

politics

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Edited by Dwight Macdonald

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**U.S.S.R.: A New
Class Society**
by Peter Meyer

How to Win the War
by Milton Mayer

Comment

The End of Europe The monastery of Monte Cassino was not of much architectural interest. This is fortunate, for on February 15 the ancient structure was reduced to rubble in four hours by 226 American heavy and medium bombers. One of the many things I cannot get accustomed to in this war is the fact that the most ancient, famous and beautiful buildings of Europe may be blasted to bits in a few hours at any time. Rome, Paris, Assisi, Florence, Ravenna, Carcassonne, Venice, Beauvais—who knows when they will join Warsaw, Bath, Coventry, Nuremberg, Frankfurt, Kiev, Cologne, Palermo, Naples, Rotterdam, Cracow, Tsarskoe Selo, London, and Berlin? It is like living in a house with a maniac who may rip up the pictures, burn the books, slash up the rugs and furniture at any moment.

"The present world war," wrote Rosa Luxemburg in the 'Junius Pamphlet' (1915), "is a turning point in the history of imperialism. For the first time the destructive beasts that have been loosed by capitalist Europe over all other parts of the world have sprung with one awful leap into the midst of the European nations. A cry of horror went up through the world when Belgium, that priceless little jewel of European culture, when the venerable monuments of art in northern France, fell into fragments before the onslaughts of a blind and destructive force. The 'civilized world' that stood by calmly when this same imperialism doomed tens of thousands of heroes to destruction, when the desert of Kalahari shuddered with the insane cry of the thirsty . . . when in China an ancient civilization

was delivered into the hands of destruction and anarchy, with fire and slaughter, by the European soldiery . . . when in Tripoli the Arabs were mowed down, with fire and sword . . . this civilized world has just begun to know that the fangs of the imperialist beast are deadly, that its breath is frightfulness, that its tearing claws have sunk deep into the breasts of its own mother, European culture."

What words could Luxemburg have found to express the lengths to which this process has gone in the present war? The physical destruction of historic cities is matched by the extermination of their "civilian"—the word has become a mockery—inhabitants, some by bomb and bullet and rope, many more by the slow fire of starvation. A whole generation of European children is growing up, nutritionists tell us on the basis of first-hand studies, whose minds and bodies have been permanently wrecked by malnutrition. The political and economic techniques used by the Nazis on occupied Europe have been borrowed from colonial experience: the substitution of direct force for market relations, the use of Quislings (that is, compradores), the reduction of the native populations to a slave labor force, to be "mined" as ruthlessly as their countries' material resources, the replacement of the judge's gavel by the rifle-butt, the ballot by the gauleiter's (that is, pro-consul's) decree.

"Native Politics" Comes Home to Roost Now that the United Nations are beginning to reconquer Europe from the Nazis, the "democratic" phase of colonial policy comes into effect—a milder application, it is true, but still . . . colonial. At the time of the

American invasion of North Africa, Henri de Kirillis, who is a realistic reactionary—that is to say, a cynic—wrote a remarkable article in the French refugee paper here, *Pour la Victoire*. He described the methods used by “the illustrious Marshal Lyautey” to extend the French empire. “He practiced an extraordinary realism, using to the utmost the leaders on the scene, however stained their records. He took every advantage of their divisions and their quarrels to increase his own authority, encouraging or even provoking native intrigues where none existed. He used flattery, corruption and the bestowal of honors to attain his ends.” But it seems that Lyautey has a worthy successor. “Let us not be afraid,” continued M. De Kirillis, “to recognize in President Roosevelt a genial disciple of Lyautey . . . It may be a trifle painful for the people of Europe, especially the French, all of a sudden to recognize that what they used to refer to with a certain disdain as ‘native politics’ is now being applied to them. But it is only the result of their own frightful divisions, their terrifying defeats and the complete social, moral and intellectual disorder into which they have fallen.”

“Native politics”! The phrase is just, even if “a trifle painful”. But the sentiments of the Europeans are of very slight interest to those who are fighting the war. Nothing is more boring to the powerful than the feelings of the powerless.

National Front of Quislings The hypocrisy of the Anglo-American-Soviet promises of “liberation” for Europe was exposed by the simple fact that at the Moscow, Cairo and Teheran conferences, there were no representatives from any of the Nazi-occupied countries, although their governments-in-exile are formally recognized by England and America. (As for the Soviet Union, one only has to recall the veto placed by Moscow on any movement towards federation of Eastern Europe—the one step that promises some economic and political hope for that region). The pitiful complaints of DeGaulle about the exclusion of France from the Moscow conference fell on deaf ears. He was not supported by his former ally in the Kremlin, which naturally preferred a deal with the Anglo-American powers at the expense of France, and which has always suspected DeGaulle as too nationalistic for its purposes.

The Big Three Powers are evolving a very interesting pattern for controlling postwar Europe. To prevent revolution, they encourage the formation of the kind of “national front” regime DeGaulle heads, which embraces in its governing apparatus all parties, from extreme left to extreme right, thus making every one responsible for keeping “order”. But the great danger of such a regime is that it may become too nationalistic, in which case it would tend to put the interests of its own country before those of the Big Three. DeGaulle’s unpopularity with the State Department is due mostly to this uncomfortable trait in him—which, of course, has nothing to do with any necessarily progressive policies on his part. (Even military reaction, as I noted last month in the case of the new Bolivian regime, may well raise the banner of nationalist revolt against outside imperialism.) What is really needed by the Big Three is a series of “national fronts” staffed by Quislings, *their* Quislings. Benes of Czechoslovakia is a fine example of the species; every fibre of his being thrills with a deeply patriotic love of . . . Russia. The contradictions of imperialist policy today might be summed up in a slogan for postwar Europe: “BUILD THE QUISLING NATIONAL FRONT!”

The Rise of the Periphery Lands When the venerable General Smuts last fall predicted that the three great Continental powers—France, Germany and Italy—will have “disappeared” by the end of the war, and that the future therefore belonged to the “power-trinity” of Russia, American and the British Empire, there was a great to-do. The liberals were, once more, shocked. The Free French were, once more, indignant. Members of Parliament from extreme left to extreme right criticised Smuts for damaging the war effort. Yet what Smuts said was the most elementary kind of truth, the kind that is not mentioned in wartime. An old and famous statesman, and a personality on a scale not produced by capitalist politics today, Smuts permitted himself the luxury of a little realism in public.

He began by sketching out a general approach to world politics. The lesson to be drawn from the collapse of our World War I illusions and the failure of the League of Nations, said Smuts—and one must remember he was himself an ardent Wilsonian in 1918—is that democracy, freedom and idealism are good but leadership, discipline and power are better. (Or, as the heroine of *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes* put it: “Kissing your hand makes you feel very good but a diamond bracelet lasts forever.”) Continued Smuts: “We cannot get away from the problem of power.” The balance-of-power, specifically. But it was not so much this philosophy itself which grated harshly as its application. With the vanishing of the great continental powers, the three mighty peripheral empires will inherit the earth. “In that trinity you will have two partners of immense power and resources—Russia and America—and you will have this island, weak in her European resources as compared with the vast resources of the other two. An unequal partnership, I am afraid.” He therefore proposed that England should “work intimately with the small democracies of Western Europe” to offset the power of Russia, “the new colossus that bestrides this continent”. There was more than a hint of a new *cordon sanitaire* in the aged statesman’s proposal.

Smuts made his speech just after the Moscow Conference and just before Teheran, at a time when the liblabs in England and this country were steeped in the most comforting illusions as to the harmonious unity of Anglo-American and Soviet policy. Hence the universal horror at Smuts’ blunt words. Yet events have amply borne him out since then. Russia has been throwing her weight around freely, rejecting all Anglo-American attempts to intervene in the Polish situation while insisting on herself intervening in the Mediterranean Commission. Her armies have

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won their most brilliant victories, while the Anglo-American forces have fumbled miserably in Italy. The Second Front is not yet open, and the Anzio beach-head fiasco does not augur well for its being very sensational militarily when it does come. Smuts' two big points—that Russia is the “new colossus”, and that there is a deep conflict of power-interests between Russia and the other two powers—these have been substantiated with dramatic speed.

Whatever the outcome of the struggle for power among the Big Three, Europe is finished. There may well be a conflict going on at present, for example, between Soviet and Anglo-American policy on the question of bombing Germany. One explanation of the whole Second Front controversy, which seems to be still far from settled, may be that England and America prefer bombing to invasion because they see the German industrial mechanism as the base of a powerful postwar competition in world markets; while Stalin sees the German industrial plant rather as something that can be exploited to rebuild devastated Russia after the war. Thus the former want to destroy German industry, the latter to preserve it. But from the point of view of the Germans, and Germany is the industrial heart of the continent, the triumph of either policy means their elimination as a major power. We are witnessing the end of Europe.

Randolph Bourne It is a pity that Louis Filler's new biography of Randolph Bourne (American Council on Public Affairs, Washington, D. C., \$3) is such a wretched job. The author lacks the sensitivity and imagination to understand Bourne's personality; he is respectful, but respect is never enough in such matters. He writes a flat, turgid prose, and strings together little facts without making anything out of them—in a word, his book is an average Ph.D. thesis. But at least he has gone through more original Bourne material than any one else has so far, and his bibliographical notes should be very useful to whomever in the future undertakes to do the job over again the way it should be done.

It is a pity because a good biography of Bourne, the intellectual hero of World War I in this country, was never more needed than today in the midst of World War II. The story of Bourne's stand in the last war, even as it is refracted through Mr. Filler's muddy prose, is a moving one. While practically all American intellectual leaders, from John Dewey on down, were accepting the war as a just crusade against Prussian autocracy, Bourne stood out to the last against it. Although he had no independent income and was entirely dependent on his writing for a living, his criticism of American war policy became more and more uncompromising. He found increasing difficulty in selling his stuff; the pages of the *New Republic*, whose editors had always been rather uncomfortable with this ruthlessly honest critic, were closed to him; for a while *Seven Arts* kept him going, but its courageous war stand soon caused it to lose its subsidy and go under. At the end, Bourne was really hard up. He lived in “a dim, narrow room” in the slums, to which a few friends came to talk long hours with him—he was a great conversationalist—and to hear his “raucous disturbing laugh”. The richness of his personality is suggested in Paul Rosenfeld's description of his last illness—he died on December 22, 1918:

He even enjoyed himself, poor devil, as he lay a-choking to death and unable to inhale the oxygen conducted to his mouth. An eggnog was brought to him at his mumbled request; and as soon as he saw the saffron liquid, he began exclaiming over its gorgeous hue.

There was little political in Bourne's rejection of the war; he belonged to no party. He was really alone. Sustained by no party comradeship or loyalty to a definite set of political principles, Bourne reacted simply as a thoughtful and humane individual, which makes his stand all the more heroic, in a sense. Although he called himself a socialist and was one in a general kind of way, he never developed—except in his unfinished last fragment on the state—much beyond an American liberalistic position. He showed such slight political insight as to edit in 1916 a pacifist symposium, *Toward an Enduring Peace*, put out under the sponsorship of the American Association for International Conciliation, one of those window-dressing “peace” groups with which respectable people amuse themselves between wars. But when the war caused the Association, whose directorate included such peace-lovers as Nicholas Murray Butler, to fold up its tents and silently steal away, and when even John Dewey, his intellectual leader, came out for the war and conscription, Bourne broke with them and went his own way. Or rather, he continued along the way they had all been following until the war began. By holding fast to the values of liberalism, Bourne in the war found himself brought into increasingly sharp conflict with most liberals. This process, in its turn, led him to scrutinize liberalism more closely, and in the last years of his life, from which most of the work for which he is today remembered dates, his whole system of values was changing, becoming more critical of bourgeois society, more penetrating and tragic.

It is one of the oldest ironies that when the rebel dies he is memorialized by the very people he would have despised while living. Randolph Bourne has been especially unfortunate in this respect. The introduction to Mr. Filler's book is by Bourne's most assiduous contemporary chronicler, Max Lerner, whose own career and personal temper offer a painful contrast to Bourne's. Messrs. Lerner and Filler deplore, like two maiden aunts clucking over a beloved but wayward nephew, precisely the qualities which made Bourne a significant figure: his ruthless, uncompromising respect for the truth, and his willingness to follow out to the logical end the consequences of his analysis.

“If there was a fatal flaw in Bourne as a social critic,” writes Lerner, “it was that he allowed himself to be pushed into the position of too consistent fault-finding with the institutions of his day and ultimately as Mr. Filler points out—to be alienated from the main sources of strength in American life, the people themselves.” This totalitarian mystique of “the people” is simply a way of protecting the oppressors of the people from the criticism of men like Bourne. And Bourne's remarkable and uncomfortable essay on the state—“War is the health of the state”—is to Lerner “catastrophically wrong”. The catastrophe is there, all right, but it involves Lerner's own totalitarian liberalism, which aims at a strong state—and no nonsense from the fascist-Bukharinist-Trotskyist enemies of the people! Bourne's analysis of the state represents the organic completion of his whole intellectual development, and if he was “catastrophically wrong” there, then his whole thinking was askew.

It is a curious process, a way of immunizing liberalistic thought against the destructive acids generated by a mind like Bourne's: utmost respect for the style of thinking and none at all for the conclusions reached. The trick is to wallow to one's heart's content in sentimental glorification of Bourne the rebel and fighter and thinker, without abandoning the philistine values of those against whom he rebelled, fought and thought while he was alive. Mr. Filler believes that Bourne was a prophet for the 20's “and

even the 30's". "But he cannot be viewed as a prophet of the 40's". That is to say, the only good prophet is a dead one. But Bourne is very much alive today, let me assure his biographer, and there still exist those who are not at all disturbed by the "error" Mr. Filler finds in Bourne's social thinking, namely: "his assumption that democracy required criticism more than defense".

The Wilson Speech On January 19 a tremendously significant speech was delivered at the Waldorf-Astoria

Hotel in New York City which got almost no attention in the press. The speaker was one of the leading industrial managers of the country: Charles E. Wilson, who left the presidency of General Electric to become the operating head of the War Production Board. The audience was of equal weight: the Army Ordnance Association, a most interesting group in which big business and the Army come together. The subject of the speech was postwar America, as it appeared to such a speaker unburdening himself before such an audience.

After noting the "happy symbolism" of the appearance at the speakers' table of Admiral Blandy, General Campbell and . . . Tom Girdler—a trio which to Mr. Wilson (and to me) aptly sum up "Free Enterprise"—Mr. Wilson got down to business. In a literal sense: he made it clear throughout his speech that he no longer considers "war" and "peace" as distinct and divisible conditions, and that war-making is as normal and legitimate a form of business enterprise as soap- or steel-making. His first major point was that World War II, like World War I, has been run in a most unbusinesslike way:

"Has it ever occurred to you that really good managers, in government or business, would never have allowed their own businesses to operate as haphazardly and spasmodically as has the business of defending the United States against its enemies? In industry we chart our sales and orders and keep a weather eye on material sources and market trends from year to year. Even the company that keeps my fuel tank supplied can tell me of the time when I will need oil. Yet when it comes to the vastly important and tragic business of war, we shut our eyes and stop our ears until it is so late that top management has to perform miracles and men die while waiting for them."

After giving three detailed examples of joint Army-industry bungling in this war, Wilson concludes: "The blame lies . . . with our approach as a people to war." And the trouble with our approach is simply that we continue to think that peace is possible in the world as now constituted. He continues:

"Perhaps it is time for some fresh thinking on this matter of war and peace. Instead of looking to disarmament and unpreparedness as a safeguard against war—a thoroughly discredited doctrine [I quite agree—D.M.]—let us try the opposite: full preparedness according to a continuing plan. The thought may be unpleasant, but through the centuries war has been inevitable in our human affairs, as a basic element in evolutionary force. We have yet to learn that hard truth, apparently."

"I am not proposing a doctrine of aggression and brutality—simply a realistic point of view, that the tendency to war is inevitable, just as the human tendency to disease is inevitable. But we do not sit and wait for the latter to strike us down. Perhaps we should even abandon that false phraseology of a "war economy" and a "peace economy." We do not have, individually, a "sickness economy" and a "health economy" in respect to the care of our bodies. One of the acknowledged glories of our age is preventive medicine."

When the American businessman turns philosopher, he generally makes a pretty crude job of it. It is perhaps not necessary here to make the old old arguments against the old old fallacy that war is "inevitable" and "eternal", though I might note that Wilson seems at once to deplore the fact and to justify it as an "evolutionary" process, an odd mixture of Christian and Nietzschean doctrines. It might also be noted that one of the many differences between armaments and preventive medicine is that the latter destroys the germs causing the disease, while the former leaves the germs unaffected and simply intensifies the symptoms. Armaments don't cause wars, as there was a tendency in the "merchants-of-death" era of the mid-thirties to think, but they don't prevent them either.

Blueprint for the P. W. E. But it is hardly fair to take advantage of an American businessman this way, and not very profitable. The significance of Wilson's speech is not its philosophy, vicious as that is, but its proposals. These are, in brief, for American industry to put itself, in close cooperation with the armed forces on a permanent war basis. *"The leaders of industry are as much the leaders of their country as are the generals, the admirals, the legislators, and the chiefs of state. Their responsibility for postwar preparedness is certainly no less. The burden is on all of us to integrate our respective activities—political, military and industrial—because we are in world politics to stay, whether we like it or not."* As Daniel Bell writes in his article in this issue, Wilson is one of the leaders of the "internationalist" school of American business; his attitude towards labor is conciliatory—all of which gives added depth to his postwar program. Here is a "permanent War Economy" organized along democratic-capitalist, not fascist lines, and with the control, whatever the CIO ideologues may think about it, firmly in the strong hands of big business and the armed services. This union of big business and the army, with overtures to labor unions and in a bourgeois-democratic rather than a fascist framework, is not the conventional picture, but it seems to be the one actually developing in this country and in England.

To return to the Wilson speech: he concludes with a rough outline of the machinery of his "Permanent War Economy":

1. *"First of all, such a program must be the responsibility of the federal government. It must be initiated and administered by the executive branch—by the President as Commander-in-Chief and by the War and Navy Departments."*

2. *"Of equal importance is the fact that this must be, once and for all, a continuing program, and not the creature of an emergency. In fact, one of its objects will be to eliminate emergencies so far as possible."* (This is dialectics: by creating a permanent state of emergency, you do away with all emergencies.)

3. The role of Congress is limited to voting the needed funds. (Congress is an archaic and unreliable instrument for such a policy.)

4. *"Industry's role in this program is to respond and cooperate . . . In the execution of the part allotted to it, industry must not be hampered by political witch-hunts, or thrown to the fanatical isolationist fringe tagged with a 'merchants-of-death' label."*

5. Permanent organizations should be set up, composed of businessmen and Army and Navy officers, to do research into new munitions and to see that the nation's industrial plant is kept ready to convert to war production with the minimum delay. Wilson suggests every big company ap-

point a special executive to act as liaison man with the armed forces, with the commission of a colonel in the reserve. *"What we have here, of course, is a consultative group which carries into peacetime the Combined Chiefs of Staff idea which is proving so successful in wartime."*

This, then, is the program, and a most realistic one, for American big business in the interval between World Wars II and III. For all his talk about avoiding war by preparing for it, Wilson is obviously calculating on a third world war in the not so distant future. In the timing of his proposals, Wilson also shows considerable realism: *"I know, as you do, that the revulsion against war not too long hence will be an almost insuperable obstacle for us to overcome in establishing a preparedness program, and for that reason I am convinced that we must begin now to set the machinery in motion . . ."* Some such idea must be in the minds of the Congressional sponsors of the pending May bill for universal peacetime military service, which will shortly come before Congress. I am told that

The Coming Tragedy of American Labor

Daniel Bell

Economic organization and control over economic power are the fulcrum which make possible influence and power in all other fields . . . Whoever or whatever controls economic power directs and shapes the development for the group or nation.

SAMUEL GOMPERS

THE postwar world of American labor is beginning to take on a nightmarish quality. On the one hand, labor sees business groups securely in control of the war economy; giant corporations, fat on war profits, emerging stronger than ever before; a groundswell of anti-labor sentiment whipped up by the press. On the other, it sees an Administration to which it is bound moving swiftly to the right; labor controls and regulation, established in wartime, holding over to bind the unions after the war; a deflated union membership, as expanded war industries contract.

All this falls into a meaningful pattern when projected against a larger canvas: the threat of State-controlled unions harnessed to the drives of American business in the scramble for world power.

History has repeated itself and given American capitalism a second chance, the chance it missed after World War I: to use its economic strength to win world hegemony. All industrial groups now realize that foreign trade is the key to America's future: devastated areas can become an industrial market; undeveloped areas a capital market; colonial areas raw material sources—all the world's riches and sweets spilling into the lap of America. But two conditions must be met at home before capitalism can strike out abroad. The first is a pliable labor movement, either bound by legislative restrictions or bribed by union-manage-

there is very little opposition to this bill even among trade union leaders, which does not surprise me. War has become so deeply grafted into our present economic system that if one accepts the system, it is sentimental and irresponsible to object to peacetime conscription or to plans like that of Wilson's for putting our war-making on a business basis. Socialism more than ever looms up as the only alternative to war.

Postscript: I had almost omitted the question of, not to put too fine a point upon it, profits. Mr. Wilson alludes to this only once, and with studied casualness, but his words are indeed winged:

"Those manufacturers called upon to develop and build the new weapons of war in peacetime should carry personnel devoted entirely to this purpose. War equipment should be the business of this group, and since it is their business, it seems obvious to me that it should be operated the same as any other business—at a reasonable profit."

ment cooperation. The other is a defined idea of national interest and the emergence of a State, strong in foreign affairs, ready to protect vested interests. The first is the necessary handmaiden to the second.

Every giant national State today necessarily has moved towards an organized economy. Private world empires can no longer do battle without the mailed-fist backing of their political states. German industry in the Nazi state, as Guenter Reimann has pointed out, was compressed tightly into national monopolies in order to compete against the dominant world groups. Today that process is being repeated in Britain, where British industry, facing the spectre of American competition, is solidifying into State-backed national monopolies in its fight to regain or hold world markets. In its struggle against American exporters for the South American trade, the British have organized their exporters on a cartel basis. Within Britain, the industrialists have sought to make labor pliable by proposing a "deal", with labor cast as the junior partner. Last year a specific proposal was made in the manifesto of 120 industrialists; the set-up was this: a corporative structure for British industry was outlined based on compulsory membership of all business in trade associations, with a national council at the peak to direct policies; labor was invited to join with the trade associations the "reward" being the acceptance of certain social security and education planks in the Labor Party program.

The Two Wings of Big Business

In the United States there is not the singleness of purpose or the homogeneity of interests that are apparent in the British economy. Two broad groups can be crudely differentiated. In the first camp are the men who think in world terms, of foreign markets and foreign investments, of a planned economy at home and cooperation with one or the other two great powers overseas. They are, in the main, "friendly" to labor, if labor will cooperate; they are willing to bear a relatively high labor cost, hoping to make it up through foreign exploitation. In this group are the men who have held the throttles of the war economy, the kind one will find represented in the National Planning Association or the type designated as the

"New Deal" businessmen. Roughly we can group here Wilson and Batt of WPB; Stettinius and Harriman of the State Department; Willkie; Lamont of J. P. Morgan; Eric Johnston of the U. S. Chamber of Commerce. They want to work within the framework of an expanded "liberal" capitalist society.

The second group, numerically larger, is a strange melange clustered about anti-labor symbols: the isolationists with more provincial interests ("hemispheric imperialism" and to hell with Europe, etc.); the fearful small capitalists and marginal men, squeezed by monopoly and labor costs; the native fascists and die-hard feudal barons like Weir and Pew and Rand. It is this group that is largely behind the wave of anti-labor propaganda. The drive on labor is a necessary trick in uniting farmer, middle class and small businessman behind its program (as Mark Hanna in the 1896 campaign, used Bryan and the bogey of silver, to stampede the middle class and business behind Wall Street).

To some extent, the rest of industry supports the anti-labor drive, for it is a warning to labor to be tractable and a reminder to union leaders to be "responsible" in curbing the membership. Yet, elements of the first group fear that the drive has gone too far. At the recent convention of the National Association of Manufacturers, Charles E. Wilson of General Electric, executive vice-chairman of the War Production Board, openly attacked the Pew-Rand policy:

Many of us in the 1930's feared that a left-wing reaction would draw labor so far away from the main body of American sentiment that the gap could not be closed without a disastrous struggle. I tell you frankly that I am deeply alarmed today over the possibility that a right-wing reaction may draw some sections of capital so far away from our traditions as to imperil the entire structure of American life as we know it."

It would be illusory, however, to hold that one group is pro-labor, the other anti-labor. The direction of their interests dictates different approaches, but the first group is as ready to use repressive tactics when necessary as the second. If foreign competition became too severe and if certain colonial areas began to compete in markets or other colonial areas to resist severe exploitation, then these industrialists would be forced to turn on home labor, as the German capitalists did, in their efforts to maintain the profit system.

... and Labor's Two Wings

Just as there are two policy-groups in business, we have two wings in the labor movement. And it would be an easy dichotomy to line up CIO as an obverse of the first and the AFL of the second, creating a Pew-AFL vs Wilson-CIO outlook. Yet there are suggestive lines to this analysis, for both Wilson and CIO think in some Statist direction, in planning terms, with the CIO holding on to the dream of a "mixed-economy", while Pew and AFL act along narrow, vested-interest lines, oblivious to the general considerations of the economy. This is not to say, of course, that there is a basic harmony of interest between the two. Actually in this war period, the AFL has been more mili-

tant regarding the War Labor Board than the CIO. It is meant to show the "primitive" economic thinking of both groups.

From the notion of direct economic self-interest, enunciated by Gompers, the AFL developed a fierce mother-bear-to-cub job-conscious psychology, seeking to protect the private job empires it had established. Thus, as Veblen aptly put it, describing the labor movement after the first world war, "the AFL became one of the vested interests, as ready as any other to do battle for its own margin of privilege and profit . . . the AFL is a business organization with a vested interest of its own; for keeping up prices and keeping down the supply, quite after the usual fashion by management, by other Vested Interests."

However this is less invidious than it may appear on first reading. It is true that the narrow job interests and bureaucratic structure that emerged in the AFL shortened its social focus and prevented it from playing any leading role in the development of the thirties. But its basic "job struggle" practices, revolving around immediate conflicts on the job, have put it in a different position in these last years.

The AFL sanhedrin, old, stubborn and crafty, has long been suspicious of the Administration's fatherly tenderness toward CIO. At the same time it has had little use for the "professors" and "social work crowd" that staffed the Administration's labor agencies. These distrusts, combined with its traditional "job consciousness" against the "community consciousness" of CIO, has made the AFL more realistic about the War Labor Board and the Administration's labor policies. The AFL hasn't been taken in by the attractive idea that the WLB is good because labor has "equal status" with industry and government. With its focus on the protection of the individual member and the safeguarding of the union, the AFL has been more tough-minded and militant than CIO regarding the war agencies and their policies.

While on the economic level the AFL plays a shrewd and flexible role, politically and socially it is still wedded to the 19th century notions of protectionism, high-tariff and free enterprise. Events of the future, therefore, are likely to place a great strain on the AFL, for in the economic field, and necessarily carried over into politics, it will battle government encroachment on union rights and fight hard for its own wage structures. Yet it lacks a social philosophy and political vision to provide understanding of the social pulls that give rise to the new situations, and in the end, this tension may cause the Federation to snap, not organically, but politically, with the Browns, Dubinskys, Tobins, and even Woll and Lewis undergoing a re-orientation, while the Hutchesons and the Building Trades element are left with the reactionary husks.

The CIO emerged as a reflex to the crisis of the early thirties. A number of unions, particularly the mine workers, had begun to think in Statist terms. The chaos of capitalism accelerated the trend towards cartelized economy which culminated in the New Deal stop-gap on the plateau of NRA, an attempt to attain an economic equilibrium through "government-coded industry" and "government-aided unionism." The narrow social focus of the AFL hierarchy prevented any real expansion of the labor movement, but other leaders in the AFL, particularly John L.

Lewis, saw an opportunity and acted on it. At the same time the "New Deal" forces needed a strong labor movement, both as a stabilizing force in the economy and as a political ally for the anti-capitalist mood germinating within the early New Deal. The result was the creation, for the first time, of State-fostered unions.

The more thoughtful CIO leaders understood that at this stage the old-style "business unionism" was passé. Labor was gaining a measure of social power, and sought recognition of this fact. A social philosophy had to be evolved. Politically, this was easy, for the New Deal ideology was tailored to measure and ready at hand. In economics what emerged was the notion of "union-management" committees and the phrase "industrial democracy" as used by Golden and Ruttenberg in their book. It would be a mistake to confuse these concepts with the Gompers-Easley cooperation of the National Civic Federation, or the John-Mitchell-Mark Hanna mesalliance which were attempts at softening the tough feudal-minded industrial barons while pledging labor docility; or to confuse this CIO doctrine with the labor-management plans of the 1920's which were essentially, attempts at stabilization of sick industries. The Golden-Ruttenberg thinking is an extension of the rhetoric of the New Deal at its palmist. It proposes industry councils, with labor sharing a voice in authority, as an indication of industrial democracy. It is accompanied politically by a demand for labor representation in government agencies.

The most dramatic expression of this philosophy came in the Murray steel plan, the Reuther auto plan and other CIO plans for copper, aluminum, etc., during a period when there was an imperative need for the economy to be geared to production. Here was labor showing what it could do when it had a voice. In the post-war period, however, where problems of demobilization and reconversion are paramount there is little possibility for a Murray or Reuther plan with any real "bite", for the prime considerations here are financial, and any plans to spur production would implicitly have to propose far-reaching changes in the profit system, a stand that labor, unfortunately, is not prepared to take. Not prepared, because it has been bound politically to the Administration and cannot advance beyond FDR without a political break and because many of its experiences in the war have made it fearful of extensive government control. "You can't bargain with the government," is how Phil Murray put it.

But the fallacy of "union-management cooperation" lies not in its conception—there are important arguments in its favor—but in the political fact that the New Deal is dead and the perspectives for labor, necessarily, must shift. Any possible hope for real cooperation, where labor would have a voice in industry's policies, depends upon a pro-labor administration that could curb the monopoly power of industry. But that hope is gone. The result for CIO is a political crisis. More than any other labor group it has maintained close working ties with the Administration. Its first important contract, the one with U. S. Steel, was a "political" contract. CIO is still tied to the Democratic Party and Sidney Hillman's Political Action Committee aims at curbing third party movements and rolling up the vote for Roosevelt, at a time when Roosevelt has gone on

record with the assertion that he will sign any anti-labor bill that comes to his desk.

The greatest resourcefulness—and at times irresponsibility—has been shown by John L. Lewis the most crafty and dangerously ambitious man of labor. The fact that Lewis is on "the outs" with the administration, combined with his own ideological flexibility has placed him in a position to win striking economic and psychological gains during the war while other unions have chafed and fretted under WLB regulations. Lewis has demonstrated in 1943 what streamlined Gompersism can accomplish. For it is a paradoxical fact that John L. Lewis today, stands closer to the ideas of Gompers than any other labor leader, and in his tactics has modernized the Gompers tactics and philosophy. "Lewis believes that men do as their economic interests tell them to do," John Chamberlain has noted. Lewis's swashbuckling defiances of government bureaus, his insistence on working out a contract through economic force is a reversion to the best Gompers manner.

The End of the Roosevelt Revolution

Apart from John L. Lewis, who has made up his mind in private, the entire labor movement is in a political dilemma. Neither the CIO approach nor the AFL approach is adequate, because of the great changes in Roosevelt's policies. Yet they cannot draw the conclusion of the political logic, which means playing an independent role and beginning the formation of a national Labor Party. The AFL fears playing an active political role, while the CIO fears being independent of Roosevelt.

The evolution of the Roosevelt regime and its policies during war (the crucial test of any regime, as to where its fundamental allegiances lie) is an important lesson for a labor movement which believes it can tie itself completely to any of the present political parties. And in writing of Roosevelt and the Democratic Party, I am not thinking in terms of the Southern Democratic machine or the urban Catholic machines, but of the fundamental nature of such a regime.

The Roosevelt Revolution, in its origins and in the pressures of the early thirties had a marked anti-capitalist trend, in common with similar movements in other great capitalist States: Germany had turned National Socialist; France was going through political convulsions; Britain was undermining her traditional world role and shaping a neo-mercantilist economy in such moves as the Ottawa Conference and the Import Duties Act of 1932, which ended free trade.

In the United States, Roosevelt had welded together, first through external soldering, later through his genius for makeshift compromises, the restless labor groups, the discontented agrarian elements, the uneasy middle classes and small sections of the capitalist class. Yet his major moves were in the direction of a State capitalist society.

Roosevelt's role as a political juggler is analagous to Louis Napoleon's in the early days of his regime, of whom Marx wrote:

The contradictory tasks of the man explain the contradictions of his government, the confused groping hither and thither which seeks now to win, now to humiliate first one class and then another.

The introduction of the NRA was a first step towards a genuine corporative economy, but the political controls were, for the moment, outside the hands of the dominant business groups. The impromptu social ideology that enveloped the New Deal—the appeals to labor, the farmers and the middle class—formulated the incipient anti-capitalist trends. The introduction of the State as the “governor” of the economic motor, the use of State spending to grease the economic gears, was a step in the direction of subordinating industry to the political control of the State. (Incidentally the pragmatic origins of these methods is not to be found in John Maynard Keynes but in Hjalmar Schacht). But Roosevelt could never carry out the logic of his program because he lacked a full-bodied social movement of his own that could serve as a trusty bureaucracy in the administration of the State. He was forced, therefore, to act as a “broker” between various social groups.

Near the end of the second term, the Roosevelt regime had begun to make its peace with powerful industrial figures especially as the prospects of war shifted the crucial issues from the domestic scene to foreign policy. Important figures in the banking and industrial community began to line up with the administration as a pro-war policy began to be shaped. The war has completed the process of bringing back to power the forces of Big Business. In fighting an economic and technological war the men who dominate the economy necessarily had to be brought into the political controls of the economy.

Labor, thus, in its political and economic power, had to be subordinated to the total direction of the war. The result in the field of labor relations has been “government by edict.” The trade unions have been transformed into quasi-official agencies of the State, their organizational power and status dependent on a promise and performance of good behavior. The war has given labor great numerical strength, yet sapped it of its real strength.

Underlying this situation is a tremendous shift in the nature of trade unionism. Forty years ago the trade union was a fighting army facing the blunt and naked power of its corporate adversary. As it gradually gained a foothold in the industrial system it developed vested interests of its own, revolving around a monopoly of job supply. From what might be termed “class-struggle unionism”, recognizing the role of economic power as dominant in a business civilization, it evolved into “business unionism” preoccupied with job control and industry stabilization. Unionism became a technical and specialized function with the leadership adapting itself primarily to bargaining and negotiating skills. With the New Deal there was inaugurated the phase of “social unionism” and “political unionism.” No longer was the political arena a place where labor pursued a mirage. Collective bargaining became the law of the land. With the creation of numerous government agencies dealing with labor or mediating between labor and industry, politics became the focal area of conflict. Labor and capital needed to depend less on pure economic strength than on political pressure and backing.

But labor failed to evaluate correctly some important factors. As long as the Administration was relatively favorable to labor, as long as “New Dealers” staffed the administrative agencies, all was well. But this situation was

subject to change. The instruments used against industry could be turned against labor—this was dimly recognized by the labor leaders. But they failed to draw the conclusion that the next step must be a consolidation of labor strength in the political area, where decisions were now being made, to see that government should not be turned against labor. In the simple dichotomy of friends and enemies, Roosevelt was classified as a friend and the labor machine was tied to him. But what the labor leaders didn't foresee was that the dialectics of war, the need for gearing the State machinery to war, would transform the Administration's position.

The War Anti-Labor Board

The agency that reflects this change in the labor field is, of course, the War Labor Board. Beginning simply as a body to adjust labor disputes, the War Labor Board has become an economic octopus, reaching into and dominating every area of labor relations and more important the vital questions of wage-fixing. From attempts to arbitrate the issues at hand in particular cases, the War Labor Board has evolved rigid formulas, based on “hold-the-line” orders, which have become blanket procedures and which in actual practice have meant not only wage freezing but the creation of *maximum* wages along particular lines of skill.

The effects of the War Labor Board have been far-reaching. In many areas the traditional structure of collective bargaining has broken down. Settlements are no longer made between union and employer, but thrown immediately to the Board for decision. The result is that the union leader becomes a quasi-official person mediating between the government and the worker. His legitimate union functions are displayed and taken over by government; the day-to-day affairs of wages and hours, grievances and conditions of work—the reality of union life, revolving about the job—become a matter not of union strength but government graciousness.

As Selig Perlman well summarizes it:

When some Board takes over the union function, relegating the union leader to the mere role of petitioner and supplicant, it has it in its power to break him as a leader. It has the power to hamstring a union through a combination of remote control and delayed decision. The union leader, say, has placed his stakes with the Administration. The “Experts” enforcing the Administration's policy veto wage increases. The burden placed thereby upon the union leader becomes well-nigh insupportable.

In its economic policies the WLB has been even more ruinous. While the large corporations reap huge profits and organized lobbies crack OPA price ceilings, labor has been the only group “held-in-line.” The Little Steel formula is applied mechanically without regard to existing realities. By shifting a case to the WLB the employer knows that the wage lid will be kept tight and thus he avoids paying the high wages he would normally have to in a tight labor market. More important for the post-war situation, the Little Steel formula has prevented a rise in the real trade union wage structure by barring any substantial rises in hourly pay. Where the “take-home” pay

of the worker is high it is usually due to overtime pay and bonuses. As the war contracts are cut back and hours level off, the 'take-home' pay drops considerably. If the trade unions cannot increase the basic hourly wage structure under favorable market conditions, would they be able to do so in a period of post-war deflation? That is why the WLB formula is so serious for labor's post-war position.

In important details, largely unknown to the general public, WLB practices have weakened vital union principles. Thus the Board last year evolved a policy of regional wage rates, satisfying the pressures of reactionary employer interests, although the trade unions have worked for years to eliminate north and south and other regional differences. Many large corporations have plants scattered over different sections of the country, and have sought to transfer work to low-rate sections. This is particularly true in auto and aircraft and is one of the reasons Walter Reuther has led the fight for equalized national wage rates and against incentive pay, which tends to set up hundreds of different scales.

In the important matter of union security, union organization has been impeded not so much by the specious maintenance-of-membership clause evolved by the WLB, as by its use as a mechanical formula. Having given up the strike weapon, to speed war production, labor bargained for recognition of the union shop. (In the last war the open shop was a stipulated condition of the NWLB). In the early days of the war, the union shop had been granted (i.e. the Bethlehem case and the west coast shipyards by the National Defense Mediation Board). And the present War Labor Board has the power to grant a closed shop. (i.e. Testimony of W. H. Davis before the Smith Committee Investigating War Agencies). However, the WLB has held so rigidly to the maintenance-of-membership award, that, as in the wages situation, employers simply avoid union bargaining demands for a closed shop by throwing the case to the WLB knowing that no matter how strong the union is, the Board will grant only a maintenance-of-membership clause. Among some of the older A. F. of L. unions who sign contracts only on the basis of a closed shop, the WLB action has been nearly ruinous.

Often the maintenance-of-membership clause is used to club unions into "good behavior". In the Brewster Aircraft plant, where the union was militant in opposing a union-busting management, the WLB threatened to revoke the award if the union didn't back down. The maintenance-of-membership clause has been of little real benefit to the labor movement. A recent Bureau of Labor Statistics study has proven what one would expect: where the unions have been strong, the clause has been meaningless; where it has been weak, it is of little value.

The patterns laid down by the War Labor Board will have far-reaching consequences in future union-management negotiations. The awards and decisions of the Board will serve as precedents in subsequent mediations. There are many indications too, that the type of compulsory arbitration represented by the War Labor Board will be used in the post-war period as a means of curbing labor militancy. The Board has become too convenient and handy a weapon to be discarded so easily. As a statutory agency,

its powers can be so defined by Congress as to restrict union activity severely. The current anti-labor propaganda drive is not aimed at "busting" the unions in the old sense—industry knows that the strong steel, auto, machinists unions cannot be broken without prolonged and bloody strife. The drive aims at blackening labor in the middle class and farm mind in order to adopt legislation that will impose some form of compulsory arbitration and various penalties for union activity.

Labor and the Coming Monopoly State

The last war ushered in a period of post-war labor militancy; railroad labor produced the radical Plumb Plan for government operation of the roads, the Denver convention of the AFL called for the nationalization of our basic natural resources. There are few of these signs today; there are many signs that if labor's post-war economic position worsens, or an anti-labor drive gets fully under way the kinetic militancy latent in the labor movement will manifest itself. But this has always been a negative, defensive strength. In terms of positive thinking, we see the A. F. of L.—and Phil Murray too—paying lip service to "free enterprise." Sections of CIO, through Walter Reuther's plan, seek to resurrect the proposals of the late National Resources Planning Board and put them into effect through a tripartite Peace Production Board.

In the main, however, labor's attitudes and reactions will be a reflex to and conditioned by the moods and tendencies of industry. And in that lies its coming tragedy. For it means that labor is tied to the expansionist schemes of American industry while intent only on maintaining wage rates and job and hour standards. In a period of prosperity this means acquiescence to these imperialistic schemes; only in periods of depression would the defense of immediate labor standards assume a progressive role with wider political connotations.

If the post-war economic situation proves economically favorable, it is probable that labor will renew its demands for a "voice" in industry councils or in the creation of industry planning boards. But this would bring only a lulling sense of security, for any post-war prosperity, under our economic set-up, will be based upon foreign exploitation or a buying boom that may bust. Union-management councils are no safeguard for labor, for in any crisis industry will be driven immediately to cut labor costs in order to maintain its profits. The most perfected system of labor-management cooperation existed in Republican Germany, where the idea of industry councils was written into the Weimar Constitution. Although a cartelized system sought to stabilize labor relations and labor costs, industry, in a crisis, subsidized a fascist movement to smash the trade unions and labor standards.

Over and beyond the wishes of any particular group of capital, the tides of the war and the logic of the economy are driving capitalism towards a State-regulated economy. Few businessmen want any sort of controls or intervention from "Washington". Yet they themselves set the very machinery in motion by seeking the support of the State in foreign trade. This fact is recognized by one of the "New Deal" businessmen in government, William L. Batt, vice-chairman of the War Production Board and U. S. repre-

sentative on the Combined Allied Raw Materials Board. Said Batt in a recent speech:

Whatever may be one's conviction as to the part which government should play in business at home, it seems to me inevitable that the course of development of foreign trade must lean substantially on assistance from agencies of government. For the conduct of our business at home we can make our own rules when and as we want, but we can't make the rules for other countries. Businessmen abroad, when they are trading with us, are likely to have the fullest possible assistance of their governments. It seems to me quite clear that unless American businessmen cooperate with and have the same support from their government, we shall be at a great disadvantage. That calls for the strongest possible organization in those agencies of the United States government which have to do with foreign trade, and a desire on the part of business to work with them.

Traders may dislike or resist the government Metals Reserve Corporation or the Petroleum Reserve Corporation, yet they are forced to rely upon them and eventually forced to seek control of these agencies. The result is that in these government corporations, the men at the helm are usually persons who have come from the great corporations. We see the rise, consequently, of administrative bureaucracies that are merged, *de facto*, with the large monopolies.

But foreign trade is no closed shell that exists apart from the economy as a whole. If America is to play a dominant role in world affairs, she must maintain that "*permanent war economy*" described by W. J. Oakes in the February *POLITICS*. Again, the shrewder business men have foreseen this turn. Speaking to the Army Ordnance Association (a private group composed of big steel manufacturers and Army officers), last month in New York City, Charles E. Wilson of WPB outlined a plan for a "continuing" war economy, with a close liaison established between government-army-industry. Wilson proposed that a number of government-owned plants be maintained by government after the war as experimental plants, that regular subsidies be established to keep arms and steel factories going, that industry select liaison men who would be given reserve ranks of colonel and that these serve as an industrial coordinating committee to work with the army procurement officers.

The establishment of such agencies as the Anglo-American Caribbean Commission, which plans for the West Indies area, or the Inter-American Developmental Commission, which directs capital investment in South America, are important steps in the direction of a State-backed economy.

This trend is given an inexorable turn by post-war military considerations. As a great power, America must secure strategic sea bases, vital air fields, control raw material supplies, establish basic metals and oil reserves. Thus we have the Saudi Arabian pipe-line scheme, financed by government and operated by Standard Oil; the raw materials stockpile scheme of Batt, WPB and the State Department, whereby the government would import vital minerals and metals for stockpile purposes, while shutting

down and subsidizing mineral and metal sources at home. The machinery is set into motion thus, through a permanent war economy, of the merger of government and industry into a giant monopoly State.

Industry vaguely understands these trends and is groping for solutions which will allow it to retain as much of its "free enterprise" independence as it can. At the moment, it seeks to coordinate economic planning "from below", through such agencies as the Committee for Economic Development. In the long run, however, the economy can only be balanced by a central agency which can over-ride independent producers who seek to defend particular interests, even at the expense of the capitalist economy as a whole.

We seem to be entering a neo-mercantilist phase. Thus "internationally-minded" business groups must now organize the State to defend their penetration and domination of the world markets. The post-war perspective, as I see it, is that "economics" will rule over "politics", in the sense that the loci of power will reside more strongly than ever in the powerful industrial groups.

For labor, the threat to its social power and economic position will arise, actually, from the business groups who are integrating their power with the State. In a series of articles in *Fortune*, John Chamberlain began with the proposition that American labor faced the future as an independent movement in terms of a Statist or anti-Statist choice. But this is unreal. The choice as it is being made, is by the leading sections of American industry and the pulls of America's changed position in the world economy.

The great decisions of the future regarding the American economy will be determined in the political arena and in the tug-of-war for the State. As in the economic field, labor can only rely on its own strength for effective action by forming a labor party.

It is possible that the present party system will buckle in the near future. The many diverse elements that exist within each party cannot be gathered successfully within the folds of each tent. The realities of American politics have made the present party system a "culture lag." Crucial decisions are not made on the basis of party vote but on the strength of various functional groups throwing their weight around through Congressional lobbies. The organization of a Labor Party, growing out of the '44 elections would bring about the realistic alignment of the American scene. With labor committed to "free enterprise", this prospect, unfortunately, is unlikely.

Robert E. Sherwood, who is director of overseas operations of OWI, is rewriting "There Shall Be No Night" because, as it was done originally, it concerned Finland's struggle against Russia. It was said yesterday that the spirit of the play will be retained, but that the locale will be changed to Norway, presumably with Nazi Germany replacing Russia. — N.Y. Times, May 1, 1943.

Presumably.

A distinguished Negro member of the "Black Cabinet" (whose function is to advise Washington on problems of color) was in session with a big official of the government during the days when the Japanese were beating back the British in Asia. That afternoon his colored office boy, unaware that he had a visitor, rushed in and shouted jubilantly, "Boss, we just took Singapore!"

—Langston Hughes in "Common Ground", Winter, 1944.

*The New Imperialism, I:****The Haitian Pilot-Plant*****Frank Freidel**

A PILOT-PLANT for the "World of the Four Freedoms" may even now be in full operation in the Caribbean area. The small black Republic of Haiti may mirror in full detail the pattern already assuming shape in North Africa and AMG Italy—a pattern awaiting only the day of "liberation" to blanket a large part of Europe.

Out of slow and sometimes painful experience supporting friendly governments in Latin America, the United States has devised the system. At times it has failed, as it did recently in Bolivia when the pro-American government fell victim to sinister forces claiming to act on behalf of the maltreated tin-miners, but in many another Hispanic-American republic it has functioned smoothly for a decade or more.

Nowhere has the pattern been developed more consummately than in Haiti and nowhere has the master-planner, Franklin D. Roosevelt, longer exercised his influence. As early as 1920 he could boast, "I have had something to do with the running of a couple of little republics"—and truly for a quarter of a century his clever fingers have helped manipulate the destinies of Haiti. In a mood of mellow reminiscence, the President recalled his long association when he entertained his old friend Elie Lescot, President of Haiti, at a White House dinner last fall.

As Assistant Secretary of the Navy during the World War years, Roosevelt helped develop in Haiti the Caribbean version of President Wilson's "New Freedom." It was a momentous experiment, and one that Wilson might have reproduced in larger areas after the war, had he remained in power, and had it worked. But it turned out poorly, and during the doldrums of the Republican twenties, Roosevelt himself admitted its failure. In its place he built the "Good Neighbor" policy when he came into power.

In his recent after-dinner address President Roosevelt warmly proclaimed his love for Haiti: "I think it was a certain Queen of England who said that after her death 'Calais' would be written on her heart," he remarked. "When I die, I think that 'Haiti' is going to be written on my heart because for all these years I have had the most intense interest in the Republic of Haiti and the development of its people in a way that will never mean exploitation by any other nation."

The ebullient President erred in intent when he compared himself to the contrite Mary Tudor, who uttered her remark in humiliation after foolishly losing Calais to the French.

President Roosevelt in his talk at the dinner for President Lescot gave newspapermen the impression that it was

he who had sent the marines into Haiti during one of the periods of great unrest in the republic. Actually the 1915 intervention was a well-considered phase of a policy initiated by President Wilson. This was not merely another instance of Theodore Roosevelt's "Dollar Diplomacy." True enough, American railroad and banking interests in Haiti suffered from the turmoil and did obtain a sympathetic hearing at the State Department. Yet their total investments were too small to justify, without other factors, an expensive occupation. The State Department later insisted that America had to intervene to prevent a German thrust, yet Admiral Caperton did not land the Marines until July, 1915, well after the British had swept the German navy from the Atlantic.

The clue to Wilson's Haitian policy lay in his 1913 Mobile Address. Upon superficial examination this speech seemed to belie intervention: it vigorously denounced the materialism of "Dollar Diplomacy," and emphasized that "the United States will never again seek one additional foot of territory by conquest." This by no means meant that Wilson was anti-imperialist. At Mobile he attacked only the extortion of unfair concessions and high interest rates, and actually was anxious to see businessmen active abroad, as long as they behaved like gentlemen. They could make safe investments only in stable areas, hence should profit from Wilson's major objective: "the development of constitutional liberty in the world." Wilson clarified his position in an address upon Mexico, July 4, 1914: "If American enterprise in foreign countries, particularly in those foreign countries which are not strong enough to resist us, takes the shape of imposing upon and exploiting the mass of the people of that country, it ought to be checked and not encouraged. I am willing to get anything for an American that money and enterprise can obtain except the suppression of the rights of other men."

Wilson's actions, in keeping with his speeches, seemed aimed at bringing "law and order," if necessary at the bayonet-point, to turbulent, small nations to the south in order that orderly democratic processes might develop. Apparently he felt that once dictators and outlaws were put down and American policing, sanitation, and education introduced, democracy would flourish. As a tacit corollary, American opportunities for honorable trade and investment would expand in this orderly atmosphere, but the basic aim was to develop a more stable Caribbean order. When the Marines went in, President Roosevelt reminded President Lescot, "We made a promise then that some day Haiti would be independent, with its own government, its own republic." Would not Wilson have made the same promise to weak, disorderly lands elsewhere?

In practice, this piece of Wilsonian idealism went sharply awry. Local opinion seemed at first to favor the landings at Port-au-Prince. It turned sharply against the Americans when "friendly officials," victorious in Marine-sponsored elections, ratified a treaty reducing Haiti to the status of a protectorate of the United States. Haitians also became disturbed over being forced to labor at building roads, and they worried over the threat that Americans would be allowed, contrary to the Haitian constitution, to own land within the country. Results soon justified their fears as American officials cooperated with the Haitian President Dartiguenave to draw up a constitution which would allow

foreign interests to purchase Haitian land. When the Haitian Congress refused to ratify it, American authorities dissolved the body and ordered a plebiscite. The election, under the sponsorship of the Marines, was an overwhelming success. The announced result was 98,294 YES, and 769 NO.

Despite the overwhelming vote in favor of the document, serious "bandit revolts" swept the country before the year was out. Marines leading small groups of native troops, put down this anarchy in an appropriate manner. According to American estimates, 1150 Haitians were killed. In addition to failing to unify the country, the Constitution failed to provide representative government. Through a loophole, the Marine-backed President Borno ruled throughout the 1920's without benefit of legislatures or elections. The guarantee of freedom of the press in the Constitution likewise was so broadly framed that a number of editors divided their time between their offices and jails.

The avowed father of this constitution was Franklin D. Roosevelt. During the Campaign of 1920 when he ran for vice-president, he admitted his handiwork, and proclaimed the Wilsonian view of the Haitian experiment:

The Republicans are playing a shell game on the American people . . . they are busy circulating the story that England has just six votes to America's one. It is just the other way. As a matter of fact, the United States has about twelve votes in the Assembly.

Until last week I had two of them myself, and now Secretary [of the Navy] Daniels has them. You know I have had something to do with the running of a couple of little republics. The facts are that I wrote Haiti's constitution myself, and, if I do say it, I think it a pretty good constitution. (*Speech in Butte, Montana, Aug. 18, 1920.*)

Roosevelt, according to the *New York Times*, declared that the United States would control the League votes of at least twelve nations in the Caribbean area, all of which regarded Uncle Sam as a guardian and big brother. Roosevelt lost the election and the Republicans discarded the theories, but not the policies of Wilson. The results hardly carried out the boast about the Haitians' fraternal regard for the United States. Under supervision of American experts, they did receive better roads and sanitation, a certain amount of agricultural rehabilitation, and stable government finances. This pleased a few American bondholders. But both groups of Haitians, the two and a half million or more poverty-stricken peasants and the fifty-thousand well-to-do elite, joined in a hearty dislike of their "big brother."

By the latter part of the 1920's, the Haitian policy had not developed an indigenous democratic government nor had it provided lucrative opportunities for American business interests. Up to 1926, only seven foreign companies had bought land in Haiti, and they controlled a total of only 43,100 acres. All but two of these companies failed to make a profit. The gulf between Wilsonian idealism and Haitian practice was so apparent that Roosevelt, writing for *Foreign Affairs* in 1928, admitted that "never before in our history have we had fewer friends in the Western hemisphere . . . intervention as we practiced it in Santo Domingo and Haiti was not another forward step." He did

not, however, recommend scrapping the pilot-plant for a new world order, but rather rebuilding it along more realistic lines: "It is not that assistance of some sort was not necessary; it was the method which was wrong . . . single-handed interventions by us in the internal affairs of other nations must end; with the cooperation of others we shall have more order in this hemisphere and less dislike."

When Roosevelt moved into the White House he began his rebuilding. "The maintenance of constitutional government in other nations is not a sacred obligation devolving upon the United States alone," he proclaimed in December, 1933. "The maintenance of law and orderly processes of government in this hemisphere is the concern of each individual nation within its own borders first of all. It is only if and when the failure of orderly processes affects the other nations of the continent that it becomes their concern; and the point to stress is that in such an event it becomes the joint concern of a whole continent in which we are all neighbors."

Translated into Haitian terms, this meant the restoration of the government to a small ruling clique of the elite, who could maintain order with the efficient American-trained *Garde d'Haiti*. Already the Hoover administration had taken preliminary steps to re-establish representative government. President Roosevelt, perhaps feeling an "inescapable obligation" to the bondholders, showed no great readiness to speed Haitianization. However, in August, 1934 he removed the Marines three months ahead of Hoover's schedule, and in 1935, after the National City Bank had sold out its holdings, he removed direct financial controls.

Withdrawal of the Marines did not mean a repetition of the disorders of 1915 and earlier, since Roosevelt cooperated heartily with the elite who took over power. He exchanged visits with President Vincent, and made no protest when the elite in 1935 replaced his "too liberal" constitution with one concentrating more power in the hands of the President. The ruling class had little to fear, as the strong *Garde* could easily put down any sporadic uprising. To enhance the efficiency of the *Garde*, Haiti signed a treaty with the United States in May, 1941, providing for an American military mission.

The United States scrupulously avoided open intervention. When a number of Haitian emigrants in Santo Domingo were slaughtered in the latter part of 1937, the United States settled the matter for Haiti in joint cooperation with the Cuban and Mexican governments.

While Haitian democracy refused to take root in the "good neighborly" soil, trade flourished. Normally about half of Haiti's exports went to France, and only about fifteen per cent to the United States. This unfavorable situation, which existed as late as 1935-36, was sharply reversed by 1937-38 when France took only 12 per cent and the United States 43 per cent.

After the Japanese capture of East Indian hevea rubber plantations in 1942, the United States fostered the growing of a Haitian substitute, cryptostegia. American capital financed a Haitian corporation, the *Societe Haitiano-Americaine de Developement Agricole*, known as Shada, which has planted 75,000 to 80,000 acres of the rubber-producing bush. It hopes to produce 3,000 tons of rubber in 1944 and 12,000 tons in 1945. The president and gen-

eral manager is a Kentuckian, and the technicians operating Shada are Americans; the 75,000 laborers are Haitians who receive the minimum wage fixed by government decree, 30 cents a day. Unless production methods improve, cryptostegia rubber will be unable to compete in price with hevea rubber after the war. Nevertheless, President Roosevelt, optimistically predicting a 10,000 ton production for 1943, hopes his successor will veto any American tariff measure that might upset the industry.

Even beyond temporary phases, the State Department has gained tremendously through the new policy. It has obtained the hearty cooperation of the formerly hostile ruling classes. Through bolstering them, it has maintained order without taking responsibility for possible atrocities of the 1918-19 pattern. It has avoided the onus of pushing a reform program, unpopular among the tradition-ridden peasants as well as the elite, and finally it has saved the costs of physical apparatus of occupation which might serve as a point of attack by hostile groups in the United States Congress.

At his dinner for President Lescot—it was Lescot who countersigned the Marine order for the 1918 plebiscite—Roosevelt appraised his policy with glowing self-satisfaction. Since he had withdrawn the Marines, he declared, “one of the experiments of my life has been permanently successful because in the last 10 years of the Republic of Haiti not a single American has been there with a gun. Haiti has made good in every way. I regard the nation’s advance in prosperity and in friendship during those 10 years as something that ought to be written in the history books.” If this be so, we may have in Haiti the pattern for the “World of the Four Freedoms.”

How to Win the War

EDITOR’S NOTE: *This article originally appeared in the January 10 issue of “The Progressive”. I am reprinting it because it strikes me as one of the most sensible and sensitive commentaries on the war in a long time. This is a shortened version, the omissions being indicated by dots.*

Milton Mayer is a journalist who has for some time been on the staff of the University of Chicago. He writes regular columns for “Common Sense” and “The Progressive”. The article printed below is given added force by the fact that its author may in the near future go to jail because of his convictions about the war. His local draft board has refused to grant him the Conscientious Objector status he claims. The case is now on appeal, but there would seem little chance of Mayer’s winning it since he opposes the war on political and not on religious grounds and the authorities do not generally recognize political objections in granting C.O. status. He has made it clear that he will not submit to the draft, no matter what the result of the appeal.

Needless to say, Mayer has been viciously smeared by Walter Winchell, “PM” and similar guardians of public morality. I do not agree with Mayer that the best way to act if one has profound political objections to this war

is to become a C.O. or go to jail; it seems to me one can more effectively fight for one’s ideas if one does not isolate one’s self from one’s fellow-men, and that the Army is a better place to learn, and teach, than either a C.O. camp or a jail. Only for a few symbolic leaders, like Debs, does going to jail seem to me the wisest course. But for all of this, I must say that it is refreshing and inspiring to find a writer who in this war is willing to go to jail for his convictions.

CONGRESS has asked me to advise it on the conduct of the war, and I have accepted the invitation. I do not believe my acceptance of this high post, and even higher honor, will necessitate a severance of my connection with The Progressive, as the invitation simply reads, “The Congress shall not abridge the right of citizens peaceably to assemble and petition for the redress of their grievances.”

As I read the invitation, it seems to suggest that I should come to Washington to appear before an historic, unprecedented joint session of the two houses, but I am not much of a public speaker and I dare say I will be permitted to assemble right here in The Progressive and present my views, like the scribbler I am, on paper . . .

Congress has come to the right party. The question is, I take it, “Mayer, the people of America, through their representatives, want to know how to win the war. They are willing to leave the details to Gen. Patton, the Chicago Tribune, and Clifton P. Fadiman. What they want from you is the winning grand strategy. Give.”

Let us send every plane we’ve got over Germany tomorrow night, loaded to the gun’les, or whatever they have on planes, with a one-sheet leaflet. And let all Germany be covered knee-deep with these leaflets so that the efforts of the Gestapo to keep them out of the hands of the people will be futile. The following day the war will end in a glorious Allied victory without the loss of a single American life.

Have I left anything out? Oh, yes—the wording of the leaflet. The leaflet is to read as follows:

TO OUR FELLOW-MEN IN GERMANY!

We address you not as Germans, or Nazis, or enemies, but as free citizens of the world who recognize no master anywhere on earth!

We are your partners in what Heinrich Heine called “the war for human emancipation”!

We are your partners in the struggle for peace and freedom for all men everywhere, in India as well as Germany, in Mobile as well as Berlin!

But we can not help emancipate you!

We can not help emancipate you because we hold only the power of death over you! We can only bomb you to death!

Emancipation is life! The power of free life is yours alone!

We, whom you call your enemies, have made ourselves free! You, whom we call our brothers, must make yourselves free!

We have thrown off our chains, in England, America, China, and Russia! Every one of us is free, free to work,

free to eat, free to vote, free to live in decency and dignity, free to die in comfort, in love, and in peace!

You, our brothers, still under the rule of the tooth and the claw, we beg you to throw off your chains and join us in the brotherhood of man, where no man goes hungry while another man gorges, where no man works while another man idles, where no man, because he is brown, or black, or weak, or unlucky, is dependent upon any other man for bitter bread!

Rise, brethren! Rise, as we have risen, and shine, as we are shining! God is good and gives us enough for all of us, if only we all will live as brothers and none like master and slave!

We await you! We await you not with unconditional surrender, not with reparations, not with victory blockades, starvation, humiliation, and military government! We await you with peace! With bread! With justice! With human brotherhood!

Our masters betrayed you and us at Versailles, at Vienna, at Westphalia, and at every peace conference ever held! But we have overthrown our masters! You have only to overthrow yours and share with us,—all you want, all you can use, all you can work for, the boundless riches of the earth that God gave to you and us, His children and each other's brother!

OUR FELLOW-MEN IN GERMANY: *Emancipate yourselves and join us! We cannot emancipate you by bombing you! We can only enslave ourselves!*

Join us, brothers! Until yesterday we had nothing to lose but our chains, and we were welding them in every munitions plant! Join us, brothers, in the boundless garden of FREEDOM AND PEACE!

That, my friends, is the leaflet that will win the war tomorrow. And if any heckler hollers, as I try to slip out of the hall, "But we would have to have the Four Freedoms here first before we could promise them to the Germans," I can only reply, as I grab hold of the hind step of a passing street-car, "But that's a detail for Patton, McCormick, and Fadiman to handle. All I promised you was the grand strategy, and there it is."

MILTON MAYER

The Revival of "Political Economy"

A PARTICIPANT in last year's meeting of the American Economic Association, commenting on the fact that most of the papers read there dealt with political issues as well as "pure" economics, observed that there seems to be a renaissance of "political economy" in process. Until lately, the term had an old-fashioned ring to it. E. R. A. Seligman in the *Encyclopedia of Social Sciences* notes that the Greeks first developed the concept of "political economy"—literally, the management of the household (oikos) of a state (polis). The concept was revived with the rise of capitalism. Petty used it first, in the seventeenth century; Adam Smith, Steuart and other classical bourgeois economists adopted it; by 1800 it was the com-

mon term for economic studies. Economics became the master-science of society; the economist drew no sharp line between politics and economics but conceived of the power, and the responsibility, of his discipline as extending throughout the whole sphere of man's social relationships. Marx carried on the classical tradition, subtitled *Capital: "A Critique of Political Economy"*.

In the last quarter of the 19th century, however, as capitalism became stable and selfconfident in the peaceful, prosperous decades following the Franco-Prussian War, bourgeois economics became a "pure" study. In title and content, Marshall's *Principles of Economics* (1890), was the work that best expressed the new *zeitgeist*. Political factors were ignored, and economics was considered wholly in terms of its own laws, which were conceived of as just as fixed and eternal as those of physical science. Analogies were often drawn between the world of Newtonian physics, with its harmonious equilibrium of interacting mechanical forces, and the supply-and-demand equilibrium of the free capitalist market. Only if this mechanism were "interfered with" by the State or by wars, would it break down or behave in an unpredictable way. From this period dates perhaps that curious degradation of the term "politics" on which I commented last month. The economic system was "given", once for all, and "its" purposes were beyond question or scrutiny, just like any other aspect of nature. It would have been considered as naive to inquire what the general human aims of it all were—as earlier economists, from Petty to Marx, had done—as to ask what was the "use" of thunderstorms.

Such was the dominant tendency in bourgeois economic thought up to World War I. Heretics like Veblen were easily isolated. Such it continued to be pretty much up to 1929, although after 1914 whatever superficial plausibility it once had was lacking. It was too good a weapon of conservative ideology to be lightly abandoned. The 1929 depression, however, was too much for the already weakened structure. The disproportion between the assumptions of "pure" economics and the realities of economic behavior became so severe it could no longer be concealed even in academic circles. The "pure" economists, with their marginal utility and equilibrium theories based on a free market which had been growing more and more mythical, after 1929 became simply ridiculous. Their theories ceased to have even an ideological value.

Some such gloomy thoughts, I imagine, were in the mind of Frederick C. Mills, when he made his 1940 presidential address before the American Economic Association. His paper, entitled "Economics in a Time of Change", was a despairing plea for "an objective science of economics . . . divorced from personal judgments of the desirable and the undesirable". This, he indicated, was under attack even in the precincts of the A.E.A.—and his colleague's comment on last year's meeting bears out his forebodings. But Dr. Mills indicates clearly enough himself how this has all come about when he states that "at the foundation of formal economic theory, today, there still stands the concept of static equilibrium, of a universe of balanced forces, of a fixed and essentially unchanging order". He draws the moral himself: "The laws of trade in a free world market have little meaning in an age of economic autarchy . . . The body of economic doctrine dealing with international move-

ments of goods and means of payment when commerce is unfettered—one of the truly impressive creations of economic thought—has slight relevance to these conditions.”

It is probable that bourgeois economists have become tired not only of being wrong, but still more of being, in addition, inconsequential. “Refinements of the theoretical structure continued,” writes Eric Roll in his *History of Economic Thought*, apropos the post-1918 development of economic theory, “but the gap between it and the daily preoccupations of the public, of statesmen, and even of an increasing number of economists has become ominously wide.” Or, as Seligman puts it: “The discipline had ceased to be a system of inquiries with a direct bearing on questions of economic policy”, and the increasing abstractness of the methods used “led to a clear separation between theory and practice”. Roll describes the result of this evolution: “In spite of their sway over academic thought, present-day economists of the leading school have had less influence in the world of affairs than their 19th century predecessors.”

The upshot of it all is that Marx has come to command more respect today, in English and American academic circles, than perhaps at any time in the past. In her *Essay on Marxian Economics* (1942), Joan Robinson writes:

The orthodox economists have been much preoccupied with elegant elaborations of minor problems, which distract the attention of their pupils from the uncongenial realities of the modern world, and the development of abstract argument has run far ahead of any possibility of empirical verification. Marx's intellectual tools are far cruder but his sense of reality is far stronger, and his argument towers above their intricate constructions in rough and gloomy grandeur . . .

Until recently, Marx used to be treated in academic circles with contemptuous silence, broken only by an occasional mocking footnote. But modern developments in academic theory, forced by modern developments in economic life—the analysis of monopoly and the analysis of unemployment—have shattered the structure of orthodox doctrine and destroyed the complacency with which economists were wont to view the working of laissez-faire capitalism. Their attitude to Marx, as the leading critic of capitalism, is therefore much less cocksure than it used to be. In my belief, they have much to learn from him . . .

Miss Robinson is a leading Keynesian economist. The present ascendancy of this school is significant, since Keynes is dealing in the old commodity of “political economy”. He and his followers have been influential both in Downing Street and at the White House because they have shaped their theories, as the classical bourgeois economists and the Marxists did, to deal with the actual management of society as a whole rather than with the workings of an ideal economic system forcibly abstracted from social and political reality. As Miss Robinson points out, and as Lord Keynes, director of the Bank of England, would be the last to admit, Keynes's theories about crises and unemployment have more in common with Marx's than with the orthodox academic economists'. Her own book seems to show that the evolutionary process is already overtaking the Keynesian school, and that, given a reasonable showing of

political strength by the socialist movement in the next few years, we may expect to see the left wing of the Keynesians moving in a Marxist direction.

What the revival of “political economy” means today may be indicated if we look at two instances of the old non-political approach to economics.

Consider, first, Colin Clark's *The Conditions of Economic Progress* (1940), a survey of comparative national income and productivity throughout the world. This is an invaluable study, presenting generalizations of the greatest significance backed up by enormous statistical research, but it has a serious limitation: since Clark's conception of economics is extremely narrow, explicitly excluding any relation to “other social sciences”, he takes as “given” a peacetime economic system. He has only two or three incidental references to war economy in the whole book, and nowhere is it even made clear whether he would consider war expenditures as part of the national income or not, and if they are part, how he would treat them in relation to non-war expenditures. Yet war, and preparations for war, in our time have come to be the very heart of world economy. One can sympathize with Mr. Clark, for if he had allowed war to come within the range of his scholarly inspection, he would have had to alter the whole perspective of his book. But to sympathize is not necessarily to condone. War is the final, climactic “interference” with the ideal construction of the academic economists, bringing State intervention to its highest point, and it must be given a central place in any realistic economic study today.

The second instance is the survey the conservative Brookings Institution made in the mid-thirties, entitled *America's Capacity to Produce*. The subtitle was explicit: “America's Capacity to Produce During the Period 1925-1929 with the Capital Goods and Labor Force which she then Possessed and with the Technology and the General Body of Operative and Commercial Organization then Prevailing.” The last four words are the point: Brookings accepted the existing profit system as “given” just as much as technological factors were “given”. About the same time a group of leftist economists, directed by Harold Loeb, put out a similar survey of American productive capacity under the title (as I recall) *The Chart of Plenty*. This considered technological factors only, and of course arrived at a much higher estimate of productive capacity than did the Brookings study. Most people would say that the Brookings survey was “non-political” since it studied things as they really are and merely recorded the results, and that Loeb's survey was “political” since it assumed a change in the system by disregarding the property-profit relationships that actually existed. Yet, in a deeper sense, Loeb's was the non-political survey, since it considered only technological factors, while Brookings distorted its economic calculations by including property-profit factors interjected into the productive process by a specific political system, capitalism. Thus, as we now know, production of magnesium, aluminum, optical goods and many other things was artificially held down in this country between 1920 and 1940 by domestic monopolies functioning within international cartels. Brookings would not count this a failure to use capacity, since it was the result of the “commercial organization then prevailing”, but Loeb, I imagine, would. Which is the politically tendentious approach?

Thus we arrive at a very neat paradox. In considering an economic system based on class exploitation, the more scientific and rational one's approach, in the sense of weighing only materialistic factors like the level of technology, the amount of manpower and raw materials available, etc., the more "political" it becomes because of its very lack of attention to political factors. On the other hand, the political assumptions of conservatives who accept the status quo as eternally "given" are so deeply intertwined with their thinking as to be concealed from themselves and from those who like them accept the status quo. The one

starts from non-political premises and takes on a "political" (i.e., tendentious) appearance. The other starts from political premises and takes on a non-political (i.e., objective, empirical) appearance. Marx is the classic example of an economist who appears to the Philistines to be excessively tendentious precisely because he insists on applying his scientific method to the political as well as the economic aspects of the system he studies, that is, precisely because he is thoroughly scientific in his treatment of capitalism.

DWIGHT MACDONALD

The Soviet Union: A New Class Society

Peter Meyer

AT least one claim of Stalinist propaganda is thoroughly justified: no one can understand contemporary history, let alone intervene effectively in it, without clarity as to the nature of present-day Soviet society. Enlightenment will not come—to sincere socialists or liberals, at any rate—from the rate of the Red Army's advance or retreat, nor from whether Stalin and Molotov happen to be dividing up the world with Hitler and Ribbentrop at the moment, or with Churchill and Roosevelt. It will come only through an attempt to answer such questions as whether Russia is now a land of freedom or slavery, whether social equality or inequality predominate there, whether it is a progressive or a reactionary country. Or—if we want to be more modest—whether Russia is evolving, through its inner laws of development, toward freedom or toward slavery, equality or exploitation, harmony or contradictions.

To answer such questions, we must know what social classes compose the Russian population today, what are their relations to each other and to the system of production, and by whom and in whose interests are society and the State managed?

There is no shortage of answers. The official Communist thesis insists that socialism, the lower phase of communism, has already been realized in Russia, and, furthermore, that the Soviet Union is a society that is at once classless and ruled by the working class. The orthodox Trotskyists counter that Russia is a Workers' State in spite of the fact that the workers do not rule there but are, on the contrary, grievously exploited. Most intelligent people find it easy to understand that wherever workers are exploited the proletariat is an oppressed, not a ruling class. But they do not understand the character of the ruling class. Totalitarianism, dictatorship, Bonapartism are talked of—but these much misused terms do not explain the economic and social structure of a society. Others fall back on the term "State capitalism", but usually fail to indicate to what extent "State capitalism" is still capitalism and in what sense the rulers of Russia can be considered capitalists. Others talk of a "transition period", but the question is precisely: transition towards what—socialism, capitalism or some *tertium quid*?

Most of the above theories are variants of the two fundamental theories, which regard Russia as in essence (1) socialist, or (2) capitalist. Let us begin by considering these.

The first thing that strikes one is that most of the arguments on both sides are negative. Those who hold that Russia is basically socialist or moving in that direction, point out that the capitalists have been expropriated, that there is no bourgeoisie, that private ownership of the means of production has been eliminated, that goods are no longer produced for private profit, and that the laws of free exchange and therewith the Marxist laws of value and surplus value no longer dominate the economy. There is no more capitalism, *therefore* Russia is "essentially" socialist; the bourgeoisie have been liquidated, *therefore* it is a Workers' State. It has precious little resemblance to our own conception of socialism, the Trotskyists will admit, and so it is a "degenerated" Workers' State—but nonetheless a Workers' State.

Those who regard Russia as capitalist point out the great social inequalities, the class contradictions, the lack of that democracy and freedom without which socialism is inconceivable, the failure of the repressive apparatus to wither away (putting it mildly). This indeed is not socialism, *therefore*—it is capitalism. And since it has precious little resemblance to our—and Marx's—conception of capitalism, it is, to be exact, State capitalism, of a new and degenerate variety it is true, but nonetheless "essentially" capitalism.

If one assumes *a priori* that all possible social systems today must be *either* capitalist *or* socialist, then the above "therefores" are valid and one of the two sides is right. The assumption is, however, unwarranted, and the actual state of affairs in Russia would refute it if nothing else did.

Human thought is conservative and always tries to trim new facts to fit old patterns. There is something to be said for his procedure on the score of economy of effort, but only if the old categories fit the data. Brushes, as Engels once observed, are hair-bearing creatures but they will never acquire mammary glands through being subsumed under the genus, mammalia. The dogma of the excluded third gets us into a dilemma when applied to Russia, forcing us to term "socialist" a society which is an insult to

every conception of socialism, or to postulate a kind of capitalism without capitalists, market relations, private property or private profit. Only if this dogma is abandoned, do avenues of really fruitful investigation open up. It begins to appear then that both sides are right in their negative propositions, and that both are wrong when from these they make a break-neck leap, with their ominous "therefores", to their conclusions. Perhaps there is neither capitalism nor socialism in Russia, but a third thing, something that is quite new in history.

The point of departure for our investigation will be conditions as they are. The question of how they came to be what they are must be left for a separate study. Most of the data used will be from the period previous to Russia's entry into the war, for two reasons: (1) the dim-out which for many years has veiled information about Soviet Russia has become a blackout since Russia has become an ally of this country; (2) this procedure obviates the objection that the conditions described are merely the temporary, abnormal effects of war.

The "Socialized" and the Private Sectors

To begin with, all the decisive means of production are in the hands of the State. This is completely true of the urban and industrialized sector. The 54,600,000 workers and the 29,700,000 "employees" (including dependents) shown by the 1939 Soviet census, amounting to almost 50 per cent of the total population, are in their overwhelming majority employees of the State or of institutions controlled by it.*

The case is somewhat different for the peasants. Families included, there are 75,600,000 members of collective farms (almost 45% of the total population) and 3,000,000 individual farmers (not quite 2% of the total population). By the end of the Second Five Year Plan, there were 2,500,000 collective farms, embracing 94% of the farms and practically all (99.6%) of the land. This land is the property of the State and cannot be disposed of, having been given to the collective farms for their "eternal use" since 1935. The State prescribes to these farms exactly what they are to produce and what they are to deliver at what prices, and also closely regulates their internal structure.* Some two-thirds of agricultural production is used by agriculture itself for productive and consumption purposes. Of the third that goes to the city, the State acquires 85% by means of various forms of forced delivery and so-called "decentralized buying". The remaining 15% of this third, or some 5% of the total raw products in kind, is placed on the "free collective-farm market".¹ To be sure, the monetary share taken by the free market is much greater, since prices are a good deal higher there, and the 15% which Soviet statistics (1938) estimate as its share is proba-

bly too low. Nevertheless, the exchange of goods between city and country is handled predominantly by the State.

There are also two sectors within the collective farm itself: its collective economy and the small private economy of the individual member, to whom the law of 1935 granted the following private property: a house, one to two and a half acres of ground, one cow, two calves, one sow with its litter, ten goats or sheep, and an unlimited number of fowl and rabbits. The collective farms sell 15% of the total products placed on the collective-farm market, their members sell 45% of them out of their wages in kind, 30% out of their individual shares, and the individual farmers sell 10%.

One can sum up by saying that the means of production in the city belong almost altogether to the State; that agricultural production, in spite of the existence of a not insignificant private sector within the collective farm and the survival of some individual farmers, is largely collectivized; and that the State directly controls all exchange of goods with foreign countries and inside the city, and most of the exchange between city and country.

All this has to be placed in evidence because some critics consider the concessions made to the peasants after the great wave of collectivization in the early Thirties, to be a return to the New Economic Policy (NEP) and to the general supremacy of market relations. But there can really be no question of that. The concessions of 1935 (eternal use of the land by the collective farms, the sanctioning within them of the dwarf economies of their individual members, and the open collective-farm market) went in the same *direction* as the retreat of 1921, but for a *much shorter distance* and from *far more advanced positions*. There were 20,000,000 independent peasants during the classic NEP; Russia was an overwhelmingly agrarian country; industry was ruined and weak; market relationships

1920



* The so-called consumers' cooperatives belong among these. All they have in common with real co-ops is their name. They are actually merely State distributing organizations.

* It [the State] has in its hands such levers as wages, prices, taxes, budget and credit. The completely disproportionate income of a series of central Asiatic cotton collectives depends much more upon the correlation of prices established by the government than upon the work of the members of the collectives.—Leon Trotsky, *The Revolution Betrayed*, p. 133.

dominated the exchange between city and country; private commerce was allowed to act as an intermediary; capitalists could compete with the State to a limited extent even in industry. Under the present "Neo-NEP" the peasants are organized in collective farms, which are much more effectively under the State's control; Russia is industrialized; there are no private agencies of exchange; exchange between city and country is regulated predominantly by the relationships of a planned economy—which is why a repetition of the "grain strike" of 1928 is impossible during the present war.

During the NEP it was still an open question whether the "private" or the "socialized" sector would win. Today the struggle has been decided in favor of the State. We have yet to see whether that has anything to do with the victory of socialism.

Standards of Living of the People

Let us next investigate the standard of living of the broad masses of the urban population. This is no easy task. "No statistics of any kind are issued dealing with prices, currency, housing, cost of living and a number of other phenomena, which are indispensable to a true evaluation of any economic system."² The Soviet Union is the only civilized state in the world that has not for years published a standard-of-living index. In 1930 the Gosplan and the Statistical Bureaus were purged, and it was announced that statistics were a "weapon in the fight for Communism." This weapon is used to keep the population's standard of living a secret.

We possess data indeed as to the average money wages (all wages from those of day laborers to those of the highest directors lumped together) and they show an impressive advance: from 37.5 rubles in 1924/25 to 94 in 1931, 130 in 1933, 188 in 1935,³ 245 in 1937,⁴ and 289 in 1938.⁵ The last estimates of the pre-war period again and again mention 300 rubles as the average gross monthly wage.

But we are interested in *real* wages. *Planovoie Khoziaistvo* in 1938 gave some facts as to how much food an average family of St. Petersburg textile workers consumed per week in 1908 under the Czar. Using this as a basis, we find that wages and living costs have run the following course under Stalin:⁶

	1913	1929	1937
Cost of 1 week's food....	3.40 (rubles)	5.90	49.60
Index of food prices....	100	172	1449
Average monthly wages.	25 (rubles)	66	245
Index of real wages.....	100	154	68

The figures speak for themselves. In 1929 the average standard of living of the Russian wage-earner was 54% higher than it had been before the Revolution. By 1937, it was 32% lower, and less than half the 1929 level.*

Manya Gordon estimates that the price of food consumed by workers' families was eighteen times as great in 1937

as in 1913. In her richly documented *Workers Before and After Lenin* (p. 159), she compares 1937 food prices not with the *average* but with the *minimal* wages of the *worst paid* workers (10 rubles in 1914, 105 in 1937 after the deduction of taxes) and comes to the conclusion that the workers' standard of living had sunk by more than a third since the Czar's time.

Since all these figures can only be approximate, because of the lack of all official indices of living, it may be well to cite still another source. In 1939 and 1940 the American Embassy ascertained the prices in Moscow retail stores.⁷ Their correctness was never disputed by Soviet authorities; single details were repeated by the Soviet press in scattered items. Using the Embassy's price scale, and taking the typical consumption of a worker's family as reported by a Russian publication in 1926, we can construct the following indices:⁸

	1913	1928	1940
Index of Prices	100	187	2248
Index of Money Wages	100	233	1383
Index of Real Wages	100	125	62.4

These estimates are given for the capital city, whose population receives favored treatment in every respect. They do not take into account, furthermore, the much higher prices on the "free market", where the worker often has to buy when he cannot get necessities at the State stores.

Poverty and Luxury

If all this is correct, one may say, then a state of real hunger must exist in Russia. The conclusion is correct: it does exist.

The terrible effects of this hunger are suggested by Soviet census statistics. The census of December, 1926, reported a population of 147,000,000. In 1930, an official government estimate put the population at 157,500,000. On January 1, 1934, Molotov reported a figure of 168,000,000. Stalin himself declared, on October 1, 1935, that the normal yearly increase was three millions, which was about that of the NEP period. At this rate, the census of January 6, 1937, should have shown 177,000,000 inhabitants. No one knows what it did show, for the results were never published, and the directors of the statistical bureau were liquidated as Trotskyist saboteurs. A new census was undertaken in January, 1939, by new and "dependable" personnel. By this time, at Stalin's rate of three million increase a year, there should have been at least 183,000,000 inhabitants. But the official figures show only 170,500,000 souls. Twelve and a half millions had simply disappeared. Many factors may be involved in this cruel deficit: a fall in the birth rate due to want, an increase in infant mortality, above all the terrible famine of 1932 when at least four million peasants died of starvation because of the brutal tempo and the ruthless methods with which Stalin pushed through the forced-collectivisation program. Another factor may have been the great purges of 1937-1938, where the death roll may have run into the hundreds of thousands. Of one thing at least we may be certain: scientific birth

* The 1929 level was somewhat lower than estimated here, since only food is taken into account. In 1929 food was cheap, clothing and other manufactured products expensive because of the "scissors" crisis.

control was not involved, since this had become an illegal privilege strictly limited to the upper ranks of the bureaucracy after the prohibition of abortions in 1936.

There is no space here to go into detail about the sub-human living standards of the great Russian masses. Those interested may find copious documentation in the works of Hubbard, Yvon, Ciliga, Serge, Manya Gordon, Trotsky and others. "Life is better and happier now," said Stalin in 1936. The question is: whose life?

The French worker, Yvon, who lived in Russia for almost fifteen years and wrote one of the best books about the Soviet Union, gives us the answer, as of 1936:

"The restaurants are open again, and the Soviet press is filled with advertisements, for the benefit of those with plenty of cash, such as have not been seen since the times of the *ancien regime*. These ads give the addresses and phone numbers of de luxe night clubs, praise the quality of their jazz, and invite the customers to spend gay nights there. Dancing, champagne, the rarest liquors. Other ads offer fancy perfumes for the ladies at 200 rubles a tiny bottle (*Izvestia*, Feb. 4, 1936) and dolls for children at 95 rubles each (*Izvestia*, Feb. 2, 1936) . . . One enterprising restaurant—the workers' fatherland must 'catch up with and overtake' capitalism!—offers to organize banquets, official or private, for which it will deliver everything, including the servants. A simple phone call—and the lackeys of the State will serve you up a dinner in your own apartment at 200-300 rubles a plate."⁹

We have the word of more than one enthusiastic Friend of the Soviet Union that these gala banquets have continued even throughout the grim years of the war.

"There are special villas for high specialists, technicians, writers and scholars," continues Yvon. "New apartments have not only the most luxurious appointments, but also special servants' rooms—of 6 square meters, as against the 12 to 24 meters allotted for the master's quarters. (*Izvestia*, March 9, 1936.)"¹⁰

Perhaps the most revealing fact of all, however, is that between 1932 and 1936 the production of luxury goods increased much faster than the production of cheap consumer's goods. Production of perfumes increased 270%, of phonographs 450%, of cameras 1750%, of silk goods 2220%; while cotton fabrics went up only 44% in the same period.¹¹ The sales tax on necessities, also, is much higher than on luxuries: 100% on cotton goods, 300% on bread, and only 50% on silk.¹²

Wages and Salaries

The silence of official Soviet statistics becomes positively death-like when we come to the delicate question of wage differentials. "So far as I know," writes Hubbard in *Soviet Labor and Industry* (p. 170), "the Soviet Government has never allowed the publication of figures giving the total number of relative proportions of workers in different wage groups." And the same author writes in his *Soviet Trade and Distribution* (p. 369): "The wage tables give no hint at all regarding the differences between the remuneration of different sorts of labor. From occasional references in newspapers and publications it is clear that the difference between the highest and lowest industrial wages is exceedingly large."

Just how large? According to Yvon, a housemaid in Moscow received toward the end of 1937 fifty to sixty rubles a month plus free board and lodging; the monthly wages of workers were between 110 and 400 rubles, usually 150 to 250 rubles; minor officials received 110 to 300 rubles, usually between 130 and 225 rubles; middling officials and technicians between 300 and 1000 rubles a month; the "responsible ones" from 1500 to 10,000 rubles, but often as much as 20,000 and 30,000 rubles monthly.¹³

Other sources confirm this picture. Only a single illustration will be given of the distribution of the wage-earners in the various wage categories. Of 1535 employees in a Donetz Basin mine in 1935, sixty made 1,000 to 2,500 rubles monthly, seventy-five between 800 and 1,000 rubles, four hundred 500 to 800 rubles, and the remaining one thousand averaged 125 rubles each per month.¹⁴

It was no exaggeration at all when Leon Sedov observed: "There is hardly an advanced capitalist country where the difference in workers' wages is as great as at present in the USSR . . . One could show without difficulty that the wages of the privileged layers of the working class are 20 times higher, sometimes even more, than the wages of the poorly paid layers . . . Ostrogladov, the head engineer of a pit, gets 8600 rubles a month; and he is a modest specialist, whose wages cannot, therefore, be considered exceptional. Thus, engineers often earn from 80 to 100 times as much as an unskilled worker."¹⁵

Nor did Trotsky exaggerate in any respect when he wrote: "In scope of inequality in the payment of labor, the Soviet Union has not only caught up to, but far surpasses the capitalist countries."¹⁶ In 1936 *The New Republic* estimated that the salaries of the highest directors of the Chile Copper Company bore a ratio of 41 to 1 to the average wage of its workers. In the Curtis publishing house the ratio was 51 to 1. Our Ostrogladov is not left behind, for his salary of 8600 rubles is almost 48 times as high as the



average Russian wage in 1935. According to *The New Republic*, Mr. H. F. Sinclair of Consolidated Oil in 1935 received 82 times as much as the average wage in his company. Yet salaries are paid in the Soviet Union which are 100 times higher than the average wage and 300 times higher than the minimal wage.

It might be rejoined that the directors of capitalist concerns receive other income than their fixed salaries. This is quite true; but it is also true of Soviet directors. Since the Decree of April 19, 1936, a directors' fund has existed in every Soviet concern, into which 4% of the earnings provided for by the Plan is paid and 50% of the earnings in excess of the Plan. Since prices are fixed from above, "earnings in excess of the Plan" can only be attained at the expense of the workers. Let us give a typical example of how this directors' fund is distributed. In 1936 a factory in Kharkov distributed 60,000 rubles from its directors' fund in the following manner: 22,000 rubles to the director, 10,000 rubles to the Party secretary, 8,000 rubles to the head of the production office, 6,000 to the head of the clerical staff, 4,000 to the chairman of the union, 5,000 to a section superintendent, and 5,000 rubles to all the others put together.¹⁷

But there are many other ways in which incomes differ. Very much to the point is the following from Yvon's book: "The position of the new masters is incomparably superior to that of the other strata of the population. They receive ten to twenty times as much income as the workers."¹⁸ They get the best apartments and the right to larger dwelling space; furnishings are often free; watering places and first-class beaches are at their disposal . . . They travel in "soft" or "international" trains (the Soviet terms for first-class and parlor cars); official business is a frequent pretext for free tickets. And then they have first call on "secret funds," the use of which is permitted to help important people out of difficulties. In case of sickness, they receive the best care in first-class hospitals, naturally at no expense to themselves . . . Cars and chauffeurs or carriages and drivers are free and replaceable, since they are attached to the job and not to the job-holder, who has a larger and larger use of them. The opportunities for personal savings are very few, but savings are no longer necessary where one's job is a better guarantee of a high standard of living than a bank account."¹⁹

In the collective farms too there are very different levels of payment for work. Wages are paid by so-called "working days," which are not real working days but fictive unities. The full working day of a helper is worth half a "working day," that of a tractor-driver five "working days." Even more "working days" can be earned in a single day by exceeding the fixed quotas of production. Laborers are paid only for days actually spent at work, while every day is an official working day for managers and secretaries. Thus, in 1929 only 25% of the collective-farm members earned more than 300 "working days" for the whole year; the average was 150 "working days." The value of a "working day" varies within limits of 1 to 3 in products and of as much as 1 to 10 in money.²⁰

Material changes usually reflect themselves in ideology, and the history of Russian opinion as to equality of income—and equality in general—is a beautiful example of that. In *State and Revolution*, Lenin considered the chief

guarantee of the proletarian character of the State power would be the fact that no public official could receive higher pay than a qualified worker. Soon after the Revolution, higher salaries were granted bourgeois specialists so that their knowledge could be used to raise production and train proletarian specialists willing to work out of idealism. But the so-called Party maximum continued to apply to Party members; even though occupying the highest positions they could not draw higher pay. The privileged stratum then in process of birth supplemented its income by "journalistic activity" royalties, various kinds of bonuses, and payments in kind such as official dwellings, official autos, etc., etc. That its ideology was already changing then can be seen by the general cry of rage that went up when the unfortunate Zinoviev wrote an article in 1925 in which he sought the "philosophy of the age" in the idea of equality. At that time the unions could still uphold the idea of equalization of income as a far perspective. Inequality already attained great proportions by the time of the first Five-Year Plan, expressing itself not so much in money incomes as in special stores and restaurants for the upper ten thousand where everything which the rest of the population lacked could be obtained. In the June of 1931 Stalin made his famous speech against "uravnilovka" or equality of pay. Every effort towards equality of income since then has been a "petty-bourgeois deviation." After the rise of the Stakhanov movement and the lifting of rationing the differences became unrestrainedly expressed in money incomes as well. With the results seen above.

"It would be probably necessary to conclude," wrote Trotsky, who still continued to regard Russia as a Workers' State, "that 15%, or say, 20% of the population enjoy not much less of the wealth than is enjoyed by the remaining 80 to 85%."²¹

We can sum up by saying that the differences of income in Russia are quantitatively in no way inferior to those in capitalist countries. They can no more be explained by differences in amount of work performed, skill, and so forth than can the differences between bourgeois and proletariat. They have long ago reached a stage where the poverty of the broad masses stands sharply contrasted to the luxury of the upper ten thousand. They go hand in hand with differences in rank and prestige; and they increase instead of diminishing. Nor are they felt as an evil by reigning official opinion, but are glorified by it. Equalization is not only not the official policy, but its very propagation is forbidden and viewed as a deviation, that is, as a crime against the State.

Those Who Dispose and Those Who Are Disposed of

The *Small Soviet Encyclopedia*, 1939 edition, defines the concept "class" by quoting Lenin: "Classes are great groups of persons who are differentiated by their positions in the historically determined system of social production, by their relations to the means of production, by their roles in the social organization of work, and consequently by the manner and extent of their participation in social wealth. Classes are human groups of such a kind that some can appropriate to themselves the fruits of others"

labor, thanks to their different positions in the social economy." The encyclopedia comments that the first two (position in the system of production and relation to the means of production) of the three characteristics mentioned are primary and that the third characteristic (difference of income) is their result.²²

The above definition is fairly generally accepted among Marxists, and it has been quoted from an official Soviet source only for the sake of piquancy. Taking it as his point of departure, Trotsky in 1936 wrote in an article on the Soviet Constitution that although there was a tremendous difference between the incomes of a charwoman and a Soviet marshal, their relations to the means of production were essentially the same. And in spite of the fact that Trotsky himself made several tentatives towards a correction of this theory, he never explicitly revised it.²³

At first glance the observer schooled in Marxism will certainly be struck by the thought that differences of income so great, so systematic and so much on the increase as those in the Soviet Union could not come about without differences in the roles played by their recipients in the processes of production—there must be fire behind so much smoke. Besides, it is also known that differences in social ascendancy between the privileged and the disinherited in Russia preceded differences in consumption. To make it appear as though the differences in consumption arose first and began only subsequently to infiltrate the spheres of production is downright misleading. But let us examine the facts themselves. What positions do the individual strata of Russian society occupy in the processes of production? How do their relations to the means of production differ?

Every Russian worker has to have a work book. During his entire time of employment it is kept by the management. No one, since 1938, is allowed to accept employ-

ment without a work book or employ a worker without one. All "work offenses" and punishments, especially disciplinary dismissals, are entered in this book.²⁴ One day's absence from work without an excuse or a lateness of more than 20 minutes was until 1940 legal ground for dismissal.²⁵ As long as rationing prevailed, dismissal brought with it the loss of one's ration card, and later on even the forfeiture of the right to dwelling space. But those happy days are no more. Since 1940 no Soviet worker can leave his job without special permission from his manager, which may be given only when the worker submits a medical certificate pronouncing him unfit for work and when no other work can be found for him in the establishment.²⁶ Anyone leaving his job without permission is given two months in jail. The punishment for temporary absence or lateness (20 minutes are enough) is forced labor up to six months, performed, if possible, at the same establishment, but under guard and at a reduction of 25% in wages. All disciplinary cases, according to this same law, must be decided within five days, and by a single judge without the usual government counsel. Judges who show leniency in such cases²⁷ and managers who do not bring offenders to court²⁸ are threatened with heavy penalties.

These measures apply "to all state, cooperative and public establishments" and all their employees. They were later extended to the motor-tractor stations,²⁹ craftsmen's associations,³⁰ and other establishments. In the Fall of 1940 the Soviet press published a flood of letters from women of the more privileged circles, asking that the same measures be extended to housemaids, about whose "laziness" and "negligence" they complained in a tone which in civilized capitalist countries has survived only in comic sheets.

According to another decree,³¹ all individual work contracts of employees have been cancelled. Employees can be assigned to any establishment in no matter what part of the USSR.

1936



1944



From 800,000 to 1,000,000 young boys are conscripted annually for labor service. After a training lasting from six months to two years they are obliged to work four years wherever they are sent.³² They cannot leave their places after the four years are up without official permission as long as the obligatory labor service law remains in effect.

The same law introduced a work week of six days of eight hours each, replacing the former five-day week of seven hours each.³³ The working day for young people over sixteen was raised from six to eight hours; a later decree made them liable to over-time and night work. A special law reduced the number of holidays to five a year;³⁴ another one forbade the shortening of work on Saturday.³⁵ At the same time that working hours were lengthened it was expressly directed that monthly wages remain the same; all hour, piece-work and job rates were revised in such a way that they gave no greater monthly return to the worker than under the shorter working hours.

Most of the work in industry is done as piece work. Work quotas or norms are fixed by the management. Bonuses are granted for additional work; deductions are made for failure to fill the quotas, which are often revised upward without consulting the workers³⁶—of whom 22 to 32% are unable to fulfill the norms.³⁷

The foremen are responsible for the workers placed under them. They have the right to hire and fire, to assign work, to threaten disciplinary measures, and to distribute rewards according to their own judgment. But they are responsible to their superiors in matters of work discipline.³⁸

The workers can exert no influence on their rates of pay and conditions of work. "The wage scale must be left entirely in the hands of the heads of industry. They must establish the norm."³⁹ The so-called trade unions work in the same direction. "Their primary purpose is to direct the fight for the completion and over-fulfilment by every worker of his prescribed norm of work."⁴⁰ "The proper determination of wages and the regulation of labor demand that the industrial heads and the technical directors be immediately charged with responsibility in this matter. This is also dictated by the necessity of establishing a single authority and ensuring economy in the management of enterprises . . . [The workers] must not defend themselves against their government. That is absolutely wrong. That is supplanting the administrative organs. That is Left opportunistic perversion, the annihilation of individual authority and interference in the administrative department."⁴¹ "In 1932 the central committee of the machinists' union called to the attention of the government the fact that in several machine works higher wages were being paid than the budget called for. The union took steps to turn the matter over to the government prosecutor for bringing criminal charges against the factory directors."⁴²

The Soviet Bill of Rights

Let us take a look at one more aspect: the legal protection of property from the workers and the collective-farm peasants. Theft of the "collective property" of the state or of a collective farm is punishable by ten years' imprisonment or death.⁴³ Children over twelve come under this

law; according to a special decree, the penalties for theft and wrecking, among other crimes are to be applied to them in the same way as to adults and by the same courts.⁴⁴ Yvon cites examples from Soviet newspapers of how two peasants were sentenced to ten years' imprisonment for stealing four kilograms of grain from their collective farm, and how other collective-farm members were even condemned to death, in accordance with this law, for the illegal use of a horse and a rowboat belonging to their collective farm.⁴⁵ In both cases the sentences were mitigated by higher courts. But how many have not been?

This is the kind of freedom the Russian worker enjoys while at work, but he has just as little freedom of movement in other respects. Since 1932 every Soviet citizen must have a domestic pass.⁴⁶ He cannot leave his place of residence for more than twenty-four hours without having his pass inspected by the police. One cannot live in a big city or within a radius of 50 to 100 kilometers of it without special permission. Its forfeiture means Siberia.⁴⁷ Travel abroad is practically forbidden—except to bureaucrats on official missions. Aside from them, almost no other Soviet citizens have been encountered outside Russia in the last fifteen years. To ask for permission to travel abroad is equivalent to accusing one's self of high treason. Illegal attempts to go abroad on the part of a civilian are punishable by ten years in jail or by death, on the part of one liable to military service by death alone. The adult members of one's family are imprisoned for five to ten years if they knew of the trip, and are deported to Siberia for five years if they did *not* know of it.⁴⁸

I do not think it necessary to mention political rights and freedom here. There are absolutely none—except the liberty to assent enthusiastically to official policy and praise Stalin. Any expression, even the mildest, of opposition, or of doubt too, is punished, very often by death. Simply to remain silent during an official panegyric is perilous; to abstain from voting in connection with an official resolution of praise is considered a crime against the State. There is a universal obligation to inform against others, even one's closest relatives. Failure to denounce a "state criminal" is complicity and is severely punished.

Those refusing to recognize these generally known facts have only to instance one example—just a single solitary one!—within the last ten years of any one in the Soviet Union who criticized its regime—Stalin, that means—whether by word or by writing, whether mildly or severely, without being punished as soon as the authorities learned of it. And let him remember that on August 21, 1939, one hundred and eighty million Soviet subjects were unanimously and enthusiastically in favor of collective security, the Popular Front, and a democratic war against Germany, and that two days later they were just as unanimously and enthusiastically for the Hitler-Stalin pact and against the English and French imperialist war. One hundred and eighty million people, and not a single voice was raised in opposition or even in doubt at such an abrupt about-face; unanimous enthusiasm for the new turn, without a single small exception—that must have been a miracle compared to which those in the Bible were nothing but cheap juggler's tricks—or else it must be that there is not a single iota of political freedom in the USSR.

But this lack of political liberty is, as we have seen,

only another aspect of the enslavement involved in the processes of production, and it leads us back to the question of classes.

The second part of this article will appear next month.

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Modern Texts

Herman Melville's Redburn: His First Voyage (1849) is not one of his best novels. It is not a novel at all, in fact, but journalism of a high order. The middle section of the book, describing Melville's impressions of Liverpool in the forties, is a social document to be set alongside Engels' The Condition of the English Workingclass in 1844, the Hammonds' Lord Shaftesbury, and the famous chapters in the first volume of Capital.

In Chapter 37 of Redburn, printed below, Melville intensifies the theme of the Liverpool chapters to give us a little masterpiece of its kind, which might well serve as a model, in its restraint and its unadorned reporting, for journalists writing of contemporary horrors. It also serves to remind us that official murder was not introduced into the modern world by the Nazis. A century ago equally revolting and widespread atrocities were inflicted on millions of human beings, in peacetime, by British capitalism. Theorists of the unique barbarism of the German people, orators dilating on the humanitarian tradition of bourgeois democracy might read Chapter 37 of Redburn with profit.

—ED.

What Redburn Saw in Launcelott's-Hey

The Dead House reminds me of other sad things; for in the vicinity of the docks are many very painful sights.

In going to our boarding-house, the sign of the Baltimore Clipper, I generally passed through a narrow street called 'Launcelott's-Hey,' lined with dingy, prison-like cotton warehouses. In this street, or rather alley, you seldom see anyone but a truck-man, or some solitary old warehouse keeper, haunting his smoky den like a ghost.

Once, passing through this place, I heard a feeble wail, which seemed to come out of the earth. It was but a strip of crooked sidewalk where I stood; the dingy wall was on every side, converting the mid-day into twilight; and not a soul was in sight. I started, and could almost have run, when I heard that dismal sound. It seemed the low, hopeless, endless wail of some one forever lost. At last I advanced to an opening which communicated downward with deep tiers of cellars beneath a crumbling old warehouse; and there, some fifteen feet below the walk, crouching in nameless squalor, with her head bowed over, was the figure of what had been a woman. Her blue arms folded to her livid bosom two shrunken things like children, that leaned toward her, one on each side. At first, I knew not whether they were alive or dead. They made no sign; they did not move or stir; but from the vault came that soul-sickening wail.

I made a noise with my foot, which, in the silence, echoed far and near; but there was no response. Louder still; when one of the children lifted its head, and cast upward a faint glance; then closed its eyes, and lay motionless. The woman also now gazed up, and perceived me; but let fall her eye again. They were dumb and next to dead with want. How they had crawled into that den I could

not tell; but there they had crawled to die. At that moment I never thought of relieving them; for death was so stamped in their glazed and unimploring eyes that I almost regarded them as already no more. I stood looking down on them, while my whole soul swelled within me; and I asked myself, What right had anybody in the wide world to smile and be glad, when sights like this were to be seen? It was enough to turn the heart to gall; and make a man-hater of a Howard. For who were these ghosts that I saw? Were they not human beings? A woman and two girls? With eyes, and lips, and ears like any queen? With hearts which, though they did not bound with blood, yet beat with a dull, dead ache that was their life.

At last, I walked on toward an open lot in the alley, hoping to meet there some ragged old women, whom I had daily noticed groping amid foul rubbish for little particles of dirty cotton, which they washed out and sold for a trifle.

I found them; and accosting one, I asked if she knew of the persons I had just left. She replied, that she did not; nor did she want to. I then asked another, a miserable, toothless old woman, with a tattered strip of coarse baling stuff round her body. Looking at me for an instant, she resumed her raking in the rubbish, and said that she knew who it was that I spoke of; but that she had no time to attend to beggars and their brats. Accosting still another, who seemed to know my errand, I asked if there was no place to which the woman could be taken. 'Yes,' she replied, 'to the churchyard.' I said she was alive, and not dead.

'Then she'll never die,' was the rejoinder. 'She's been down there these three days, with nothing to eat;—that I know myself.'

'She deserves it,' said an old hag, who was just placing on her crooked shoulders her bag of pickings, and who was turning to totter off; 'that Betsey Jennings deserves it—was she ever married? tell me that.'

Leaving Launcelott's-Hey, I turned into a more frequented street; and soon meeting a policeman, told him of the condition of the woman and the girls.

'It's none of my business, Jack,' said he. 'I don't belong to that street.'

'Who does, then?'

'I don't know. But what business is it of yours? Are you not a Yankee?'

'Yes,' said I, 'but come, I will help you remove that woman, if you say so.'

'There, now, Jack, go on board your ship, and stick to it; and leave these matters to the town.'

I accosted two more policemen, but with no better success; they would not even go with me to the place. The truth was, it was out of the way, in a silent, secluded spot; and the misery of the three outcasts, hiding away in the ground, did not obtrude upon anyone.

Returning to them, I again stamped to attract their attention; but this time none of the three looked up, or even stirred. While I yet stood irresolute, a voice called to me from a high, iron-shuttered window in a loft over the way; and asked what I was about. I beckoned to the man, a sort of porter, to come down, which he did; when I pointed down into the vault.

'Well,' said he, 'what of it?'

'Can't we get them out?' said I. 'Haven't you some place in your warehouse where you can put them? have you nothing for them to eat?'

'You're crazy, boy,' said he; 'do you suppose that Parkins and Wood want their warehouse turned into a hospital?'

I then went to my boarding-house, and told Handsome Mary of what I had seen; asking her if she could not do something to get the woman and girls removed; or if she could not do that, let me have some food for them. But though a kind person in the main, Mary replied that she gave away enough to beggars in her own street (which was true enough) without looking after the whole neighbourhood.

Going into the kitchen, I accosted the cook, a little shrivelled-up old Welshwoman, with a saucy tongue, whom the sailors called Brandy-Nan; and begged her to give me some cold victuals, if she had nothing better, to take to the vault. But she broke out in a storm of swearing at the miserable occupants of the vault, and refused. I then stepped into the room where our dinner was being spread; and waiting till the girl had gone out, I snatched some bread and cheese from a stand, and thrusting it into the bosom of my frock, left the house. Hurrying to the lane, I dropped the food down into the vault. One of the girls caught at it convulsively, but fell back, apparently fainting; the sister pushed the other's arm aside, and took the bread in her hand; but with a weak uncertain grasp like an infant's. She placed it to her mouth; but letting it fall again, murmured faintly something like 'water.' The woman did not stir; her head was bowed over, just as I had first seen her.

Seeing how it was, I ran down toward the docks to a mean little sailor tavern, and begged for a pitcher; but the cross old man who kept it refused, unless I would pay for it. But I had no money. So, as my boarding-house was some way off, and it would be lost time to run to the ship for my big iron pot; under the impulse of the moment, I hurried to one of the Boodle Hydrants, which I remembered having seen running near the scene of a still smouldering fire in an old rag-house; and taking off a new tarpaulin hat, which had been loaned me that day, filled it with water.

With this, I returned to Launcelott's-Hey; and with considerable difficulty, like getting down into a well, I contrived to descend with it into the vault; where there was hardly space enough left to let me stand. The two girls drank out of the hat together; looking up at me with an unalterable, idiotic expression, that almost made me faint. The woman spoke not a word, and did not stir. While the girls were breaking and eating the bread, I tried to lift the woman's head; but, feeble as she was, she seemed bent upon holding it down. Observing her arms still clasped upon her bosom, and that something seemed hidden under the rags there, a thought crossed my mind, which impelled me forcibly to withdraw her hands for a moment; when I caught a glimpse of a meagre little babe, the lower part of its body thrust into an old bonnet. Its face was dazzlingly white, even in its squalor; but the closed eyes looked like balls of indigo. It must have been dead some hours.

The woman refusing to speak, eat, or drink, I asked one of the girls who they were, and where they lived; but she only stared vacantly, muttering something that could not be understood.

The air of the place was now getting too much for me; but I stood deliberating a moment, whether it was possible for me to drag them out of the vault. But if I did, what then? They would only perish in the street, and here they were at least protected from the rain; and more than that, might die in seclusion.

I crawled up into the street and looking down upon them again, almost repented that I had brought them any food; for it would only tend to prolong their misery, without hope of any permanent relief: for die they must very soon; they were too far gone for any medicine to help them. I hardly know whether I ought to confess another thing that occurred to me as I stood there; but it was this—I felt an almost irresistible impulse to do them the last mercy, of in some way putting an end to their horrible lives; and I should almost have done so, I think, had I not been deterred by thoughts of the law. For I well knew that the law, which would let them perish of themselves without giving them one cup of water, would spend a thousand pounds, if necessary, in convicting him who should so much as offer to relieve them from their miserable existence.

The next day, and the next, I passed the vault three times, and still met the same sight. The girls leaning up against the woman on each side, and the woman with her arms still folding the babe, and her head bowed. The first evening I did not see the bread that I had dropped down in the morning; but the second evening, the bread I had dropped that morning remained untouched. On the third morning the smell that came from the vault was such, that I accosted the same policeman I had accosted before, who was patrolling the same street, and told him that the persons I had spoken to him about were dead, and he had better have them removed. He looked as if he did not believe me, and added, that it was not his street.

When I arrived at the docks on my way to the ship, I entered the guard-house within the walls, and asked for one of the captains, to whom I told the story; but, from what he said, was led to infer that the Dock Police was distinct from that of the town, and this was not the right place to lodge my information.

I could do no more that morning, being obliged to repair to the ship; but at twelve o'clock, when I went to dinner, I hurried into Launcelott's-Hey, when I found that the vault was empty. In place of the women and children, a heap of quick-lime was glistening.

I could not learn who had taken them away, or whither they had gone; but my prayer was answered—they were dead, departed, and at peace.

But again I looked down into the vault, and in fancy beheld the pale, shrunken forms still crouching there. Ah! what are our creeds, and how do we hope to be saved? Tell me, oh Bible, that story of Lazarus again, that I may find comfort in my heart for the poor and forlorn. Surrounded as we are by the wants and woes of our fellow-men, and yet given to follow our own pleasures, regardless of their pains, are we not like people sitting up with a corpse, and making merry in the house of the dead?

Free and Equal

Our Historians and Slavery*

If the leading expounders of the Southern proslavery argument, men like Thomas R. Dew, John C. Calhoun, and George Fitzhugh, could establish themselves as a celestial board of censors over American historical writing relating to the Old South, they would find little use for their blue pencils. Lee's tattered soldiers had scarcely surrendered their muskets at Appomattox before a new Confederate host—soldiers of the mighty pen—had mobilized to do battle for their section. In the years that followed, these facile writers, viewing the ante bellum South through the mauve curtains and soft, blurred lights of time, constructed a fascinating picture of an idyllic civilization free from the complexities of modern industrial society. Thus was born a beautiful legend, a theme for countless romantic novels, and a seductive lure for Yankee tourists.

Since the institution of Negro slavery was such an integral part of the social pattern of the Old South, it was inevitable that these apologists should accept, tacitly at least, the chief tenets of the historic proslavery argument. The biological inferiority of the Negro and his peculiar fitness for a status of servitude were axioms in their creed. So too was the obvious impossibility of the two races ever living together on terms of equality. "White supremacy" was the aphorism which presumably united all classes of the "superior race" in a common cause. Abolitionists were dismissed as fanatics who failed to understand "our niggers" and the complex social adjustments made necessary by their presence. Besides, the "fat, sleek blacks" had been well treated by their benevolent masters and were much better off than the white free laborers of the North. What, then, could be more desirable than for the "New South," in seeking a solution to its "race [and labor] problem," to borrow heavily from its Utopian past?

But more important is the process by which this Southern legend ultimately was embellished by historians with the trappings of scientific fact. The road from Appomattox to the present is cluttered with scholarly books and articles which accept the essence of the proslavery argument and bolster it with impressive quotes, ponderous footnotes, huge appendices of statistics, and overwhelming bibliographies. These authors disarm the unwary with their simulation of historical objectivity and their disdain for the prejudices of the past. The critical accounts of slavery written by Northern partisans before and immediately after the Civil War are now rejected as "biased."

The elevation of this "revisionist" viewpoint to the level of objective history was not solely the work of the Southern agrarians who still would "take their stand" in traditional Dixie. Nor was it achieved alone by their allies in the Southern Historical Association. The most cursory survey of the specialized studies of the Old South will demonstrate that the vast majority of historians are apologetic in their treatment of Negro slavery. Avery Craven, of the University of Chicago, who professes to have "examined every document" in preparing his recent book, *The Coming of the Civil War*, has emerged with the most exhaustive of the recent apologies for slavery. James G. Randall, of

the University of Illinois, in his widely used text on the sectional controversy, writes: "In contrast to other races, the Negro adapted himself to bondage with a minimum of resistance, doing cheerfully the manual work of the South and loyally serving those who held him in chains."

With few exceptions, the more general works on American history, most of which have been written by Northerners, are equally "objective" in dealing with slavery. One need only consult such standard college texts as those written by Harold U. Faulkner, John D. Hicks, and Morrison and Commager to appreciate the prevailing sympathetic attitude in current analyses of the slave system. When, in 1832, Dew wrote: "A merrier being does not exist on the face of the globe than the Negro slave," it is only the use of the present tense which distinguishes him from most of his professional descendants of a century hence.

Why should Northern historians have put Appomattox in reverse and surrendered to the catchy maxims of the proslavery argument? Five explanations might be suggested: (1) The danger of offending sensitive Southerners, which would impair the marketing of books and monographs. (2) The organic suspicion of the scholar for the activists and agitators who led the attack upon slavery. (3) A sympathetic understanding of the social and economic problems involved in a policy of emancipation. (4) Ill-concealed evidences of race prejudice. (5) The basic conservatism of most historians. After all, the antislavery argument, carried to its logical conclusion, is a radical doctrine. Clearly, then, a writer who would surmount these factors and emphasize the uglier aspects of Negro slavery exposes himself to the charge of heresy.

Herbert Aptheker, in his study of *American Negro Slave Revolts*, is such a heretic. His volume is as refreshing to the minority of dissenters as it will be disconcerting to the upholders of the Southern legend. After a careful re-examination of the relevant documents he has cut through the mythical beauties of the slave system and exposed harsh facts. Contrary to the general belief that Negroes placidly acquiesced in their servitude—indeed, revelled in it—Aptheker found widespread discontent among the slaves. Thus it appears that many not-so-docile "old black Joes" tucked numerous exploiting "massas" in the cold, cold ground. Whether evidence of rebellious slaves is disagreeable or not depends upon one's point of view.

To appreciate the significance of Dr. Aptheker's story of Negro slave revolts it must be remembered that a vital part of the old proslavery argument was the assertion that the institution formed the ideal solution to the conflict between labor and capital. In the Old South, allegedly, there were no labor problems, no strikes, no unions, no class struggles. Labor and capital lived together on the plantations in peace and harmony and observed the socialist apothegm: "From each according to his talents; to each according to his needs."

But the very foundation of this allegation is destroyed (and with it much of the later apology for slavery) not only by the stark facts of slave insurrections, but also by the prevalence among the Southern whites of a chronic dread of their Negro slaves. The perpetual terror of slave revolts (quite apart from actual outbreaks), the existence of which is so clearly shown in the social records of the ante-bellum South, should suffice in itself to put at rest the belief that slaves were contented with their lot. John Randolph of Virginia revealed an important facet of the psychology of the Old South when he confessed that "the night bell never tolls for fire in Richmond, that the mother does not hug the infant more closely to her bosom."

Keenly aware of the danger in their midst, Southern whites took steps to construct elaborate machinery for con-

* "American Negro Slave Revolts". By Herbert Aptheker. Columbia University Press, \$4.50. Mr. Aptheker has also published a short pamphlet: "Negro Slave Revolts, 1526-1860" (International Publishers, 1939, 15c)

trolling the Negroes. They fostered a belief in the inferiority of the Negro race, in his unfitness for freedom, and in the need to keep him "in his place." Religious instruction of the blacks was shaped to achieve docility and demonstrate that they were slaves by God's will. On the principle of divide and rule, trusted household servants were rewarded for spying and informing on their fellow slaves. Finally, the repressive slave codes, the legal power of corporal punishment given to individual masters, and the use of the military power of the state rounded out the techniques of enslavement.

"The goal," Dr. Aptheker concludes, "was to make slavery appear as an inseparable constituent of the whole way of life; to make slavery so acceptable that it would go unquestioned. And if this could not be reached, certainly the idea was to make those who did question or disturb the institution appear to be not merely enemies of slavery, but of society, of life itself."

The second half of Dr. Aptheker's study is devoted to cataloguing the slave revolts and conspiracies which resulted from various combinations of the irritants to which slaves were daily subjected. From colonial days to the Civil War, he uncovered evidence of some 250 plots and rebellions each of which involved ten or more slaves and aimed at freedom from bondage. While whites were occasionally implicated, their numbers were not great. More impressive was the general participation of the non-slaveholders in the mob lynchings and in the enforcement of harsh repressive measures which normally followed the exposure of a slave conspiracy. The pro-slavery argument had achieved its purpose. While the lower Southern whites were so busy "keeping the nigger in his place" they had little time to disturb the Bourbon slavocracy who dominated the Old South.

Since, in 1865, the Thirteenth Amendment prohibited "involuntary servitude" Dr. Aptheker saw fit to close his narrative at that point. Yet the story of the Southern Negro in the years that followed is not fundamentally different. It is filled with the same explosive ingredients. The struggle of the Negroes to give substance to their freedom has produced many chapters of violence. Repression and lynch law are not the mere echoes of a dead past. The mystic chords of the proslavery argument still tie the New South to the Old. And Southern Bourbons are still doing business at the same old stand while poor whites and blacks glare at each other across the color line. Indeed, one might ask as ironically as he likes: What is so "new" about the "New South"?

KENNETH M. STAMPP

THE HARLEM RIOT: A STUDY IN MASS FRUSTRATION.
By Harold Orlansky. Social Analysis: Report No. 1. 25 cents.
(G. P. O. Box 399, New York 1, N. Y.)

This brief but thorough pamphlet "introduces a series to be issued by Social Analysis, a group which seeks to apply the techniques of social anthropology to studies of the contemporary American scene." If the present piece is indicative of future work, the activity of this new group will be very welcome: for here, with intelligent and incontrovertible fists, Mr. Orlansky smashes the face of one of the ugliest hypocrisies of wartime America—the property-minded lies concerning the Harlem riot of August 1-2, 1943.

6,000 police, 1,000 civilian deputies, and all the elements of white and Negro authority were unable to halt the riot, which ended of its own accord after nearly 24 hours, having caused a property damage of \$5,000,000. "The attack

... was centered not upon white civilians, but upon white property and the white police force." Lower class youths comprised the leadership.

Making a very fruitful application of John Dollard's psycho-analytical approach to sociological material, Mr. Orlansky translates the obvious causes of the riot—the socio-economic conditions of Negro life, his second-class citizenship—into terms of frustration and aggression. "This, then, was the main etiology of the riot: accumulated frustration accentuated by increased goals placed before the Negro in wartime." Negroes, too, respond to the 'glorious call' of Air Force recruitment posters.

DAVID T. BAZELON

"The Truth about the Detroit Riot" by Earl Brown.
HARPERS, November 1943.

An excellent summary of the background of the riot and of Negro-white relations in Detroit. Also exposes fully the responsibility of the city authorities and police force for the tremendous loss of life among the Negroes.

"Jazz and its Forerunners as an Example of Acculturation" by J. S. Slotkin. AMERICAN SOCIOLOGICAL REVIEW, October, 1943.

This short article outlines the history of Negro music in America—"coon songs", ragtime, blues, jazz, swing—and analyzes its effect on white culture. Its thesis: "Continued contact between two groups leads to eventual assimilation . . . One characteristic after another of Negro music has been gradually adopted by popular white music . . . Conversely, the Negro idiom has been affected by West European music through the influence of white jazz musicians."

Books

WHAT TO DO WITH GERMANY. By Louis Nizer. Ziff-Davis. \$2.50.

Louis Nizer is a lawyer who has been "counsel to important business institutions." In this book, with much fawning upon "common sense" and a large use of moralistic courtroom verbiage, he presents a brief against the German people (not merely the Nazis) which includes a detailed plan for their post-war punishment and cure. The height of his indictment falls just this flat: "It is no accident that Germany and Japan prattle continuously about their destiny, their fate. They have substituted an image which they have created, for the image of God." The book is heavily indorsed by such notables as Henry Wallace, Donald Nelson, Claude Pepper, Harry Truman, Rex Stout ("I did not sleep last night"), Clifton Fadiman, and Walter Winchell ("This book is final proof that the pen is mightier than the sword.")—all of whom admonish us to read *What to do with Germany* in order to prevent a third World War.

The author disagrees with Earnest A. Hooton's hereditarian theories: "Aggressiveness is not a biological trait." And further on: "We hold the race theory to be apparent

nonsense."—Ah-ha! we say: Darwin and Marx are brothers, and now we shall have an *historical* analysis. And, in fact, Mr. Nizer states that he has "adopted the historical approach." But reading on, we soon come to realize that his historical sense responds to those instances only which illustrate his pre-conception of the Germans as singularly savage and amoral beings. We come out of the tunnel hearing the whisper in our ear that there are "two thousand years of Germanism to account for." And when he speaks of "the age-old German program of world conquest" (shades of the Protocols of the Elders of Zion!), we begin to feel that the historical approach which he adopted should have been allowed to remain in the asylum for such things. His "environmentalism" is just as static and unconditioned as any racist theory of absolute behavior and ability. As the one-time Catholic, James Joyce, retorted to a proselytizing Protestant: I did not relinquish a logical absurdity in order to assume an illogical one.

After establishing that "the evolution of man, which developed his spiritual qualities, has been resisted by the Germans," Mr. Nizer presents his program for "peace" (we need a new word for the lull between wars). Not only is the assistance of the German masses not required, but the program is to be instituted against them (Mr. Nizer would say "for them") as well as their ruling class. German society will be ruled by the "civilized world" (it's a sketchy guess, but the author probably means America, Russia and Britain.) Germany's sovereignty will be suspended; a few hundred thousand war criminals to be tried and mostly executed. Industry will be taken into receivership; the impossibility of future production for war ensured. "They will learn the simple American slogan that crime does not pay."

"... economic distress was not the cause of Hitlerism. Deeper, corrupt, super-national phobias drove the German people."—And so we have the amazing phenomenon of "super-national phobias" (moreover, existing for 2,000 years) which are not determined by changing material conditions. A convenient definition: for on the basis of this vulgar idealism, this immaculate conception, German national conduct is not in the slightest the result of world conditions or the acts of other nations. *The Germans are simply nuts!* While Mr. Nizer says that "I. G. Farben was the financial arsenal of fascism," he goes on to designate "world control through cartel monopoly" as an expression of the evil German genius—not as a common practice of world capital. (Deals like the Standard Oil-I. G. Farben cartel were pure rapes—so noble, unsuspecting and virgin-like were the American firms.) Conclusion: not only is Nazism merely a *German* corruption, but even the other major abuses of over-ripe capitalism are seen to be largely local-German.

Mr. Nizer plays to a dull-minded jury—for instance, terming common sense (which is common prejudice) "the ordinary man's erudition." And the pages of the book ooze with a comfortable petty-bourgeois Sunday-moralism. Perhaps he depends on this sort of bribe as his part of a bargain which allows him to re-write history to conform to present bourgeois policy (like Joseph E. Davies): he re-loads the Germans with total responsibility for the last war. And most significantly, he never discusses the two factors paramount in the judgment of and perspective for today's Germany: 1) the role of the British Empire as the greatest exploiter of men for over a century; and 2) the power of the German working class.—No, he is too occupied with such nonsense as "The Germans with their craving for polysyllabic names..."

Behind the moralistic chatter about the German beast-nation and the angelic desire of the Allies for international

cooperation, one smells the sweating body of the new American imperialism. The clients of Nizer the lawyer believe this: the ruling class of the Germans can no longer be trusted; therefore, their functions must be taken over by the rulers of the United Nations. Post-World War I mistakes will not be repeated. The inter-bellum indecision is resolved. The "peace" will be war, too.—And so the Germans are not, strictly speaking, human beings: "... the German people have ever been arch-conspirators against civilization." This is according to pattern, for in the official press the Japanese are considered sub-human—or at best, "little yellow bastards." In order to kill another human being his essential non-humanity or inhumanity must be assumed. We cannot kill ourselves, and killing is the order of the day.

DAVID T. BAZELON

THE AMERICAN SENATE AND WORLD PEACE. By Kenneth Colegrove. Vanguard. \$2.

This oversized pamphlet pleads for a constitutional amendment abolishing the provision requiring a two-thirds majority of the Senate to ratify treaties negotiated by the executive.

It might readily be granted that the outmoded machinery of the Senate is cumbersome for a rapidly developing American Imperialism. U. S. imperialism has become "world conscious" and is groping to adjust itself and the machinery of government to its new vistas. But rather trying in this book is the constant mixture of neo-imperialism and liberalism. "The United States Chamber of Commerce, the National Association of Manufacturers, the American Bankers' Association and other representatives of the business world are more tolerant of internationalism." And then; "With equal truth millions of soldiers and workers believe that this World War is a people's war... A people's peace requires: (1) that the universal settlement should promote exclusively the interests of the common man..." And again: "The new United Nations should serve as the vehicle for a global system of security... This should not preclude alliance of the Big Four, which have the responsibility for maintaining the monopoly of weapons..." (Note the delightful way of calling the monopoly of weapons a *responsibility*... the new "white man's burden.")

The tenor of the book is typical of the evolution of our totalitarian liberals. Once upon a time they started out with high resolves to make this war a crusade for democracy, now they are quite willing to settle for a military alliance of the Big Four.

As to the argument itself, it seems that Isolationism is dead as a force in American politics. Whatever the legal and constitutional methods used, it is certain that those whom a London paper recently called the "backwoods-men from Alabama" will not be able to seriously threaten the forward march of American imperialism. Debate will rather center around methods and direction of imperialist expansion (the Asia-South America group as against the European group, etc.) than around the old poles: Home market versus foreign expansion. Expansion has become a compelling economic necessity. Mr. Colegrove need not fear... the days of Cabot Lodge and Borah are definitely over.

LOUIS CLAIR

MAKE-UP-YOUR-MIND DEPARTMENT

2. The purposes of this war are or should be: (a) to overcome the fascist military threat; (b) to destroy the cause of fascism, and (c) to establish conditions leading to a world of peace, freedom and plenty.

—editorial in Common Sense, February 1944.

THE NEW COURSE. By Leon Trotsky. THE STRUGGLE FOR THE NEW COURSE. By Max Shachtman. New International Publishing Co. \$2.00.

Half of this little book is devoted to the first English translation of the famous articles with which Trotsky, in 1924, carried to the Bolshevik Party rank-and-file the fight against the rising Stalinist bureaucracy. *The New Course* is obviously of great importance as a historical document. It also furnishes fresh evidence, if any is needed, that Trotsky understood the uses of democracy better than most of his fellow Bolsheviks. It also suggests, however, that he might have understood them better. For all the shrewdness and rightness of his criticisms of the bureaucratization of the Party, Trotsky's pamphlet often seems superficial—as his *History* rarely does—because its author never grasped (never dared grasp, perhaps) the full historical threat of Stalinism. There is a curiously *defensive* stress throughout, especially curious in so veteran a polemist as Trotsky. (Campaigns, political or military, are rarely won on the defensive.) He defends his "Leninism," he defends himself against the charge of "underestimating the peasantry," he defends the Party youth, he defends—rather cautiously—the right to form political groups inside the Party. For Trotsky accepts what are, after all, the main political points: the sanctity of the Bolshevik Party and the necessity for its continuing, years after the Civil War, to monopolize state power. All he has to say about the latter is the single sentence: "We are the only party in the country and, in the period of the dictatorship, it could not be otherwise." Almost like a law of nature.

The latter half of the volume is devoted to Shachtman's analysis of the causes of the Stalinist degeneration and his theoretical speculations on the nature of present-day Soviet society. This is the most impressive intellectual performance to come out of the Trotskyist movement in a long time. The historical background to *The New Course* is done with honesty and realism, and shows a scholarly grasp of original materials. But the real contribution is the refutation of the notion that Russia is a "degenerated workers' state" which Trotsky held up to his death (pages 201-243). Shachtman brilliantly exposes the crucial miscalculation Trotsky made in the 1928-1930 period, when he predicted that Stalin, as a "centrist," would soon be brushed aside by either the socialist left or the capitalist right. Bukharin, representing the kulaks and Nepmen, seemed to Trotsky—who was constantly expecting a *capitalist* restoration—the real threat to socialist progress.

Shachtman's own theory is that Russia is a new form of class society, which he calls "bureaucratic collectivism." Collectivized property, he shows, is not decisive in itself:

When the proletariat takes state power . . . it wipes out the private ownership of the means of production and exchange by nationalizing them. They become *state property*. The proletariat . . . "owns" social property *only* by virtue of the fact that the state, which is the repository of the means of production and exchange, is in its hands, is *its* state. . . . The new state is not proletarian because it owns—has nationalized—property. Just the other way around: the nationalized property becomes socialistic . . . because the state that owns it is proletarian. . . . Where property is collectively or state owned, it means nothing to ask merely: who owns the property? . . . The meaningless answer is: the state, of course! Under such circumstances, the only meaningful question is: who owns the state that owns the property, that is, *who has political power?*

This unorthodox theory about Russia, which is also the position of Shachtman's Workers Party, logically leads to considerable revisions in other departments of Trotskyist theory. Shachtman does not follow the logic in this book, nor has he shaken off the old pious attitudes—he has a litany to Trotskyism on page 246 which echoes Trotsky's litany to Leninism on pages 55-6. But at least here is evidence that one wing of the Trotskyist movement is doing some fresh thinking about the events of the past two decades and is venturing to revise tradition in the interests of realism—and, I might add, of socialism.

DWIGHT MACDONALD

HOW TO THINK ABOUT WAR AND PEACE. By Mortimer J. Adler. Simon & Schuster. \$2.50.

No one who wants to understand the meaning of this war, and the problems that will confront us afterwards, can afford to read this little book. It is true that, as Clifton P. Fadiman writes in his introduction, the book is by no means easy reading. But for all its dull writing, *How to Think about War and Peace* is superficial. Mr. Adler once wrote a book called *How to Read a Book*. He should now read one called *How to Write a Book*.

D. M.

THE CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTOR AND THE LAW. By Julien Cornell. John Day. \$1.75.

Mr. Cornell, a New York lawyer and a Quaker C.O., has written a lucid and concise little book on the legal aspect of the treatment of C.O.'s in this country. This he has discussed carefully, judiciously and with a reasonable thoroughness. The result is a reference book, uninspired but useful.

The book's chief omission, and a very serious one, is any discussion of the punitive aspects of Civilian Public Service (except for the chapter on "Why Conscientious Objectors Are Not Paid"). The author is much too complacent about the seamier side of C.O. life. Under the present draft law sincere *religious* objectors are assigned to work camps all of which were, until recently, supervised and supported by religious groups. There is now one government camp, with a second being set up. The law provides for "work of national importance under civilian direction" but Selective Service has concerned itself less with "work" and "civilian direction" and much more with making of the camps punitive internment centers to soothe antagonistic public opinion and to salvage a few disheartened men for the medical corps. Although this application of the law has resulted in many leaving the camps for jail and in much criticism, not only in the pacifist press but in such periodicals as the *Christian Century*, Cornell reports "one of the main features of the law has worked well on the whole. This is the provision for work of national importance under civilian direction."

Many may believe that conscientious objection is of no importance to them or to America. The number in jails and in camps will probably not exceed ten thousand during this war—a very small minority, let them go their way. But in England the roster of objectors exceeds 60,000, in our own army they comprise a substantial part of the medical corps and throughout the world among civilians and soldiery alike there is speculation as to the efficacy of war. Thus this brief, simply written exposition finds a legitimate place among current commentaries on politics and religion.

JOHN HENRY DENTON

LIBERAL EDUCATION. By Mark van Doren. Henry Holt. \$2.50.

Mark van Doren's book and St. John's College in Annapolis for which it is the apologetic, have at once a perfect urgency and a complete irrelevance for the problems of American education and society. Their urgency is their insistence, against the blank ignorance, passionlessness, and satisfaction-with-front of Americans—their insistence that there is at least (not to speak of sublime or terrible things) a common plain reason and humane emotion possible to all men; these were not so neglected in other times and we may learn of them in classical works of science and art. In the end, and therefore potentially from the beginning, a man must come to the fundamental use and awareness of his powers and aims, or else die a fool. The philosophic knowledge of anything is the only kind that is concrete and central, concrete because it considers the causes, and central because it keeps things in proportion. All this van Doren states pretty well.

But must not this fundamental wisdom be discovered in the experience and the suffering that each man gets where he happens to be thrown by his situation, his character, and his luck; and is not the education and social problem, therefore, to humanize those chancy trials so something *can* be learned from them, and the man not be merely pacified or overcome? Verbal propositions do not help, especially if they are really simple, true, and important; more likely they inhibit courage. Even in Plato's *Republic*, where the trials of life were made ideal and educational thru and thru, the brightest persons never got to the common science till the age of 20 to 30, after their practical arts and military service, and they never got to common wisdom till 30 to 35. But these are the two divisions of the St. John's books, designed for boys half way thru high school. Is it not just such a program that Plato attacks when he speaks of the disastrous results of giving boys the ideas to verbalize with?

The American situation is far more desperate than that of the Greeks, for Americans of all ages, by means of their political and economic institutions, have learned remarkably to avoid the sting of any serious, comic, or lyric word. Van Doren recognizes this when he describes their behavior at a movie or the debasement of rhetoric to advertising; yet is he not catering to their dear habits of avoidance when he proposes to inure them from their youth to the poison of the classics? If only they are accustomed to the sounds, they may later not be embarrassed by the meanings. Thanks to St. John's and the publications of Bennett Cerf they may yet be able to hear even truth without flinching, as they pursue their world-wide adventure.

It is said that the improvement of society and education is circular, for the society determines the education but the education can help change the society. This is true when the society is not debauched, vitaminized, immunized. But in America every reform is a new bulwark against human nature. Then precisely the opposite of what van Doren proposes may be relevant: not to teach the liberal arts in order to irradiate and harmonize the industrial and social life, but to corrupt the economic and social conventions with private questions, animal temptations, and insubordinate behavior, not without sitdowns and recalcitrance. Mark van Doren and Ignazio Silone are both concerned to get to the basic humane words; but Silone teaches us to begin again with the little band of natural friends and the words for bread and water.

What then? Is there another pedagogic system in the field obviously preferable to van Doren's Great Learning? I do not think so. St. John's is quite a good school, as

schools go. But to my mind, we can accomplish nothing of major educational importance unless we reject the idea of schools altogether. Van Doren urges us to talk seriously about education, but this possibility he does not even envisage.

PAUL GOODMAN

The Intelligence Office

This is designed to be an informal department where information of interest to POLITICS readers may be briefly, factually presented. Readers are invited to send in items, and also to express themselves in letters-to-the-editor, which will also appear in this column.—ED.

We may begin this column with a few words on the reception of POLITICS, Vol. 1, No. 1. The response has far surpassed the most optimistic expectations of the Business Manager, and even of the Editor (occupationally an optimist). A lot of mail and word-of-mouth comment has been received on the issue, most of it favorable. The chief objection has been to the cover, which is widely felt to be too black and funereal. (The amount of black has been considerably reduced on this issue.) The general tenor of comments has been that POLITICS has been needed a long time.

Readers of Conrad Lynn's brief in the Winfred Lynn Case—the only court test yet made of the anti-discrimination clause in the 1940 Draft Act—will be interested to know that on February 3, last, the Federal Circuit Court of Appeals in New York City handed down its decision. Although the decision upheld the Government, it was favorable to Lynn in two respects. (1) One of the three justices dissented in Lynn's favor, which will make it easier to get the Supreme Court to hear the case. (2) The Court unanimously rejected the Government's contention that because Lynn was inducted as a draft delinquent therefore he did not go in under a regular Negro quota and hence the case did not raise the issue of discrimination in selection; the Court dismissed this as a technicality and stated that the case does raise the central issue of draft segregation. Arthur Garfield Hays has announced the case will be brought before the Supreme Court as soon as possible.

The Federation of Modern Painters and Sculptors, founded in 1940 by dissident members of the Artists' Congress who were fed up with the Stalinist complexion of that group, has violently attacked the Museum of Modern Art, in New York City, as having become "an enervating influence rather than a stimulus to the more inventive artists of America". The Federation charges that the Museum selects the work of living American artists "on such superficial grounds as fantasy, romance, and (most of all) geographical and regional interest". It deplores the Museum's "sacrifice of seriousness of purpose for publicity" and criticises the Museum's current exhibition of Romantic American Painting "in which the more important works are of a quality usually encountered in small-town Victorian reading-rooms".

The Museum to date has made no direct reply to these charges. The *N. Y. Times* critic, Edward Aiden Jewell, a

veteran conservative in art matters, has come to the Museum's aid in a long and incredibly naive account of its good deeds. The Museum hit a new low in polemical methods by sending to each member of the Federation an inquiry, with reply-paid postcard enclosed, as to whether he or she had or had not seen the Federation's letter before it was mailed.

The movement for a Labor Party which began last summer in the Michigan CIO is not dead, as seemed to be the case until recently. The Michigan Committee for the Promotion of a Farmer-Labor Party has issued a call for a conference to be held at the Book-Cadillac Hotel in Detroit on March 4 and 5. Temporary Chairman of the Committee is Matthew Hammond, president of the big West Side Tool and Die Local 157 of the United Automobile Workers. The call is signed by an impressive list of labor leaders, including Paul Silver, head of Local 351, UAW; Emil Mazey, head of Briggs Local 212, UAW; Merrill Case, of the American Federation of Teachers; and Tucker P. Smith, vice-president of the Michigan CIO Council. There will be speakers from the American Labor Party, the Canadian Commonwealth Federation and similar groups.

The Cigarette Factory, or Further Adventures of Mary

Dear X:

Since I last wrote you (see "A letter from Petersburg, Va.", in the February *POLITICS*), I have a job in the Brown & Williamson cigarette factory here. It is a day job, 6:30 A.M. to 4:00 P.M. weekdays, Saturdays only to 10:30 A.M. And I make \$25 a week after all deductions, which is getting on toward civilization. I never worked in a factory before, so I found it exciting for a week. The machines are monsters—you drop tobacco into a big hopper, and the next instant thousands of cigarettes come flying out. I could not get over it. The machine never makes a mistake but every once in a while it gets mad and sprays cigarettes in all directions. There is another kind of machine that puts the cigs in packages. This machine is a stool-pigeon, for if you have left any faulty ones in the tray, the machine stops, reaches out a large, bony iron hand and taps on your number—a card fastened above it. It always knows whose fault it is. I have never seen anything like this, and I think it has gone too far.

I make English cigarettes. The machine bites snarls and cuts so you have to be careful. The noise is unspeakable and I haven't been able to understand a word my fellow-workers or foremen have said for the past two weeks. For all I know I may have been fired long ago. They often come over and bellow into my ear (a bellow in a Southern accent is absolutely unintelligible) and I always either smile and nod, or smile and shake my head. I have seen the 3 foremen together in a little group—they look at me and seem puzzled—but I go on doing what is known as catching cigarettes.

The place is 100% unionized—I join it next week. I don't like the way you are threatened when you get the job. "You *have* to join the union," they start off. I nod and smile. "Do you hear? You *have* to join the union." I jump up and down clapping my hands. "If you don't join the union—out you go." I can't convince them that I *want* to join the Union. Perhaps these are the correct Southern union tactics, but they make it sound so ominous that some people don't take jobs here.

Best regards,

MARY

RUSSIA AND EUROPEAN PROGRESS

SIR:

Louis Clair is too quick to dismiss the hopes some radicals derive from the prospect of industrialization and agrarian revolution in Eastern Europe under Stalin's aegis ("Stalin's Policy in Europe," *Politics*, No. 1, Vol. I). "What value," he asks, "is attached to technical and economic development if it is coupled with the physical destruction of all progressive independent forces, if it is linked with a reaction throwing culture back beyond the period of the Enlightenment?" I hope no one will accuse me of being a Stalinist sympathizer if I remark that the problem is not quite as simple as that. It demands some of the unpleasantly bloodless thinking which is obligatory for Marxists.

Industrialization and agrarian revolution in Eastern Europe would inevitably raise production—whether for consumers' goods or military purposes. If enough of production were devoted to the former, the standard of living would rise, and politics and culture would eventually be liberalized. This flows from a Marxist tenet by which all liberalism in social relations is historically explained. (Or will it be claimed that liberalism reflects the free market relations of pre-monopoly capitalism?) It seems to me that to contradict this tenet is to assert the compelling force of inherent evil and omnipotence of the past. And to maintain that nothing good can conceivably come of Stalinism amounts to the same thing.

Marxism asserts that men oppress each other when there are not enough goods to go around, and those who possess find it necessary to protect their possessions and their exploitative means of acquiring them from those who do not possess. There is no oppression in some primitive societies because the means of production are so elementary that no individual's labor can be spared, or because the material level of culture is so low that the exploiters require a relatively small share of social labor power to satisfy their demands.

The question Mr. Clair ought to have asked is whether or not the industrialization of Eastern Europe would eventually raise its standard of living. This would entail the question of the stability of international relations in post-war Europe: will the demands of armament deflect too much production from consumers' goods? Or will the exploitative accumulation of capital goods that industrialization and reconstruction make necessary tend to keep the standard of living down for too long a period? On the other hand, is there a possibility that an increase in production and productivity, coupled with the slackening of foreign danger, may release the socialist tendencies which Trotsky said lay locked in Soviet economy? Will the absence of the profit motive be enough to cause the bureaucracy to disappear, once there is plenty? Or will its violent overthrow still be necessary?

Again, is a post-war union of Germany and Russia something the working class can view with hope—in the failure of the socialist revolution to materialize quickly enough? Certainly such a union, if free from the danger of interference by a third party, would raise the standard of living in most of Europe and result possibly in the expropriation of German capitalism. Or is nothing very much to be hoped from an imposed, an imperialist socialism?

Of course, Stalin will muzzle, imprison, or execute all bona fide working-class leaders and liberals in any country he gets control of. Such would be the immediate cost of Stalinism to Eastern Europe, as it has been and still is to Russia itself. But is it too heartless to hazard that this

sacrifice may be redeemed by historical forces which Stalin himself may set in motion and be powerless to control for his own ends?

There are no certain answers to any of these questions, but one should at least be aware of them in undertaking to speculate, as Mr. Clair does, on Stalin's post-war policy.

CLEMENT GREENBERG

New York City

SIR:

We live in a period in which progressive political action of the working class is on the order of the day. If this were not so, then Stalin's absorption of Europe, just as Japan's Eastern co-prosperity sphere or Hitler's Fortress Europe might in a sense be called technically "progressive". In this sense Japan's absorption of Manchuria or Italy's rape of Abyssinia might be called "progressive"—and yet, all liberals and radicals opposed them. It is possible that in the very long run all these solutions might lead to a rise of productivity and even of the standard of living in these areas. However, those who think that the working class contains enough latent energies to solve its own problems are not compelled to choose lesser evils; they leave this to those who believe with Burnham that our period is doomed to the rule of the managers with no chances for a socialist revolution.

Russian domination of Europe would mean the rooting out of all conscious socialist forces and the end of a century old culture and tradition, leaving us with a mere hope for some new movement to rise some day. Yet we cannot view political problems *sub specie aeternitatis*. We are concerned with the fate of socialist forces, with the fate of the working class here and now.

Mr. Greenberg asks whether higher productivity does not mean higher living standards. Isn't it already obvious that the post-war world will be dominated by imperialist rivalries of a few gigantic power blocks—of which Russia is one? In such a situation, war economy is a normal feature and no significant rise of the standard of living is possible. It is quite vain to speculate on a situation in which the threat of war does not exist; a world domination of one power does not seem to be in view.

Moreover, Mr. Greenberg does not realize the huge economic waste constituted by the upkeep of an immense parasitic ruling class (and its police force) which would require a very important share of the national product. Also, a Russian bureaucracy would rule Europe and its main purpose would necessarily be to keep the outer fringes of the Empire in a state of dependency (as did all conquerors). The center of gravity must remain in Russia proper; therefore development in the dominated areas cannot be allowed to outstep the center. The Nazi's have shown us the results of such a policy.

It is mechanistic to assert that if there are enough goods to go around oppression will automatically cease. Political superstructures often continue for long periods although the material basis to which they originally owed their rise have long disappeared. Change is not brought about merely thru the automatic working of economic forces but requires conscious intervention. Furthermore, a ruling class might very well realize that the raising of the standard of living of the ruled spells danger for its domination, and act accordingly. In a planned economy no longer governed by the laws of competition there remains no incentive to continue economic expansion if the needs of the rulers are fully satisfied and there is no exterior threat. This would

mean a century long stagnation. Chinese history is a case in point.

If the conscious socialist forces are liquidated, if the carriers of socialist ideology are executed, a new Dark Age, not a Renaissance, is in store.

LOUIS CLAIR

New York City

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Coming in "Politics":

Kurt List: *The Music of Soviet Russia*

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