks to
maintain the German achievements wherever it comes as
"liberator.")

Fourth Characteristic

Despite the blockade the international economic interdependence
expresses itself by a regular commerce between all countries. Coun-
try supplies and trades with country; business remains in full
swing; there are no business interruptions but only interruptions of
delivery as a result of—torpedoing. The international trusts in
the warring countries enjoy a boom. Here the "sharing of the mar-
ket" may best be perceived. Across the mass of neutral countries
(more important at such a moment and in a different position than
they are today) moves direct and indirect trade between the bel-
ligerents, bringing to a head the phenomenon that has scandalized
bureaucracy under the name of the "bloody international of the arma-
ments industry." Toward the end of mutual "holding-out" which
yields enormous profits and strengthens the international trusts,
they supply each other in the very midst of the war with fabricated
and raw materials for the direct conduct of the war. This prolongs
the war and most certainly postpones the military decisions. There-
fore, the war very soon becomes static, stagnant and reflects per-
fectly the stagnating character of monopoly in the stage of its
maturity (on this point see the next section), where it can have
neither the courage nor the possibility to make radical decisions. It
should be noted in addition that the trusts are no less active in the
almost "normal" activity of diplomacy (namely, secret diplomacy).

Victory of Economy Over War

Nevertheless, the war and the productive forces do not develop in
accordance with the logic of the capitalist magnates and the stock
exchange; they bring everything to the point of collapse. War is
above all the destruction of the sources which nourish it, a sharp-
ening of all contradictions and disproportions which unlease it.
Following its own unfettered lawfulness and succumbing to the
development of its own premises, it must necessarily tear apart the
carefully preserved international connections and turn against its
own foundations. For this time it stagnates, hangs "in mid-air" as
if it were an end in itself, without perspective, and exhausts itself
in its own inner impossibility.

Nothing is more characteristic of the dependence of Europe upon
international economy than the fact that all countries at the end
of the war were also at the end of their resources and on the brink
of the abyss (e.g., Russia, bled-white, was able to defend itself
successfully against the attack of the whole world). There is some
truth in the statement that Germany emerged from the war mili-
tarily "undefeated." That has so penetrated into the general con-
sciousness that Americans speak with great assurance of this day
of the breakdown of the German people which "tore the heart out
of the military resistance of Germany." A clear military decision
was lacking, and the actual victor fell to the country that best under-
stood how to take advantage of the "economic problem of the war.
America, strengthened by the "war prosperity," by supplying
 needy Europe, held off from the battlefield as the primary world
economic power—oddly enough without participating in the
problematic "redivision of the world." It was a victory of definite
economic relations over the war itself, which in a few years changed
America from a sorely indebted to a great creditor nation.

When America entered, the war was already in full disintegra-
tion. Russia had already withdrawn and had set a definite limit to the
war. Germany, on the other hand, maintained the principle of "war" and the military administration alone concern themselves
with the encroachments which are necessary but which are not at all
organic to the goal set. And just because this is so, and because
the war cannot in any respect jump out of its economic skin, it is
conducted astigmatically and is felt by the whole chauvinisties
(despite "racism") the Second World War separates the "peoples"
the question of the "redivision" of the world. But the economy was more surprised by this than prepared for it.

Result of "Redivision"

The result therefore corresponds exactly to the premises. The incident that occasioned the conflict, entangled in the fight for national independence of the oppressed nationalities of the Balkans (with the dismemberment of the Turkish Empire as a background) has a greatly disproportionate weight in the imperialist result. In the Versailles treaty, Europe appears less divided up among the most powerful and developed capitalist states than "splintered" within itself. There are now more "new" states, boundaries and problems in East and South Europe than before.

In this way the economy revenges itself for the violation of its laws through the dismemberment and weakening of Europe. The arena for monopolistic competition is made smaller by the withdrawal of Russia. What is more, two dangerous non-European competitors, America and Japan, are loaded on its neck.

The "mixed form" of this war in transition from capitalist maturity to disintegration is revealed best in what emerges from the "redivision." All that is actually divided up—no, "apportioned"—is that which belongs to Germany. Of the German colonial empire, England and France pocket the lion's share; Alsace-Lorraine, and some important German areas fall to France, Belgium and Poland. Italy comes out empty-handed, America does not profit by territorial acquisition. Under Anglo-American pressure, Japan must relinquish a great deal of its role in the Far East. This makes the "redivision" doubly "guilty," political-national differentiation, economic destruction, revolutionary danger, general weakening, a more unstable situation than before, greater dissatisfaction and ferment) Europe lost its political equilibrium and its economic mastery in the world. Never did an Eaux sell his birthright for more choky.

To be sure, such a result was neither desired nor foreseen: an insoluble economic problem seized everybody by the scruff of the neck and merely extended the "vicious circle" of capitalist economy to Japan and America. Glad to have removed only slightly bruised, England and France move all the more inexorably to ruin in their "victory." They are seized by a debilitating concern for their possessions, the more the real redivision of the world is subsequently conscious planned by Germany, fully prepared, and placed upon the economic, political and social foundations necessary for this purpose; and the more, on the other hand, America and Japan accelerate the "vicious circle" by their specific gravity.

Historic "Mission" of America

We said earlier that America (the same goes for Japan) introduces no essential alteration into the picture, and can only seal the economy which stood theoretically or practically in the way of the as-


division. Although America, as a capitalist economy, is in no way "original," it is still worthwhile to ascertain every deviation of the elements in the amalgam of which this terrible epilogue of capitalism is composed. We must keep in mind what has gone into the formation of this country: Joy of discovery and need for trade; adventure and greed; colonization efforts and emigration; all races and achievements; all advantages and disadvantages; all virtues and vices; all race and class antagonisms of Europe, Asia and Africa; all the advances, backwardness, combinations, unevenness, and crises, abominations, crudities and atrocities of the whole world.

For its part, America developed on a broad, existing foundation imposed upon humanity more gruesome suffering and bloodier sacrifices than ever before, for henceforth it declines under conditions which in their totality (economically from the standpoint of material wealth, politically from the standpoint of total social relations) are of the circle of capitalist life when, on the whole, is already closed. Whether as the rival or the "ally" of England—the "historic mission" of America always boils down to being the gravedigger of the British Empire and to intensifying the self-destruction of capitalism. It has, and can have, no other mission.

VII. THE FIRST IMPERIALIST WAR AS A PREMATURE HISTORICAL "MISFORTUNE"

If we glance back at the first world war and the total constellation at the time, we must recognize that the first world war, despite all causal connections which led to its outbreak, was no more than a historical misfortune of capitalism, an accidental event which staged the collapse of capitalism within the framework of historical necessity earlier than historically necessary. Thus we defend the thesis: There was no inner or outer necessity which stood theoretically or practically in the way of the assumption that capitalism could remain for a considerable time on the plane of its "maturity"—or even expand.

Causality and Historic Necessity

If the "iron chain" of causal connections is taken for historic necessity, necessity is understood wholly and completely in the ordinary bourgeois sense which believed it was refuting Marx by the question: "And do dynamic ambitions, reason, knowledge, bad blood, crime, personality, etc., play no rôle in history?"

Naturally, the bourgeois does not know (or at least he does not want to know) that he is addressing himself not to Marx but to certain "Marxists" against whom, unfortunately, he is in the right. Statesmanlike wisdom, knowledge of the actual situation on part of the Germans, insight into economic conditions, experience, perspicacity, etc., might have been able to isolate the "local incident" and postpone the world war without in the least altering the destiny of capitalism.

For Marx, only the collapse of capitalism was historically necessary, not this or that accidental or dispensable circumstance which concretely delays or hastens it. On the other hand, accidental circumstances, once operative, set a whole chain of causal connections into motion, which flow into the absolute necessity of the negation of capitalism and prescribe the future concrete course of its collapse. The German bourgeoisie at all events perceived the misfortune of the first world war so well that it introduced "guaranteed conditions for the second war" which are already directly adapted to historic necessity in all its aspects. The guarantees and conditions of its "salvation" already coincide directly with its collapse. That is the tragedy of the bourgeoisie, which, for all its efforts to secure itself and ward off accidents, is the trailblazer of its own destiny and is all the less capable of escaping it the more it drives itself within the narrow conditions of its own existence.

Decline of the Proletariat as a Politically Organized Class and the Corruption of Traditional Consciousness

We would not, however, insist on our thesis if it did not have an important reverse side. What was a historic misfortune for the bourgeoisie, was a stroke of good fortune for the socialist revolution. The bourgeoisie passed up an opportunity to prolong its life. The proletariat (or rather its leaders) likewise passed up a "series of opportunities to seize the pass" (Trotsky). They lost the chance that history imposed upon humanity more gruesome suffering and bloodier sacrifices than ever before, for henceforth it declines under conditions which in their totality (economically from the standpoint of material wealth, politically from the standpoint of total social relations) are of the circle of capitalist life when, on the whole, is already closed. Whether as the rival or the "ally" of England—the "historic mission" of America always boils down to being the gravedigger of the British Empire and to intensifying the self-destruction of capitalism. It has, and can have, no other mission.

On a continent by itself, suspiciously stalked by the watchdogs of Europe and Asia (England and Japan), the men of "rugged American individualism" were able to utilize the advantages of the situation more freely and decisively than any one else. Ever since America in the first world war, again came into larger-scale direct contact with the rest of the world, it was clear that it would assume a key position in the coming imperialist disputes. The fact that America continues the work begun in the first world war, and again pours out the blood of the whole world over the whole world, is only part of this circle of capitalist life which, on the whole, is already closed. Whether as the rival or the "ally" of England—the "historic mission" of America always boils down to being the gravedigger of the British Empire and to intensifying the self-destruction of capitalism. It has, and can have, no other mission.
ness is now only class-consciousness in the sense of limitation, through belonging to a class. It is bourgeois consciousness and (not to speak of revisionism) is doubly reactionary in so far as it has received in Stalinism its most perverted, repulsive, detestable, vulgar, mendacious, hypocritical, disgraceful and perilous form.

The example of Italy shows, and will show more clearly with every day, the fatal results of the retrogressive development of the independent-political consciousness in the most corrupt bourgeois consciousness through Stalinism (on the basis of the Russian and other retrogressive development). In Italy the masses instinctively find their way to red flags and to slogans corresponding to their needs. It is striking how these slogans revolve around the organizations of the masses, whose every step is made impossible without organization. It is characteristic how American imperialism bears down on everything that might lead to the formation of the class. But political consciousness, which can become genuine class consciousness only through the knowledge of all class relations, is lacking, or else is furnished by revisionism and Stalinism, which provide the scum of bourgeois slops, that is, the most falsified consciousness of these relations.

VIII—GOOD LUCK AND BAD LUCK IN HISTORY AND RECAPITULATION OF THE DEVELOPMENT

Bad luck and good luck are in historic balance. We must recognize the one and will the other. The misfortune of the bourgeoisie was the salvation of the Russian revolution; the "salvation" of the Russian revolution was the tragic fate of the (expected) world revolution (and vice versa). The problem now is to assess the situation correctly and to exploit the new "good luck" which restores the historical balance.

The bourgeoisie must develop a new mode of production in the womb of the old society, and on the basis of this, accomplish a political revolution which makes the bourgeoisie master of the situation. The proletariat, on the other hand, must prepare a social revolution in the womb of the old society and make itself master of the situation in order to be able to develop a new mode of production. In so far, however, as the Russian revolution and bourgeois society develop in parallel and move side by side, they compress the development into the one from which they emerged: into the problem of the democratic political revolution, without which neither the Russian nor the European proletarian can advance.

History has here created one of those (already unavoidable) episodes which are a "stroke of good luck" for the revolution. The episode not only forces a return to what was "apparently accomplished" in the Russian revolution and the world labor movement, and to the opening up of a struggle for it again; it not only simplifies the problem by sharpening it and creating a situation which contains the solution in itself—but to the same degree it also supplies the indispensable formal means or the key to the solution of the whole question.

The situation of Russia, like the situation of the world labor movement, in general, if it were a matter of repeating all over again the bourgeois development and therewith (because this development included the labor movement) the history of the labor movement, on the basis of the decay of all. And in fact, it is nothing but a matter of this repetition in rapid tempo and telescoped form, i.e., in a form in which everything that was once achieved remains preserved in its essential contents, its quality and potentiality, and is reconquered in its breadth, its quantity and materiality. Thereby the road is first cleared for the higher development.

Formulation of the Task in Accordance with the Retrogressive Movement

Before Europe can unite itself into "socialist states," it must first separate itself again into independent and autonomous states. It is entirely a matter of the split-up, enshrined, hulled-back peoples and the proletariat constituting themselves again as a nation ("although not in any way in the sense of the bourgeoisie"); the devastated nationalities, just as the internationally and nationally devastated and disintegrated economic connections, just as the severed connection between scientific socialism and the labor movement—which never had an almost one as a politically-organized movement), must be reconstituted under new conditions.

We can formulate the task in the following way: To reconstruct the whole screwed-back development, to regain all the achievements of the bourgeoisie (including the labor movement), to reach the highest accomplishments and excel them. The recoupling of socialism with the labor movement is the point here around which everything revolves.

Scientific socialism is in the same situation as at the time of its emergence, with only this difference: it has been enriched by the experience and the theoretical illumination of imperialism, the victorious October revolution and its degeneration, the defects and shortcomings of the labor movement and its downfall, etc. Otherwise there are only isolated and declimated propaganda groups, exactly as at that time (then emerging, now residual), which must endeavor to expand, to link themselves to the masses, and to arouse the political labor movement to life again.

Political consciousness lives only in those groups and individuals—the alleged tradition of the masses is (with qualifications for Russia) the true-bourgeois tradition of revisionism and its last perversion, under whose influence the masses have stood for more than forty years and which is responsible for today's situation. Parenthetically: nothing of this is altered by the activity of the German Left—to say nothing of their miserable epigoners—who, is on the other hand, America, as the "epilogue," has experienced a political labor movement even less than favored England. Even with the existence of trade unions (which keep everything in the framework of bourgeoisie, trade union consciousness), the socialist "propaganda group" there works, and rightly so, for the formation of an independent labor movement.

The new "bad-luck" for the bourgeoisie and the unprecedented "good luck" for the revolution now consists in the fact that the retrogressive development has on a large scale compressed all the problems posed in the rising development of the whole of bourgeois history in its prehistoric phase, fused them into a single unit, and has loaded them with irresistible revolutionary explosive force. Everywhere, the masses will have to, and will, get into revolutionary motion as never before. And the retrogressively provided, indispensable formal means for the solution of the world crisis of capitalism and socialism—the means for which the revolutionists need only stretch out their hands—is called: national freedom. By this, we mean to say: the national question is one of those historic episodes which necessarily become the strategic transition point for the reconstruction of the labor movement and the socialist revolution. Whoever does not understand this historically necessary episode and does not know how to use it, knows and understands nothing of Marxism-Leninism.

The Revolutionary Counterpart of Historical "Episodes" in the Framework of Necessity

With reference to the revolution and "episodes" in general, Trotsky in the preface to his well known 1905 remarks brilliantly: "Whoever does not understand how to find elbow room for talent, initiative and heroism in the framework of historic necessity [we cite this from memory and add for ourselves: planfulness, organization, perspicacity, spiritual audacity, accidents, etc.] has not penetrated the philosophic mystery of Marxism." There would, however, be no "elbow room," and all that remained would be the empty mechanical unfolding which the Philistine, finding in himself
nothing but mechanical notions, considers Marxism, if the accidental and possible could not turn into the compulsory, inevitable and necessary.

To round out the present theme: Over and above all laws of motion and of compulsion of the capitalist mode of production, hovers the inner nature of capital itself, which creates many historical “episodes,” that can become doubly fateful to it if conscious socialism seizes upon them and alights into the sore-points made by capital itself. The reader may well enjoy the brilliant presentation which F. J. Dunning (cited by Marx in Capital) has given of the inner nature of capital:

“Capital is said by a Quarterly Reviewer to fly turbulence and strife, and to be timid, which is very true; but this is very incompletely stating the question. Capital reveals no profit, or very small profit, just as Nature was formerly said to abhor a vacuum. With adequate profit, capital is very bold. A certain ten percent will ensure its employment anywhere; twenty percent certain will produce eagerness; fifty percent positive audacity; hundred percent will make it ready to trample on all human laws; three hundred percent, and there is not a crime at which it will scruple, nor a risk it will not run, even to the chance of its owner being hanged. If turbulence and strife will bring a profit, it will freely encourage both. Smuggling and the slave-trade have amply proved all that is here stated.”

It is—and what would Dunning say now if he were living in the day of the percentages of monopoly!—as if the dialectic incarnate had come among us and called to us; Turbulence and strife which capital encourages are breaches which it makes in itself. Turbulence and strife, produced in order to save humanity, rebound as sand and more percent, rebound as the turbulence and strife of hundreds of millions against capital. Conscious socialism has “only”—to widen this breach planfully, in order to bring capitalism to the gallows.

IX—QUALITATIVE CHANGES FROM THE FIRST IMPERIALIST WAR TO TODAY

We can appraise the development from the beginning of the first imperialist war to today only if we understand it as a reversal, prepared before and during the war, of all relations, foundations and conditions valid for the ascending development of capitalism. Of the qualitative changes in the total relations, we consider only those which are important for the question before us for treatment, and leave aside all the more specific problems (finance and currency questions, foreign trade, capital export, etc.).

The Law of Breakdown in Monopoly

The continental wars preceding the imperialist world war (“chemically purest” example, the wars of Prussia with France, Denmark, Austria) which established the boundaries of the European states in the fight for their independence, were conducted in far-reaching independence from international and (within generally valid limits) even from national economy. The army, its equipment, its training, strategy and tactics of the conduct of the war, etc., reached a certain independence—the war remained “mobile” and always ended after a relatively short duration with a clear military decision, after which the economic development could start again. The whole development leads now to monopoly as the qualitatively prevailing phenomenon, which entangles itself in the “mixed form” of the first world war, stagnates in it, breaks, and here too forces through fundamental changes. More exactly: on the basis of the disintegration, the old relation is re-established in reversed form.

Why monopoly exactly? The stagnating and parasitic character of imperialism has often been established; and—strange as it may seem at first glance—so has its “irritability,” its aggressiveness. Whence this aggressiveness? Does it arise out of monopoly itself? We do not think so. Aggressiveness cannot stem from monopoly, if monopoly is stagnating, parasitic and (indubitably in the cartel form) seeks peace, like someone who, after hard labor, want to enjoy its fruits in the greatest possible security. The “dual character” of monopoly capitalism must arise out of the inner nature of capitalism itself, it must have a common root. The explanation is simple, if we understand monopoly as a phenomenon in the transition from the maturity of capitalism to its decline, embodying and revealing both features within itself. In fact: It is the law of collapse of capitalism that is operative in the aggressiveness of monopoly capitalism, that robs it of its fruits and its “peace,” and that makes it transvaluate all values, transform all forms.

**“Finance Capital”**

For a time capital believed that it could “freeze” its essence and established its independence as bank capital in order to be able to control the economy and rule in security. The brilliant days of bank capital have passed, and it falls back into its rôle of industrial assistant just then it had moved into its “dominating” position. It was the midwife of big industry and was able to raise itself temporarily to power during the transition from free to monopoly capitalism. But industry conquered the mastery in monopoly capitalism and reinstated the old relationship which has as its basis industrial capital. In this “retransformation,” so to speak, of bank capital into industrial capital, the transformation which it underwent itself is important: industrial bank capital became monopoly capital. As monopoly capital it gives capitalism a new dynamism and sets in motion the mechanism of the collapse which must follow the relative stagnation during maturity. The war and its consequences (inflation, plundering of the people) are important levers of the super-concentration which the new dynamism of the collapse produces.

**Militarism and Nationalism**

Militarism and nationalism likewise had an indispensable function. They were the midwife of progress, they created economic union, cultural and political freedom, freedom of the capitalists and of the labor movement. In the course of development toward monopoly capitalism, they first became a permanent and ever more significant institution in the advanced countries (promoting industry and promoted by industry). Then they developed in the words of Luxemburg in form of motor of capitalist development into “capitalist disease” (in pronounced form in the first world war). Finally these were converted into their direct opposite: they became the motor (cranked by monopoly in industry) of destruction of all (even their own) freedom, of all progress, of all nations. Just as important as in the case of bank capital is the transformation here of relatively independent militarism and nationalism into industrial militarism and nationalism, the re-establishment of their rôle of assistant dependent upon monopoly.

**Social Factors (Primacy of Monopoly)**

The relative independence of all social factors (art, science, religion, denial of religion, philosophy, ideology, politics, propaganda, organization, labor, conduct of the war, leisure, etc.), belongs to the past and coincides with the disappearance of parliamentary democracy. The state which in bourgeois democracy coordinated and adjusted the various interests in the interests of the ruling class and would occasionally set itself up as arbiter (Bona-partism), now centralizes but one interest: the interest of the monopoly capitalists. The primacy of politics over economics, proclaimed by National-Socialism, now has no other meaning than this—to bring the whole machinery of the state into the possession of the monopolists and to make their economic policy the one and only political principle.

National freedom, the right of self-determination of nations and all other phrases which National-Socialism retains (preserving the connection with what was once achieved while leading society back, even ideologically, into the past on whose shoulders the bourgeoisie rose to its height), mean only the freedom and the right of this one industrial nation to rule over the world. Its racial superiority means only the superiority of this one industrial race, rationalized through and through, down to the leisure time of the workers, etc., etc.

**Law of Life of the Bourgeoisie**

The bourgeoisie, says Marx, cannot exist without constantly revolutionizing the instruments of production, and with it the production relations, and through them all social relations? The “theoreticians” of state capitalism stand helpless before processes in which they see the “disappearance” of the bourgeoisie, but in which reality one of the most important laws of development of capitalist society takes its fatal course. We can also express it in this way. The bourgeoisie must complete what it destroys and it must destroy what it completed.

Let us take the changes which are presented to us as “autarchy”

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T. Citing from memory, we hope we have the exact sense of Marx's thought, if not the literal quotation.

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and "bureaucratic collectivism," and which, along with other changes (overcoming of unemployment, enormous increase of production and development of new industries, disappearance of the "free proletarian," etc.,) are now interpreted as "classless capitalism." To go into all the particulars would take a book and cannot be the purpose of a work which is limited to the fundamentals in order to find a political platform.

It should be perfectly clear that the anomalous economic, social and political factors that have taken place since the first world war and are constantly advancing, are nothing but those revolutionizing changes which Marx had in mind in the above-cited passage and without which the bourgeoisie cannot exist and not go under. If we admit, for example, that the astonishing increase of production (which is accompanied in Germany by an equally astonishing productivity of labor), then what Marx says elsewhere remains entirely valid: With accumulation and the concomitant development of the productivity of labor, grows also the capacity for sudden expansion of capital.8

With this capacity the overcoming of German unemployment may be explained quite "capitalistically," if we understand the role of the "industrial reserve army." On this, Lenin says: "Inasmuch as accumulation accelerates the displacement of the worker by the machine, and produces wealth at one pole and poverty at the other, it also produces the so-called 'industrial reserve army,' the 'relative surplus' of workers or 'capitalist over-population,' which assumes extraordinarily variegated forms and creates for capitalist economy the capacity of exceptionally rapid expansion of production." (Our italics)

We have already met the industrial reserve army in the form of mass unemployment and first classify its liquidation systematically along the line of Marx-Lenin when we say: In its first form, i.e., as a change in the method of production, it necessarily includes qualitative changes in the social organization and social relations which are capable of "swallowing up" the capitalist over-population and gaving it "new forms."

X—REMAINING RELATIONS WITH REGARD TO ALLEGED "STATE CAPITALISM"

Changes together with their entanglements and contradictions have occupied us throughout the preceding sections (the reading of which can simply be recapitulated from the standpoint of the revolutionizing activity of the bourgeoisie which cannot free itself from this condition of its existence). We observe them now in some remaining relations, which will definitely disclose their true essence.

With regard to those phenomena which disturb Burnham and conspire to the point of sooting flight to state capitalism9 the summary declaration of the first section still holds: "Pretzifying capitalism, although it continues to remain capitalism, strengthens in its decline all the features which make up its 'impropriety' and point to the socialist sphere. It forms itself, the proletariat to a substantial degree, i.e., capitalism turns from progression to retrogression, the state becomes totalitarian, the proletarian a modern slave." And particularly the greatest marvel that the apologists of "state capitalism" have produced, namely, the alleged replacement of economic exploitation by political (in which the exploitation of the workers is no longer supposed to be the result of the position he holds in the productive process as the seller of his commodity, labor power), is no more than a striking revolutionizing of the social relations and of the production relations by the bourgeoisie.

In tracing the course of the revolutionizing work of the bourgeoisie, we have especially classified the abolition of the freedom of labor (freedom of movement, freedom of labor contract, end of the "free proletarian," ghettos and the whole camp system, and characterized them as forms of the "development toward the modern slave state." This development is an inherent tendency of capitalism, always present and always operative in it. Through imperialism it becomes ever more strongly pronounced in the capitalist countries themselves and must be evaluated as a characteristic of capitalist "contraction."

The theory of state capitalism is worthily christened not only by its name (if the capitalist economy is dead, why then is it still "capitalism" at all?) but also by the mistake that one phase of capitalism (that of liberal or "free" capitalism) is confused with the whole of capitalism (imperialism, decline). Not only is the constant revolution in the social relations, in the social organization, etc., overlooked, but even more so the "extraordinarily variegated forms" which the industrial reserve army and its "sudden" utilization assume.

Thus we must once more underline: Under imperialism production is constant revolution in the social relations, in the social organization, etc., overlooked, but even more so the "extraordinarily variegated forms" which the industrial reserve army and its "sudden" utilization assume.

Sudden Expansion for War

An opportunity for sudden expansion and for extraordinarily rapid expansion of production is afforded monopoly capital (which, as a result of one event, is supposed to level competition among the workers, which we have in mind the specific forms that split society and threaten its existence) by applying the same methods which are supposed to level competition among the monopolists.

The champions of "state capitalism" naturally and rightly proceed from Germany and Russia, where they perceive a puzzling change in things and then discover traces of it in every country. They thus see here the establishment of a decisive quality (only they don't know which) and the most "serious" among them do not even think of disputing that the German economic, political and social development coincides with the complete subordination of economic activity to the needs of the conduct of the war. They thereby implicitly admit that the methods of production in the old and new industries have been transformed for the war. They thus admit that the powerful concentration, monopolization, cartelization, etc., both in the economy and in the social relations and social organization, move competition along the line of disproportion, on the basis of such industries as are decisive for the outcome of the war and monopoly politics, i.e., by systematizing the disproportions, they make them catastrophic for society.

In the qualitative changes which we have considered, there are therefore necessarily also included quantitative changes in the individual branches of production. There is no end to the "sudden" transformation in every conceivable sphere. War and peace become a unity like politics and economy. War infects peace and peace war. That is no arbitrary play on words. It is the formula for the grim fact that "state capitalist" peace declares war in permanence. What are the "technicalized armies of millions in the economic system of imperialism if not the employment of the industrial reserve army for the "sudden" expansion of monopoly capitalism, in the course of which they "consume" themselves as well as the industrial product?

The Hunger for "Surplus Population"

If we realize how quickly England and America have "consumed" their unemployed and yet are little satisfied, then we get an idea of what is actually going on. We must straightforward say that imperialism creates a societies of production and a society of consumption, which may be best compared with the hunger for the "free proletarian" in the epoch of primitive accumulation. The methods of satisfying this burning hunger are the same now as then: force, brutality, starvation, slave labor, and beyond that, imperialist forms of utilizing the slave labor and forced labor service, prisons, etc., become, by the massive extent and the manner of their utilization, first, special forms of slave labor, and beyond that, imperialist forms of utilizing the capitalist overpopulation. Under imperialism, such labor becomes simple slave labor with all the emblems pertaining thereto, as soon as capital is able to expand itself "suddenly" in the midst of changed social relations, i.e., as soon as it has equally "sudden" use for it on the basis of changed methods of production.
the most part also unguaranteed and propertyless slavery. The field of recruitment is no longer any old "primitive" area, but, so far as the modern methods of force are involved (the transitional feature of free emigration, etc., is something else), the world.

Germany's position in the retrogressive movement must assure it also in this respect (i.e., by the backward transformation of the surplus population arose out of primitive accumulation, which is the leading role which fell to England in the "classical" primitive accumulation. A "classical" country is always sufficient to give world capitalism its prevailing character, and one and the same thing that happened today as it had then. The backward transformation of the industrial reserve army and the increasing slavery through robbery all over Europe, etc., is for its part identical with the backward transformation of the industrial nations into agricultural countries with a colonial and semi-colonial status. In addition there are other aspects.

The "Migration of Peoples"

Although woven into the thick mesh of the other relations, the "migration of peoples," for example, is a complex of questions in itself. Foreign and native workers and peasants, who, by force or "voluntarily," are sent all over Europe from their homeland or from the allied and defeated countries and are "resettled," form the material substance in the system of Greater German imperialism of a procedure that consists in "establishing" (wherever necessary) "resettlement of capital" in certain regions in other areas. The "Three Theses" speak of resettlement, deportation of workers, etc., which involve hundreds of thousands. That is an incorrect point in the thesis. It should have said deportations and resettling of many millions. Operations like this involving millions are far from distorting and ostensibly the composition of Europe. Nations are decomposed; minorities and majorities and their problems are "created" and added to the old as botanical species are bred in a laboratory. The pride, the wealth, the specific culture, the tradition of the peoples are thereby destroyed. The great flower and vegetable gardens, the vineyards of France, Holland, Belgium, true "cultures" of human labor, the experience of many generations, perfume and the solace of civilization, belong with the French way of life to the golden past which only yesterday was living present. In place of the old splendor appear ordinary corn and potatoes—over and over again the potato, whose widespread use is the surest sign of the spread of poverty, of a sinking standard of living.

No wonder that the nations fall apart from within and a tendency grows up which can lead easily, in perspective, to a place where parts of the nation oppose each other, fight for their release from the national bond, just as if it were a matter of reestablishing the dismemberment that existed before national unification. But all processes start from and enter into the industrial process. As the concentration and the centralization of the means of production develop to their highest point, it narrows down the development of its component parts and of itself, and keeps everything in the conditions of decomposition which it produces. We must understand how to follow it closely in the modern development.

"Managerial Dictatorship"

The advocates of state capitalism have obviously failed to offer proof of why the German economic system, which is characterized by all the peculiarities here described, is "not capitalist." Practice has given their "system" many headaches and they are forced to degrade the undeniable "remnants" of capitalism to factors "without fundamental significance." In so far as they refer to Marx in this connection, that is, construct a "model" of state capitalism which the raw reality of capitalism must—as they say—rapidly approach, their method is all topsy-turvy. Marx constructed "models" in order to explain the indubitable reality. He found at hand all the "tendencies" in the raw reality of finished capitalism but he never hesitated to set up a pure economic abolition of markets rejected on rigid scientific grounds (as Lenin after him often so strenuously) the idea of opening up "specific [socialist] perspectives of the future." And so (as up to now) the secret of the "managerial dictatorship" will be unveiled without state capitalism—in spite!—by capitalism itself.

Property in the means of production has always been power and the power which this specific property exercises over the workers, the consumers, the state and in all social spheres, increases to the degree in which the means of production and the productive forces grow. If the relations are shifted in the course of development from free to monopoly capitalism, and then, within monopoly capitalism, in such a way that the industries of destruction in an advanced capitalist country (which draws the others after it) gain the quantitative preponderance and becomes the sole determining factor, then all remaining relations must necessarily assume not only "national" but "capitalist" definites which is inseparable from destruction. All we have to do with is a reality which brings to pure expression the self-purpose of the capitalist mode of production, and turns the quality of capital producing only for itself into the quality of self-destruction.

But under capitalism no one is "free": neither the "reformer" nor the bureaucrat, the politician, worker or capitalist can "choose" his road. Whoever does not obey the laws of capitalism or "misunderstands" them, is automatically thrown overboard, finished, crushed, imprisoned, driven into exile—be he the "labor leader" most devoted to capital, Thyssen or Strasser.

Just as, however, the centralization of capital and of the means of production kills off many capitalists and monopolists, centralizes power and shifts the total relations by the transfer of preponderance, in the same way the makeup of the personnel of the ruling capitalist class can and must be "shifted" in part, without doing any damage to capitalism as an economic system. In the whole "managerial revolution" it is once more a question only of an inherent tendency of capitalism, which, in imperialism and with the help of Fascism, is driven to its climax and to its point of transformation. Conceived as a theoretical "ideal," the whole capitalist class to the last man, could, for example, be strung up on the gallows and be replaced by the robber band which monopoly capital raised up and financed to save itself. That would only prove what was long ago deduced from capitalist reality: that Fascism means not the reform of state capitalism monopoly concentration is as if made to order for the formula "Managerial Dictatorship" have expression to various intentions, disintegrates to the degree to which the productive forces of monopoly capital grow and give it mastery over the state.

Second: The centralization of capital necessarily coalesces with the more and more expanded economic function of the state. Fascism oversteps all the purpose of fusing into one channel the channels separated and differentiated in the democratic-parliamentary system—the channels through which the ruling class exercised and knew how to conceal its economic and political power in the period of free competition).

Third: The whole process is united in the fusion of the political monopoly capital with the state, which Marxism has long recognized as the necessary result of the function of capital.

Intervention of History

In this process it is only and solely history which prevents the realization of any kind of "ideal model" (be it, to name a good and a bad example, Bukharin's model for "state capitalism" which in his view remains capitalist, or Hilferding's preposterous "general cartel"). History is always uneven and combined. Hence, it is only by the competitive process that it attains that (as a result of the division of labor) specialists and politicians who have performed "services" in behalf of production and the rule of capital, move up socially and use their position and their political power to make substantial industrial "acquisitions." If social-democrats, former anarchists, "communists" and other rabble have had no trouble reaching ministerial posts and directorships of banks and industrial enterprises (they also "fuse" with the nobility by marriage)—there certainly is no trouble for the "most meritorious" of the high commissioners, the Fascists!

Anti-Semitism

The expropriation of Jewish capitalists in the interests of monopoly concentration is as if made to order for the "self-acquisi-
tion" of state capitalism, which is one of the reasons for the obdurately consistent anti-Semitism in Germany. Another reason is: Where monopolist development is as pronounced as it is in Germany, and where war preparations demand it, the residue of finance capital (in Hilferding's sense), certain branches of industry, of trade, of small shops, of science, etc., must be ruthlessly eliminated.

The Jews everywhere have substantial positions in these branches. Fascism "stormed" these positions and thus prepares the way to sacrifice other middle class strata. Hatred of the Jews is further incited, kept alive and practiced mercilessly because the Jews (historically and politically conditioned) express more easily the ineradicable "impurity" of capitalism, i.e., they are tradition-
ally more capable and more compelled to reproduce private prop-

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erty daily and hourly, and on a large scale (as Lenin says in another connection). Hatred of the Jews in general, and the crudity of German anti-Semitism in particular, are perpetuated by the irresistible attraction of capital to its own conditions and the forms of organization characteristic of those other societies in which more primitive, original, older features of uneven development prevail). To use a metaphor: A building, resting on pillars, which collapses, leaves less empty space and compresses all the building materials in a dense heap. At the same time, it falls below the level of the pillars that bore the building, so that it is transformed, say, into a heap of rubble or a cave. Further, under certain conditions (the influence of long-lasting convulsions, etc.) the cave or the heap is sooner or later a point of departure for a new development than a magnificent building can be reconstructed out of its material remains.

Thus considered, the new tyrants honored in Byzantine fashion are called (in Russia and under fascism) Il Duce, the intuitively gifted Führer, the “Sun of the Peoples,” the Only One, the Great, and the Genial. They brutalize everything which is suspected of progress, freedom, culture and humanity. They surround themselves with their own Praetorian guard, in addition to an army, police, espionage and juridical apparatus. They have their St. Bartholomew nights, fratricides, pogroms of Jews, public burnings, their witch trials of enemies and accomplices. There is not a gloomy image out of the past that has not been conjured up by Stalinism and fascism and imprinted on the picture of present society as its most predominant feature.

The Masses and “Mass Psychology”

All this, to be sure, is “known”—it would not need special mention did it not have an unknown, falsified, misinterpreted, dangerous reverse.

The masses, those on whose backs and at whose cost the economic, social and political process of transformation is carried out, have become, because of what preceded the erection of fascism, even more than ordinarily incapable of defending themselves in the right way. As soon as fascism comes to power, the economy is “cranked up” for the imperialist aims of monopoly capital, the corresponding social changes are carried out—the unbelieving-hopeful, fearfully expectant, restless-trusting attitude of the masses must pass into the disarticulation of their belief in the former political and social institutions, only to be transformed finally, with all the waverings engendered by the process of transformation itself and faithfully accompanying it, into complete submission to an ineluctable destiny.

The power of economic facts is in Russia (on the basis of the nationalized economy and of the productive forces released thereby) and in Germany (through monopoly capitalism carried out to its ultimate consequences) on the economic “security” which it not only ensures the masses on the way to its own tremendous growth but which for a certain period of time it actually offers—this power is so great that it allows the collective consciousness no other way than to pass through the cleansing fire of time, and then—whatever the aspirations of the various strata of the population may be—to see what “develops further.” The decline of the Russian Revolution is the result of the incapacity of the labor movement, the state of world capitalism is, in addition to all other factors, first-rate factors which block the consciousness of the German, Russian and European masses in general into very narrow limits and deprive it of any “better” perspective. We can say with certainty that German mass consciousness will be turned in other directions only to the extent that Germany is economically destroyed and its economic power appreciably diminished.

An investigation of the so-called “mass mood” is thus possible only on the general basis. When economic realities are established or evaporate, mass consciousness follows them for up or down. The more overwhelming and pronounced the economic realities, or their atrophy, the more unequivocal the effect on the two basic forms of mass reaction to their social environment: active and passive support, active and passive rejection. Whoever does not understand this, still understands nothing; and whoever pretends to be able to say more about “mass consciousness” is (objectively) a charlatan.

To express ourselves still more clearly: We must turn energetically against the “mass psychology” fraud and mischief which has become fashionable in recent years and to which certain “Marxists” also incline. We must not permit the shamelessness which falsifies the crimes of social-democracy, of Stalinism, of rotting bourgeoisie democracy, and unload on the masses the guilt for the crimes of this whole gang. The longest whip should be reserved for those who make the masses responsible for their enforced behavior in a situation into which they have been driven by the blatherings of

Reproduction of the Historical Past

And here the retrogressive movement becomes compact: an apparent confusion of old and new features, of tendencies pointing simultaneously in different directions and criss-crossing, a combination of all characteristics and unevenness of previous class societies (of the history and pre-history of capitalism in particular)—in reality a strictly lawful disintegration of bourgeois society. In its downfall it can do no more than demolish its own history and kick up the checkered dust of the past—and do it all the more furiously, the more rapidly it sinks back into the past, i.e., the longer the descent. More unequivocally must it assume the form in which all class society is brought to an end.

Because the development preserves its thoroughgoing unevenness, the disintegration appears on the one hand in highly con-

densed and combined form (for no feature of development, no attribute, no law, etc., can ever go lost)—and it appears on the other hand as a broad process of levelling (for it adapts everything to the conditions of classes, those of those social formations in which more primitive, original, older features of uneven development prevail). To use a metaphor: A building, resting on pillars, which collapses, leaves less empty space and compresses all the building materials in a dense heap. At the same time, it falls below the level of the pillars that bore the building, so that it is transformed, say, into a heap of rubble or a cave. Further, under certain conditions (the influence of long-lasting convulsions, etc.) the cave or a heap sooner or later is a point of departure for a new development than a magnificent building can be reconstructed out of its material remains.

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The masses, those on whose backs and at whose cost the economic, social and political process of transformation is carried out, have become, because of what preceded the erection of fascism, even more than ordinarily incapable of defending themselves in the right way. As soon as fascism comes to power, the economy is “cranked up” for the imperialist aims of monopoly capital, the corresponding social changes are carried out—the unbelieving-hopeful, fearfully expectant, restless-trusting attitude of the masses must pass into the disarticulation of their belief in the former political and social institutions, only to be transformed finally, with all the waverings engendered by the process of transformation itself and faithfully accompanying it, into complete submission to an ineluctable destiny.

The power of economic facts is in Russia (on the basis of the nationalized economy and of the productive forces released thereby) and in Germany (through monopoly capitalism carried out to its ultimate consequences) on the economic “security” which it not only ensures the masses on the way to its own tremendous growth but which for a certain period of time it actually offers—this power is so great that it allows the collective consciousness no other way than to pass through the cleansing fire of time, and then—whatever the aspirations of the various strata of the population may be—to see what “develops further.” The decline of the Russian Revolution is the result of the incapacity of the labor movement, the state of world capitalism is, in addition to all other factors, first-rate factors which block the consciousness of the German, Russian and European masses in general into very narrow limits and deprive it of any “better” perspective. We can say with certainty that German mass consciousness will be turned in other directions only to the extent that Germany is economically destroyed and its economic power appreciably diminished.

An investigation of the so-called “mass mood” is thus possible only on the general basis. When economic realities are established or evaporate, mass consciousness follows them for up or down. The more overwhelming and pronounced the economic realities, or their atrophy, the more unequivocal the effect on the two basic forms of mass reaction to their social environment: active and passive support, active and passive rejection. Whoever does not understand this, still understands nothing; and whoever pretends to be able to say more about “mass consciousness” is (objectively) a charlatan.

To express ourselves still more clearly: We must turn energetically against the “mass psychology” fraud and mischief which has become fashionable in recent years and to which certain “Marxists” also incline. We must not permit the shamelessness which falsifies the crimes of social-democracy, of Stalinism, of rotting bourgeoisie democracy, and unload on the masses the guilt for the crimes of this whole gang. The longest whip should be reserved for those who make the masses responsible for their enforced behavior in a situation into which they have been driven by the blatherings of

Reproduction of the Historical Past

And here the retrogressive movement becomes compact: an apparent confusion of old and new features, of tendencies pointing simultaneously in different directions and criss-crossing, a combination of all characteristics and unevenness of previous class societies (of the history and pre-history of capitalism in particular)—in reality a strictly lawful disintegration of bourgeois society. In its downfall it can do no more than demolish its own history and kick up the checkered dust of the past—and do it all the more furiously, the more rapidly it sinks back into the past, i.e., the longer the descent. More unequivocally must it assume the form in which all class society is brought to an end.

Because the development preserves its thoroughgoing unevenness, the disintegration appears on the one hand in highly con-
of the bourgeoisie, who drape themselves, according to need and circumstance, as revisionists (neo-Kantians), "state capitalists," mass psychologists, etc. We must use alchemist "psychology," then it is this: Nobody has transformed the milk of the pious way of thinking into the fermenting dragon's poison of fascism-Stalinism, and accustomed them to monstrosities more than those gentlemen themselves.11 "Mass psychology" (even in Freud) is the last pseudo-scientific rubbish which imperialism in the demonstrable and true! To decieve themselves. The most aggressive position conceivable is the worthy supplement of pseudo-scientific "racism" cut to the needs of Anglo-American imperialism, which finds in these "sciences" the ideological justification for the "reeducation" of the European masses. It gives them the "psychologically" motivated pretext, the ideological underpinning of the domineering "leadership" of Europe thinks to restate itself. These people will and must deceive themselves. The most aggressive position conceivable must be taken against the latest attempt at fraud by the bourgeoisie who are the ideological trail-blazers for fascism in the "democracy." The line of struggle is defined by the insight: There is and can be no "mass psychology" (with or without Freud)—that is only a political psychology, political behavior of the masses. What we can say about this behavior is completely exhausted by the recognition that a couple of differences in degree in the economic relations produces in every case a wholly different-soul. Whatever goes beyond that is (to put it precisely) swindle; more politely, self-deceit.

"Autorchy"

We come thus to the last point that interests us: the "theory of state capitalism," which is no more than the pseudo-scientific supplement to the "millennium" and (like mass psychology) a true ideological precursor of fascism in the "remaining democracies," a means against and in Germany, and as such a weapon against Germany in competition. The point in question is the swindle of the economic "autarchy" of Germany or Russia, without which the "system" of state capitalism naturally cannot exist, and which therefore makes it in reality the theoretical nonsense that it is. Nothing could be more characteristic of the political psychology of the masses (especially in Germany and Russia), of the decline of capitalism, the retrogressive movement, the posing of the problem of the Second World War, etc., than that is hidden behind this alleged autarchy. In it, all rays are, so to speak, united with fascism in the "democracies." The line of struggle is defined by the insight: There is and can be no "psychologically" cut to the conditions of the establishment of an economic unity useful for the conquest and reconstruction is not...everything which establishes preponderance, by creating definite proportions in the international division of labor... returns to the capitalist market. The creditor-debtor relationship is characteristic and essential for ascending capitalism, vice versa for declining capitalism. Whoever wishes to open the "autarchy" (sum grano salis: is called upon to achieve his ruin) must, contrariwise, become a debtor, force back the development, monopoly industry, becomes the mobile front. And these "mobiles" are reduced mainly to England and America (due to their position in the international division of labor). The establishment of an economic unity useful for the conquest and reconstruction is not "building," but it is the necessary condition for the establishment of an economic unity useful for the conquest and reconstruction.

Return of the National Question

Both sides of this effort are explicit features of the breakdown of capitalism, the historic road of the capitalist mode of production circulating within itself and progressively contracting. In these are revealed not the establishment of "state capitalism," but the inversion of all relations which characterizes the decline of capitalism. The establishment of an economic unity useful for the conduct of the war (the absence of which caused the internal collapse of the first imperialist war) is accomplished by ways and means which present, as always, the direct opposite of the ascending development.

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The "Correct" Posing of the Problem for the Second World War

While capitalism thus proves to be absolutely incapable of removing a single one of its contradictions and of escaping its destiny (the sharpening of these contradictions in the retrogressive movement of the collapse), one thing is nevertheless sure: the problem of the imperialist war is this time at least posed correctly according to capitalist logic. The end-result of capitalist development, monopoly industry, becomes the foundation of the war and the military problem is now to be solved by it with economic measures (on economic foundations). Hopeless though the venture remains with regard to the solution of the capitalist problem of labor "autarchically." The result of the effort not to abolish it but to overcome it in a prescribed direction, i.e., to shift it, is its consolidation on the level of disintegration. With this consolidation, Russia, (whose revolution degenerates and whose economy gravitates toward the capitalist side) and Germany (which expands imperially) have abolished the political boundaries only to reestablish them as an economic-national problem (in Russia, e.g., the Ukrainian question). Seen in all its aspects, the development returns to its points of departure. The imperialist and Stalinist atomization of the individual corresponds to the national conglomerating of the impoverished, hurled-back countries, degraded to colonies or politically subjugated—and returns as the national question.

10. Whoever, for example, considers the "forty-three per cent" of German workers, which was the highest Hitler ever received, as an actual measure, overlooks and has no idea of how this result was attained in a situation that was absolutely hopeless and issueless for the masses.

11. Note for the English reader: Schiller has William Tell say against Gessler: "Into fermenting dragon's poison have you thrown for me the milk of the pious way of thinking, you have accused me to monstrosities."
brief stage of the overthrow of weak capitalist nations (among them, France). Otherwise it is like the long-drawn-out and ever-renewed attempts of ancient kingdoms to conquer world mastery. Under such efforts, the "civil population," both at that time and now, suffered more than the soldier himself. Nevertheless, the "grandeur" of the attempt and its material foundation is the reason why mass consciousness cannot escape it and the prospects are blocked up.

**Historical Meaning and "Progress" in the Retrospective Movement**

Our conclusion is: the "psychologist" is far blinder than the masses, who are another tool of the historic breakdown of the capitalist mode of production and follow its iron laws. History never makes "arbitrary" but always revolutionary jumps. And humanity, according to Marx, not only poses just such tasks as it can solve, but (as we have made clear in former works) it resolves upon their real solution only when all illusions have disappeared and no other way out is left. That is just as true of the Russian Revolution as of its decline, and the historical meaning of the retrogressive movement consists in exhausting the ultimate possibilities of capitalism—the historical-practical possibilities of its self-destruction. There is no other meaning than the historically developed meaning. If anyone asks us about the progress which must necessarily follow the historical retrogression, and whose disclosure is a political act, we would answer in this way:

The enormous progress which the retrogressive movement must bring into existence in the unfolding of its inner contradictions lies in the creation of a situation which drives the consciousness of humanity to the last possible out of which grow more intolerable each day press toward the revolutionary solution of the crisis of humanity and thereby also serve to collapse the last illusion of Stalinist revisionism, namely, that the world revolution can be avoided.

In the retrogressive movement there comes to an end the life's course of revolutionism, which accompanied the ascending development with the illusion of a capitalism having an unlimited capacity for expansion, and its complement, the illusion of "socialism in one country." In 1864, it enounced the capitalist's decline. The proof of this, and of the opening up of the revolutionary perspective, is obtained by investigating the special form of the retrogressive movement which, in addition to the features already observed, it possesses in strict opposition to the ascending development.

**XI—SPECIFIC RETROGRESSIVE MOVEMENT**

The disintegration of the British Empire supplies the historic framework of the retrogressive movement or the downfall of the capitalist mode of production.

The breaking up of the British Empire set in at the same time that it received its juridical coronation through the Versailles Treaty. England's position as industrial monopolist belongs definitively to its economic and political basis, and this economic and political basis is too narrow for its colossal possessions; her wealth (which, like France's wealth, is co-responsible for the obsolescence of her industry in comparison with Germany and America) is the source of her weakness. Since America and Japan broke into her sphere of influence, she has taken up a line of defense in the post-war period from which she slowly but steadily retreats. This line in turn influences the whole development in a corresponding manner. In the English "balance-of-power politics" of the post-war period—the social question which shakes the world from Russia and Germany to China and India and back again to the Spanish Revolution, has become a dominating element. It now participates decisively in the shaping of the development.

It is not the British Empire which is not the British Empire but the rest of the world which provides the framework for the disintegration of capitalism. But that is a mistake. The rest of the world provides the framework for the construction of the British Empire as much as for its dissolution, and it is this dissolution which gives concrete ramification to the whole declining line of development. England's strength is still great enough, in its retreat and defense, to exert influence upon the decline of the Russian Revolution (among other means by systematic strengthening of Germany and later the Stalinist bureaucracy), and to exploit for the "solution" of the social question the policy of the Stalinist bureaucracy in China, in the Anglo-Russian committee, in the victory of fascism in Germany and in the Spanish Revolution, etc. Without Stalin, no Hitler. But without the English policy there would not be so rapid a rise of Stalin and so successful a foreign policy for Hitler, which was made possible by the systematic weakening of France and the Little Entente. England, dominated on the other side by the antagonism to America, cannot do otherwise than contribute to the concrete history of the decay of capitalism which it contained embryologically in itself on the basis of its position as industrial monopoly. The point is that this is the historical result of the movement generated by the capitalist development itself. The point is not how the development might have occurred under other premises. The destiny of capitalism has been decided in Europe.

**The Transition**

We have said that a "classical" country is always enough to give world capitalism its prevailing character and the prevailing power of the ascending development was free competition, controlled by the industrial monopoly of England and the building up of its world empire. The development goes from West to East, and produces monopoly in industry out of free competition. Capitalism appears in the imperialist stage of its full maturity and poses the problem of the red revolution of the world. Because the real situation was misjudged, this problem was falsely posed: Capitalism ccloses its decline at an early date and goes under in Russia, which is especially a product of capitalist super-saturation and is the weakest link in the imperialist chain. In Russia the uneven and combined development of capitalism is not broken, on the contrary. It becomes the basis of its highest historical product to date, the victorious October Revolution and the nationalization of the means of production as the basis of socialist economy. The last and weakest country in the imperialist movement had the most irresistible labor movement, the densest intertwining of the latter's interests with the bourgeois-democratic interests of the whole people, especially with the interests of the peasantry, and the most conscious combination of these interests for the victory of the proletarian revolution through the Bolshevik Party. Therefore its lifeline of capitalism is broken. History proves that it is the destiny of its mode of production to be overthrown by the proletarian revolution and to be material premise of a higher mode of production, of a more human society. In England's industrial monopoly, whose abolition threatens its empire and becomes the cause of an imperialist war, the collapse of capitalism was included in advance.

But socialism can be achieved only if it builds further on the basis of capitalist world economy, i.e., events out the uneven development, draws all people into technical progress, brings material wealth and technical progress itself to a height at which it is possible to speak of overcoming the social division of labor in its producing and politically-oppressive effect and form. The problem of the proletarian revolution is therefore posed by Lenin and the Bolsheviks as the problem of the world revolution, and it is unmitakably asserted that the isolated Russian Revolution cannot vitally perish. Apart from the fundamental consideration of the impossibility of a "national" socialism, the highest product of uneven development is at the same time the lowest product of capitalism, a backward country whose general level lies far beneath the level of the advanced capitalist countries.

**Italy**

Russia, after warding off all the imperialist attempts at intervention and ending the civil war, made allowance for the world situation and drew back to the NEP with full maintenance of the revolutionary line. New revolutionary crises ripened in Europe and the hopes of the Bolsheviks for help through the revolution in other countries (Germany is the most important) awaited fulfillment. During this period, Italy assumed the position of precursor of an imperialist disintegration which seeks in fascism the form or rule of monopoly capitalism corresponding to this disintegration.

Italy thus introduced the specific retrogressive movement into the imperialist countries, and laid bare a political vacuum unparalleled in modern history. After the murder of Matteotti, political power literally lay in the streets. Only after nobody else would take it did Mussolini seize it again. It was the vacuum in which capitalism and the labor movement turn somersaults and stagger back.

Nevertheless, it is Italy's destiny to be in no way decisive, and always to be only a special case of the anticipated development. Having just leaped to the top, she sinks back again to fourth place and looks toward the stronger. This time she finds the stronger in Germany. But she enters the great conflict, in accordance with her destiny and the labor movement turn somersaults and stagger back. The New International - October 1944 - Supplement
LINI'S EXPEDITION TO ABBYSSINA AND HIS EXPEDITION INTO THE DESERT ON THE EVE OF THE SECOND IMPERIALIST WORLD WAR ARE SYMBOLIC OF ITALY'S DESTINY. HER POWER IS JUST ABOUT BIG ENOUGH FOR HER TO TEST OUT THE EFFECTS OF COLLAPSE IN THE DESERT. HISTORY AVENGE ITSELF FEARFULLY FOR THE VACUUM INTO WHICH FASCISM LEAPED: IT IS ITALY'S ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL HISTORY WHICH MAKES THE ITALIAN PEOPLE SKEPTICAL, UNHAPPY FOR EMPLOYMENT IN THE SERVICE OF FOREIGN INTERESTS AND MAKES THEM (IN THE MASS) "BAD" SOLDIERS OF CAPITAL.12

THE WAR HAS NOT YET ENDED AND ALREADY THE ITALIAN BOURGEOISIE SEES ITSELF REWARDED APPROPRIATELY FOR ITS EFFORT TO OUTWIT HISTORY. IT STANDS AGAIN AS THE BETRAYER BETRAYED. WITH THIS, THE DEVELOPMENT IN ITALY IS ONCE AGAIN BROKEN: SHE BECOMES THE PRECURSOR OF REVOLUTION, WHICH CARRIED THE DAY AND LEFT THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION ISOLATED.


THERewith the uneven and combined development breaks in its highest historical product and demands corresponding ideological expression. The gap in consciousness is filled by the new revisionism with the "theory of socialism in one country," which is put in circulation by Stalin himself as a direct product of the halfwayness of German revisionism. Stalin immediately after the defeat of the German revolution and Lenin's death. If German revisionism was the theoretical climax and systematization of all other methods for holding down the labor movement, and, as such, was the effort to avoid revolution in every single country, revisionism of the Bolsheviks is the climax of the halfwayness of the German Left which permitted German revisionism to perform its fateful function to the full. This halfwayness is the medium through which German revisionism is carried over into Russia and appears as the effort to hold revolution on the basis of the revolution already accomplished.

With this, the theoretical development is broken in accordance with the economic development by inversion of the revolutionary concept (the "peaceful growing" of Russian society into socialism). And therewith is broken also the democratic and national development, whose broad line up to that point had moved upward and had stepped beyond bourgeois limits. Proletarian democracy, just achieved in the fight against Czarist absolutism, gave way to the most hideous absolutism history has ever seen. The national question, correctly solved for the first time in history, arises again in its ancient forms. A consequent anti-democratic, untransformed Stalinist policy. An unparalleled disintegration sets in; the transvaluations of value and service capitalism as decisive prototype, is utilized by it decisively and clears the road for its self-disintegration.

The revisionist "peaceful growing into" socialism is always identical in practice with the growing together of the labor bureaucracy with the bourgeois state, which it supports in the interests of the bourgeoisie, in order to emancipate it of a more or less large part of its business of suppression. Where all capitalist development has landed in a dead end, has progressed beyond bourgeois accomplishments and has then been inverted on a revolutionary basis, the labor bureaucracy usurps the state and monopolizes political power for itself alone. It dictates the state externally as internally against the proletariat and the revolution, and draws increasingly upon bourgeois elements for support against the proletariat and the revolution (as contrariwise, the bourgeoisie in the democracies draws the labor bureaucracy to its assistance).

Further: Since social consciousness permits no gaps and there is no middle ideology between socialist consciousness and bourgeois ideology, it is bourgeois consciousness which returns in the degeneration of the completely isolated revolution. And because all combinations and unevenness, including the revolutionary ones, are carried over from West to East and have broken in Russia, all fundamental features of the revisionist development also reappear in combination and inversion. Stalin's revisionism has four aspects: It remains or becomes:

1. Impossible, in so far as it can come forward only as reaction and counter-revolution; can only suppress the proletariat and deliver it over to bourgeois atomization; can only intensify class differences; can only undermine its own foundation; can only worsen the situation of the masses as contrasted with the reformism of the preceding development.

2. Theoretical, because it re-systematizes all methods of holding down the labor movement, is a post-dated note on the fruits of "growing into socialism" (from which the world working class is also supposed to profit), and therefore takes over the fateful function of German revisionism, to corrode the revolutionary will and spirit of the great movements by this "perspective."

3. Practical-political, because it is the direct state practice of the autocratic bureaucracy and is just as directly engaged in counter-revolutionary activity in Russia as in China, England, Germany, France and Spain and the like.

4. Organic, because it is identical with all the wishes, goals and aspirations of the autocratic bureaucracy and the whole process of retrogressive development.

HISTORICAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF THE BOLSHEVIK OPPOSITION

(On the acknowledgement and evaluation of the situation of the labor movement and of conscious socialism)

Because, however, nothing can go lost in the development, not even with regard to the consciousness achieved; because the revolution was victorious and the revolutionary concept was sufficient, complete and consistent—a consistent revolutionary Marxist wing split off and the retrogressive movement of the revolutionary political emigration set in. The actual Bolshevist emigration was for Russia, diminishingly small in extent, overwhelming in quality, and restricted almost exclusively to the exile of the family of Leon Trotsky, which was the greatest obstacle for Stalin. He persecuted it with the parvum's burning hatred of the revolution, he hounded it westward with the support of the bourgeois front one country, from one "democracy" to another, and did not rest until he had killed every male member of this family; and finally, in a backward country on the other side of the ocean, he killed with a pickaxe the second genius of the Russian Revolution, the last political, literary and military genius, the last genius of socialism and of humanity. With Trotsky murdered, the whole rôle of the Russian Revolution, the whole Bolshevist leadership, the flower of the Red Army, of the revolutionary working class and of the intelligentsia is physically murdered, imprisoned,.exiled, cut off completely from the world, or use huge party corrupted—like Stalin himself—in the tiny and low-ranking remnants that survive. In connection with this, the history books are rewritten, the truth turned upside down, falsification, slander, intrigue and deception are organized into a system of which the most demoralized bourgeoisie before Stalin had not even a faint inkling, and compared to which Czarism was a highly civilized institution.

It is of the utmost importance to acknowledge and evaluate correctly the historical accomplishment of the Bolshevist Opposition in the struggle against Stalin and the new revisionism, for without this premise an acknowledgment and evaluation of the situa-
tion of the labor movement, or better still, of scientific socialism, are impossible.

Historically, there fell to the Bolshevik Opposition the enormous task of preventing the disintegration of the Russian Revolution, of explaining it theoretically, and of re-forming the forces of the world labor movement for its salvation. The conditions under which they had to accomplish this task were the following:

a. Capitalist bureaucratization and ideological corruption of the Comintern; isolation, falsification of history, slander, deception in Russia and in the International.

b. Everywhere, defeated labor movements which had “missed” their opportunities; had never emerged from the inherited mistakes and weaknesses of both the revolutionist and the revolutionary wing; could learn nothing from its defeats as a result of Stalinist theory, policy and tactics; standing as a mass wholly and completely under the influence of mutually complementary revisionism and petty bourgeois ultra-left or opportunistic sects.

c. Capitalist disintegration which curbed the spirit of the labor movement and had the general effect of depression; (where the development, as a result of special conditions, still moves upward, the labor movement is still young, as in China, politically undeveloped as in England, improvised as in France, and in every case it is killed by Stalin’s long arm, which when other methods fail him, turns Russian weapons directly against the Spanish revolution and has the revolutionists butchered by his GPU).

d. Continuing fascization of Europe, to which reformism and Stalinism lend an alliance and thereby permit the betrayal to be carried out to its end.

Under such conditions history itself reduces the task of the Bolshevik Opposition (which, moreover, is really able to take up its independent struggle in 1923) to covering the retreat of the labor movement, to maintaining the consciousness of the interconnection of things and of the Russian reality, and to assuring the continuity of the movement in every branch of work. This problem absorbed Trotsky’s time and energy completely. Its carrying out is a life or death question for socialism. Without Trotsky, who embodied a whole epoch in himself, nobody would find his way, and there is no one who could have accomplished the colossal job in his place. He devoted himself to it with a spirit of sacrifice, consistency, fearlessness, with devotion and a consciousness of responsibility which make him one of the sublimest prototypes in the history of all mankind. He saved the honor of the whole movement and its revolutionary incorruptibility under the most difficult circumstances. If ever there was a martyr to the cause who, despite a complete consciousness of the murderous danger, did not flinch for a moment, it was he.

The task itself is posed by the inversion of all relations in such a way that this time the revolutionary wing must begin with the demands for the end of the Soviet Regime and the International in order to go over gradually to the recognition of the necessity for a political revolution for Russia, and the struggle for a new, the Fourth International of the world revolution. Also with regard to the International and the labor movement, the regressive developmentpicture and the miscegenation, and it has not only arrived again at the demand for a revolutionary international but has driven back the free labor movement to the place from which it once began: England. We will see this when we consider England. With regard to the Bolshevik Opposition, we conclude:

The last period of Trotsky’s life was filled in the main with a sharp struggle over the question of the character of the Soviet Union, and the writing of a biography of Stalin. Because of the harsh necessity to defend to the last the first workers’ state, in spite of its horrible degeneration, for the sake of its fundamental achievements, and to participate in the struggles for the consolidation of the Fourth International, what was perhaps his most important theoretical work, the biography of Lenin, remains unfinished. History awaits the day when the work of both is completed and millions lower draped flags in memory of the great dead.

13. We have emphasized this issue in order to say another word about the development of the modern slave state. We know that Hitler and Stalin have used political prisoners and forced labor for canal-building, drying up marshes, building highways, etc., and that on a mass scale. It would be difficult to call these workers anything but state slaves. Under Hitler they are actually hired out to private entrepreneurs, taken back at the end of their work and given to others on the morrow. We no longer have here a meeting between the free worker and the “possessor of money” in the market, entering into relations of exchange, but rather the slavery of the workers, and the master of the situation in fact and possessed sufficient support in the rest of the population. But from the first day onward mastery was consciously wrested from it by its own bureaucracy which, from the outset, summoned to its support against the workers the bourgeoisie and the same reaction which was later to give it the deserved knockout blow.

14. The German Left, although it had a correct knowledge of this aspect and was inspired with real revolutionary will, mistook the situation in the labor movement and did not understand how to destroy the illusions of the workers (who rightly felt themselves restricted. It is a capital crime to come late to work. Punishable as treason is not only any criticism of Stalin but even the mere failure to fulfill the natural duty to turn on all fours before the ‘Leader.’ The frontiers are guarded by an impenetrable wall of border patrol and police dogs on a scale heretofore unknown anywhere. To all intents and purposes, no one can leave and no one may enter. Foreigners who had previously been tolerated are being systematically exterminated. The gist of the Soviet constitution, ‘the most democratic in the world,’ amounts to this: that every citizen is required at an appointed time to cast his ballot for the one and only candidate handpicked by Stalin or his agents. The press, the radio, all the organs of propaganda, agitation and national education are completely in the hands of the ruling clique. During the last five years no less than half a million members, according to official figures, have been expelled from the party. How many have been shot, those in the same cells and concentration camps, is a lost to us. We do not definitely know. But undoubtedly hundreds of thousands of party members have shared the fate of millions of non-party members.

It is sufficient to sketch again the situation of Germany after the war to recognize that this, and not inadequate Italy, is the political model that the German bourgeoisie must imitate in pursuit of its corresponding aims.

Germany

The industrial struggler, having become the most modern monopolist in industry in a country ruled by England, having got the short end in the dividing up of the world, first to overcome “finance capital,” saw itself punished by still narrower confinement for its attempt to dispute for place with England. Its collapse ended first of all, exactly as in Russia, with a victory of democracy and of the long-sought freedom of vote over the mon­archyl of Wilhelm—against the will of Ebert. The ascending line of democracy is brought to an end, and its “natural” sequence is established: bourgeois democracy in England, France and Germany, monop­olistic or far-reaching proletarian democracy in Russia.

The development now shown, however, have proceeded from Russia on an ascending line, i.e., the completion of the last bloody of all revolutions, or later at least, the proletarian revo­lution on the Russian model, were it not for revisionism and the miscegenation of the German Left. The German working class was misled by the Bolsheviks, and had the general effect of depression; (where the General Secretariat of the Communist Party of France remained in the hands of the revisionists, and the International, which like the German Left, was he.

The last period of Trotsky’s life was filled in the main with a sharp struggle over the question of the character of the Soviet Union, and the writing of a biography of Stalin. Because of the harsh necessity to defend to the last the first workers’ state, in spite of its horrible degeneration, for the sake of its fundamental achievements, and to participate in the struggles for the consolidation of the Fourth International, what was perhaps his most important theoretical work, the biography of Lenin, remains unfinished. History awaits the day when the work of both is completed and millions lower draped flags in memory of the great dead.

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masters of the situation) by using these illusions as its point of departure.

The moral and political prestige of the German Left was great. They too saved the honor of the movement in a difficult situation—the names of Rosa Luxemburg, Karl Liebknecht and Leo Jogisches were legends around which memories were spun every day. The leadership of bolshevism was obvious, and the movement of mandacious opponents. By misunderstanding the real situation, this prestige was squandered in a series of premature and artificially forced actions. "Radical" slogans and tactics took the place of what was necessary. The leadership was then upon murdered, the movement was left in a state of hopeless confusion; the German working class was delivered to the counter-revolution all the more easily because the young Communist Party continued its "radical" practices, and also because it flung away the prestige of the German Social Democrat and soon the leadership of Stalinism. Lenin's attempt to help the German party and to transmit to it the tactics of the Bolshevik Party remained unsuccessful. Lenin's Infantile Maladies was his most popular work, so far as its title goes, but in every other respect it was his most unpopular and least understood work.

Revisionism in Germany became for several years the organic and political practice, as a phenomenon of crisis and with explicit counter-revolutionary functions. Then, the retrogressive movement set in. Lenin, Revisionism, Revisionism, the extension of the world crisis. The democratic development, the development of the labor movement, was definitively broken under the régime of Brüning, Papen, Schleicher, who finally yielded to fascism, which, as in Russia, broke every development, and in the very first place dispatched into the void the German labor movement, the mightiest in the world. In part, history at least avenges all crimes on earth: the reformist labor bureaucracy on the whole is treated by Hitler as offfal despite its "readiness to collaborate." The blood of the murdered falls upon the murderers.

Under Fascism

The German bourgeoisie, with the help of fascism and an extensive technical transformation, brought industrial monopoly to an unexpected height. In the conversion, i.e., proceeding from its own resources the colossal, the eternal, *the Essential*, the important is that it is with soon speaks the "last word" again and can be set in motion for the alteration of existing relations. On a broader industrial foundation the bourgeoisie again take up the problem at the point where the collapse of the imperialist war had dropped it. The ambiguity of the earlier posing of the problem disappears: there is to be no *redistribution* of the world, but only the diememberment of the world under the leadership of German industrial monopoly by means of the destruction of England.

The side road which France was forced to travel in the capitalistic development and through which it arrived at its relatively favorable second rank, is in its general outline now reversed. This endowment of *dangerous* society with dramatic effects, the fireworks of history, the Great Revolution and the Paris Commune, rhetoric and bourgeois criticism, the press and the parodical operetta, comedy and satire, irony and serene catholic sentimentalism, paths of reform, eroticism, and domestic naturalism, wine and the gourmet's kitchen, spirit and fashion, naturalism and impressionism, military technique and the Republic—for all this and more France is "classical," because economically secondary—is imbued like no other with a feeling for life in which the consciousness of the evanescence of all earthly things vibrates perceptibly.

The feeling for life of the French nation is pessimistically grounded, but it has nothing of the burrowing despair of Northern pessimism or Eastern nihilism, nothing of the struggle for a man of the French, in my opinion, which is due to his wants, his tastes, his desires, his grand and his picturesque, his wild and his mad, his flights of fancy, his craze for beauty, his desire for the beautiful, his intuition of the beauty of life. The French nation has the habit of expressing the meaning of life in metaphors, and he is a man who says: "The French nation is like a beautiful flower on its broad vulgar stem, nothingness."

The world for hundreds of years has rightly regarded France with admiration and pampered it disgracefully. Its vices and weaknesses are such as to force it to adopt the philosophy of the nation. This philosophy is the same, but in better grace, in a higher, a more beautiful flower on its broad vulgar stem, nowhere have liveliness of temperament and "laissez-faire, laissez-aller!" transmitted an inkling of better humanity than in France. Where sureness, composure, unaffected humaness appear, one is on the trail of great traditions which—condition their naturalness. It is only natural for the flower to wither before the stem is

15. Again: the grief for the murdered leaders was a true, popular grief. Whoever looked into the face of men at that time could read the inexpressible things in them. Voices were lowered in speech; the liberal consciousness, the consciousness of the negro, the consciousness of the negroes' purity and the "noble purposes" of the murdered who had "not declared" their motives. A strange, swinish opinion of the Vorwärts, which regretted in its renowned-notorious jingle that Liebknecht, Rosa Luxembourg and Radek had not been to join in the murdered workers' departure.

16. When favorable circumstances permit, it would be highly revealing to write a study of how the uniqueness of the French feeling for life arises out of history and is consciously formed in literature (in the same way the English tradition unfolds the genius of Shakespeare). Here it is important, however, as elsewhere, that this development only reaches its climax in France to the point where it begins to be a fiction. It is only natural for the flower to wither before the stem is...
dried up; only destiny if France molders in the English embrace; only the broken energy of a people instinctively sure in good as in evil, if, though accompanied by the anguished cry of all its governments, it obdurately refuses to reproduce itself and increase its numbers. The “doom of the gods” of imperialism, which is ruining humanity, is not symbolically, musically anticipated by France but objectively described in detail,17 and experienced physically as a shrinking of its population. That is as it should be for a great nation, which could never reach first place; which has exhausted itself in the dramatic effects of politics and precedes the doom of the British Empire, and is itself prepared for by the merciless gods only to be accompanied by their own.

**France Between the First and the Second World Wars**

In the First World War, France bled itself white. Its reputation of having engaged out of the struggle as victor and as first military power on the continent, is benevolent legend and fiction. It is in reality the victim of England and lives thereafter more by the favor of circumstances than by its own strength. Exhausted as it is, it has but one need: recovery from the fearful blood-letting, protection from a repetition of the same operation. And the fear for its security makes it no wiser.

Hindered or called to heel by England in all measures which aimed at keeping the “favor of circumstances” and its security, it sought an understanding with all and reached it with none. Its will to understanding which extended right inside the general staff—for it was dictated by circumstances and was the only possibility of salvation—was utterly sincere. It was a national necessity, to avoid “avoidable” measures and to spare the people. Its capitulation was determined in a manner which permitted the maintenance of the “vendetta ideal”: it succeeded in avoiding the inflationary raid on a German scale because it lacked the corresponding economic driving forces. Revisionism became organic in France, in so far as everything was attuned to reconstruction, reform, appeasement, etc. The crisis remained latent until 1933 and first began to take effect after the victory of German fascism. From that time on, it acquired a convulsive character which accurately registered the spasms of the organism.

The number of unemployed grew in France, but that offered no special difficulties to the Jewish and political emigrants who were retreating further to the West. The Daladier régime even made a last grand gesture and granted Trotsky asylum. It did not at all lie in the “bad will” of Daladier that his courage disappeared with the untenability of his position and his democratic conviction capitulated before the growing difficulties. Nevertheless, the gesture was there, and he fired on those fascists—unthinkable for a social-democratic German minister—who ventured their first assault in 1934 with the help of the Communists.

In the crisis of 1936, the German situation of 1918 was repeated. The bourgeoisie sat in every mousehole. Police, army, farmers and petty bourgeoisie sympathized with the workers. A revolution could perhaps have been carried out almost immediately and been reconcilable together with Spain. France could have been saved, the wheel of history turned. The Communists, and they alone, succeeded after the victory of German fascism. From that time, they no longer needed a last grand gesture and the Daladier régime granted Trotsky asylum. The pressure was never­theless in the refusal of the French people is preserved a remnant of these characteristics: in it is hidden political instinct and historic genius, which remained, itskes the kernel of revolutionary defeat­ism: “The defeat of one’s own bourgeois is the lesser evil,” which at a certain point goes over quite of itself against the government. If France finds itself in complete disintegration, chaos becomes general, billions fly to the South, and the “Debrouillez-vous” of the 1936 movement, fails completely in the war and gives way to the slogan: “Débrouillez-vous!” (Get yourself fixed up!) “Brillez-vous!” (Shine yourselves!) “Debrouillez-vous!” (Save yourselves!) “Qui vive!,” that is in fact the only possible slogan for France after every better solution has been rendered impossible for it through the betrayal of the Popular Front politicians.

What it was scolded for—its “pacifism,” its unwillingness to let itself be sacrificed once more for a hopeless cause, the cause of England—is what it should be praised for. Though it sank far— and its positive characteristics have become lost in triviality—yet in the refusal of the French people is preserved a remnant of these characteristics: in it is hidden political instinct and historic genius, which remained, itskes the kernel of revolutionary defeat­ism: “The defeat of one’s own bourgeois is the lesser evil,” which at a certain point goes over quite of itself against the government. If France finds itself in complete disintegration, chaos becomes general, billions fly to the South, and the “Debrouillez-vous” of the 1936 movement, fails completely in the war and gives way to the slogan: “Débrouillez-vous!” (Get yourself fixed up!) “Brillez-vous!” (Shine yourselves!) “Debrouillez-vous!” (Save yourselves!) “Qui vive!,” that is in fact the only possible slogan for France after every better solution has been rendered impossible for it through the betrayal of the Popular Front politicians.

To be sure, it is true that democracy and the labor movement of France failed even more ignominiously than in Germany, and were not even exterminated by the fascists but simply decreed out for an understanding with Germany—plays into the hands of the Social-Democratic Prussian government; the action of the French Communists at the same time with the fascists against the Daladier government in France, etc. Doriot arose organically out of this policy, for the political essence of Stalinism is fascism. The renegade Doriot “refused to lose his head” and was again successively to have himself under the “Stalin pact” with Hitler, but France is delivered from its dilemma by the Second World War.

France is just about as well “prepared” for this war as a sheep that is led to the slaughter. The bourgeoisie is split, and its fascist wing—including a part of the military leadership, renegades of the labor movement like Marcel Déat, Doriot, etc., who had come out for an understanding with Germany—plays into the hands of Germany. The will of the whole country is paralyzed and an overwhelming majority of the people are no more friendly to the war than one would be to a strong dose of poison. Every Frenchman knows inside him, and every other one says it aloud, that England was ready to fight the First World War “down to the last Frenchman.” It took 36 years to build it up, and the English—before they were killed—had an Englishman—but without us” (without France).18 This reversal is good, and the “soul of the masses” exactly reflects the general situation.

**The Last Stage**

Poor France! Horrible how it has broken up since the First World War, how its magnificent feeling for life has sunk to mere banal need for rest, how its balanced optimism has crept down to trivial affirmation of the status quo. The true war cry of France sounded in 1918: “Je veux mon haché! (I want my beefsteak)” and “Pou­tes-moi la paix!” (go to hell!). The French talent for improvisation, confirmed for the last time in the sitdown strikes of the workers in the 1936 movement, fails completely in the war and gives way to the slogan: “Débrouillez-vous!” (Get yourself fixed up!) “Brillez-vous!” (Shine yourselves!) “Debrouillez-vous!” (Save yourselves!) “Qui vive!,” that is in fact the only possible slogan for France after every better solution has been rendered impossible for it through the betrayal of the Popular Front politicians.

18. Literally: “Cette fois, on peut mener la guerre jusqu’au dernier des Anglais—sans nous.” That was the expression of a French soldier with whom we, as internee in the forest of Chambord, were not only on good terms, but followed his advice to cite him as symp­tomatic. If ninety out of every hundred Frenchmen did not think in the same spirit and—act accordingly.

The whole truth is this: it was not to old General Pétain that...
democracy and the labor movement had to capitulate—his régime could only be transitional—but to Hitler, France itself was too weak for anything and could only preserve its sure instinct for historic necessity. The deed fell to German monopoly capital which cannot for long tolerate any democracy, any, even if only potential, labor movement, any opposition to itself.

The real enemy, the working classes felt and suspected where the real enemy was, and that it must be beaten on better grounds and with better methods. What Germany had already demonstrated, namely, that the political mass party on the "classical model" of the German bourgeoisie for the political purposes that proletariat, that the trade unions are questionable in the highest degree and that especially in critical times a one-sided orientation of political work upon them is catastrophic, etc., is, as always, practically experienced in France and carried out to the end. Scarcely beaten, the political genius of France is confirmed anew and gropes a way for itself beyond the old organizations and traditions, moving step by step to that form of struggle which is adapted to the new situation. It is the national question around which the political activity of France is oriented, and it is anything but an accident that France, as always in political history since the Great Revolution, should give the signal for Europe. It poses the national question as it must be posed today, and it would be disastrous not to see it: as a movement of the people and not nationalistic—whatever it takes to overthrow the current conscripts and it is inevitable. The old France is dead and will never be able to establish itself again "capitalistly." It is this which the French people feel and have lived through in the most inward sense. Whether in the Great Revolution, should give the signal for Europe. It poses the national towering above; it has been shaken from top to bottom. Again and again it has carried its conflicts to exhaustion, collectively and individually. Again and again it has wrecked itself from its own dramatic experiences which make its blood well up and leave behind the true taste of things.

It therefore had to be this way: Finished economically as an imperialist country, France could do nothing else but anticipate the fate of humanity in the capitalist disintegration and hold this mirror before the world. The hopelessness of all efforts becomes under impudence to the national question around which the working classes feel and burns in the consciousness of a people which has lived through history like no other and has learned from it. History is (to quote Theodore Lessing) "making sense out of the senseless," or, better yet, the effort to purge the senseless of the demon which it bears within it in its crude natural state. It is the great misery of life under unmastered nature which sets history in motion, and through it seeks to restore the pure, unrestricted course of the senseless (waxing, blooming and waning) free from the demon of the unconscious. History is the formal means for the freedom of humanity and must abolish itself with its complexes and its great people, whose imperialism deprived of historical perspective earlier than it did any other, had to feel its actual essence earlier than any other people. France has proved authentically that imperialism ruins humanity, breaks its life's energy, and drives out its spirit, will and instinct of propagation.

Interlude

Toward midnight of the last July 14 which Paris celebrated, a taxi swung through the Place des Fêtes, one of the squares where the people amuse themselves. As the taxi swung through the Place des Fêtes, one of the squares where the people amuse themselves.

"It's always the flower of youth which falls on the field of human stupidity."—Lenin collects in his Karl Marx the "flower of youth which falls on the field of human stupidity."—Lenin collects in his Karl Marx the "flower of youth which falls on the field of human stupidity."—Lenin collects in his Karl Marx the "flower of youth which falls on the field of human stupidity."—Lenin collects in his Karl Marx the "flower of youth which falls on the field of human stupidity."—Lenin collects in his Karl Marx the "flower of youth which falls on the field of human stupidity."—Lenin collects in his Karl Marx the "flower of youth which falls on the field of human stupidity."—Lenin collects in his Karl Marx the "flower of youth which falls on the field of human stupidity."—Lenin collects in his Karl Marx the "flower of youth which falls on the field of human stupidity."—Lenin collects in his Karl Marx the "flower of youth which falls on the field of human stupidity."—Lenin collects in his Karl Marx the "flower of youth which falls on the field of human stupidity."—Lenin collects in his Karl Marx the "flower of youth which falls on the field of human stupidity."—Lenin collects in his Karl Marx the "flower of youth which falls on the field of human stupidity."—Lenin collects in his Karl Marx the "flower of youth which falls on the field of human stupidity."—Lenin collects in his Karl Marx the "flower of youth which falls on the field of human stupidity."—Lenin collects in his Karl Marx the "flower of youth which falls on the field of human stupidity."—Lenin collects in his Karl Marx the "flower of youth which falls on the field of human stupidity."—Lenin collects in his Karl Marx the "flower of youth which falls on the field of human stupidity."
the field. Just as Russia degenerated because of the failure of the world revolution, so the world revolution degenerated step by step because of Russia. The Anglo-Russian Committee kills the general strike and Stalin reveals himself in all his breadth before the eyes of the world—the direct savages of the bourgeoisie, who, in the bourgeois summons up new self-confidence. Its ideologists begin to regard Russia with wide-opened “different” eyes. The number of joyous discoveries, of “Friends of the Soviet Union,” of critical well-wishers, of articles and books about Russia, all grow to gigantic proportions. The bourgeoisie breathes with relief and feels itself saved. With lures and threats, with baiting of Trotsky and praise for the “unromantic, realistic,” Stalin,21 Stalin’s counter-revolutionary work is completed and he himself is incited to produce, even more potent, a reliable bourgeois, even more palpable, a bourgeois, even more palpable.

England’s working class is beaten, but the radicalization process continues. It is caught up and braked by the “Independent Labour Party”—one of the reasons why the Fourth International has less favorable ground, produces no unified organization and consequently does not react to the present situation. (Hence the British bourgeoisie is palpably palmable.) Churchill may give assurances that he has not become Prime Minister in order to preside over the liquidation of the British Empire, but he is doing it anyway. Canada, Australia, India, China, islands and bases which England sells or leases to America, or turns over for its use, etc., are living evidence against him. As a capitalist country, England has only one perspective left: to “win” America’s side, to divide world mastery with America and—to divide miserably.

Evidently the English bourgeoisie decisively prefers this perspective to the “victory of bolshevism” with which Germany successfully frightened and blackmailed it, for above all considerations stands the international solidarity of interests of capital. Nevertheless, besides Churchill’s logic, the logic of things works unremittingly. Much-feared Bolshevikism established itself in England with England’s flight from France, and is eating away at its vitals. England is the only country of Europe that went into the war with an open opposition, and to this day she cannot get rid of it. The opposition is confused, petty-bourgeois-pacifist (ILP), contradictory, weak, cowardly, treacherous, but at the same time it is clear, decisive, energetic, unambiguous, revolutionary. The conditions are turning at last in favor of the Fourth International. It develops far better in wartime than in “peace-time.” It is heard, it has foreseen something, press and Parliament must concern themselves with it. It has defended the honor of the movement, other organizations must protect it in the interests of their own freedom. Its newspapers are read in many thousands of copies, it is uncompromised, it pillories the bourgeoisie unsparingly and more plainly than anyone in America, it is gaining on the working-class experience. In short, it is going forward, and the work of the Fourth International, which seems “hopeless” to the Philistines, fellow-travelers, the weak and faint-hearted, the obstinate and de­liberate “swimming against the stream”—this Herculean achievement is bearing its fruits.

And powerful forces are working along with it. On one side stands ravished Europe which has drained the capitalist cup to its bitter dregs. On the other side stands Africa, China, India, the thick-ravished colored peoples of the earth, who are passing quickly through their experiences with the new rulers, America and Japan. The development is retrogressive, but in return it brings new things to the surface and has also produced “unruly” offspring, which although afflicted, nevertheless stand outside the “narrow” family. For the first time in history a semi-colonial country is intertwined in the imperialist war and has offered an imperialist power bitter resistance for many years. It is impossible that China has forgotten the “Opium War” and does not remember the endless abominations of imperialism—whose last great act was the closing of the Sino-Japanese war. Hence China is in grave situation for three months without reinforcements. It is impossible 21. One should not forget this: Ewen Carl von Ossietzky incontinently repeated the miserable slander of Stalin that Trotsky, in the struggle against “Stalin,” was driven to the side of... England.

that India and the colonial slaves are not waiting for the moment when they can shake off the gruesome, life-destroying yoke. It is impossible that Russia has lost the memory of the October Revolu­tion. It is kept erect by its economic foundation, making it—des­pite the overpowering Russian bourgeoisie.

Yes, the disintegration of capitalism opens up a broad revolu­tionary perspective. There is much evidence that the English people themselves will get into motion when Germany wavers. Consciousness, will, clarity, boldness must see to it that the perspective is brought forward and acquires an irresistible attractive power. We have long held that with “classical” German fascism, fascism itself has reached its limit and lost its power of attraction. This is not contradicted by the fact that the enslavement of mankind is unavoidable if the revolution falls again. Around this point—the leadership of the Fourth International—everything. The birth of the new society is a difficult operation. It is not a matter of cheap optimism—in every crisis it is a matter in the last instance of the operating physician. Boldness and elasticity, the overcoming of paralysis and of habit-forming phrases without concrete ideas, are what the revolutionary movement needs most. A philosophy, a doctrine, an ideology which conveys no enthusiasm and no impulses is worthless and must fail.

It is not necessary to linger over the “frenzied epilogue” of imperialism, America. It is the American revolutionaries who arrive at an all-sided system of political propaganda and action. They then they-threw the “epilogue” and the “frenzied slogan” of the English working class, the colonial peoples and Europe. Then there can be no doubt that:

Churchill will fall and with him the colossal structure of the British Empire. Then will the seed come up which England everywhere sowed and it will grow over its grave.

The Final Problem of Imperialism

In the general average the quantitative changes in imperialism mean: Significant predominance of the use and production of means of destruction—preponderance of production for the sake of production—over the use and manufacture of means of life or necessities.

The proposition: “The bourgeoisie must complete what it destroys and destroy what it completes,” has as its content the history of the bourgeoisie and the law of the capitalist mode of production as self-purpose. They destroy the old society and are completed in their destruction. Arrived at their culmination, they destroy their completion and direct themselves against the society which they bury beneath themselves.

From now on all progress has ceased. Monopoly groups with their satellites confront other monopoly groups with their satellites. From this “height,” capitalism plunges down upon itself, upon its past, its social, economic, cultural, spiritual, political, national, international achievements, which it tramples under in the imperialist race. The capitalist development, which is contained from the very outset within industrial monopoly and toward the solution of which it now steers, is: Rule of the world through a single monopoly-capitalist country.

It is provided that the trees do not grow to heaven. This problem is certainly the clearing of the circle. An impossible task, which coincides on this historical plane with the self-abolition of capitalism. If it could at any time complete itself it would leave nothing of its wonder-structure save a single capitalist tower, rising in the desert of the same world in which all the slaves of the world worked together for its erection and ruined themselves.

The circle will never be squared. Independent of the completely identical plans of Berlin and Washington, which are distinguished only by more sincere or more mendacious language, capitalism must conclude the course of its life in itself. If capital comes into the world “dripping blood and dirt from head to toe, and drenched with the whole body rotting from head to toe, stinking from every pore, dripping blood and dirt. It is not, however, history which produces this result, it is the inner nature of capital which produces its historic course, and flows into the infinite fraction of the circle—eternal pi. This fraction consists in the fact “that capital and its self-expansion appear as the starting and closing point, as the motive and aim of production. Its production is the production for capital, and not vice versa, the means of production mere means for an ever expanding system of the life process for the benefit of the society of producers” (Marx).