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Table of Contents

	Page
Proletarian Literature in America By Haim Kantorovitch	3
The American Trade Union Movement By James Oneal	12
The German Situation By Siegfried Lipschitz	23
Concerning Fusion By David P. Berenberg	33
The Results of the Five Year Plan By A. Jugow	39
The International Socialist Youth Movement By August Tyler	49
Books Reviewed	57
Krieg und Demokratie (War and Democracy) By Karl Kautsky Reviewed by Joseph Shaplen	
Farewell to Reform By John Chamberlain Reviewed by David P. Berenberg	60
Poem By David P. Berenberg	62
Index to Volume 1, 1932	63

Proletarian Literature in America

HAIM KANTOROVITCH

IN American literary history, 1932 will be remembered as the year in which a small, but noisy, group of American writers discovered the name of Karl Marx. Some may think they discovered more than the name. But this is a mistake. With the possible exception of one (V. F. Calverton) no one of this group has shown in his writings that he has understood what Marxism stands for. Some of them probably have read Marx. Mr. Edmund Wilson expressly said that he had; some of them may be able to quote Marx, but none of them has as yet shown himself capable of applying the Marxian method either to literature, or to anything else.

Marxism is above everything else a method. To be able to repeat what Marx said is of no value. For those who do naught but quote from Marx and do not know how to use the Marxian method, Marxism is nothing but an old, though honored, dogma to be piously repeated. They have an easy job. Whenever a problem confronts them, all they have to do is to look up the "Holy Scriptures", and see what Marx said about it. The trouble with this kind of Marxism is that in Marx, as in every great and versatile thinker, one may find quotations for or against almost anything. In our time, when we are confronted with so many problems about which Marx never dreamed, most of the quotations must be construed and interpreted. Some "Marxists" are so skilful in construing and interpreting, that Marx himself would not be able to recognize his own creation. It is sufficient to recall to what extent quotations from Marx were used by the Mensheviks against the Bolsheviks and vice versa! The books of both warring factions fairly bristle with quotations. The trouble is that quotations neither prove nor disprove anything.

The American Socialist Quarterly

Living Marxism is not a set of dogmas to be quoted like the scripture. It is a method to be applied from day to day. The important thing is not to find out what Marx said, or would have said, but to be able to look at the passing show of life from a Marxian point of view. What would be the first thing that a Marxian critic in America would have to do? He would have to take American literature, past and present, and analyze it with the view of finding out what the social and economic forces were that produced it; what the social and economic forces were that determined its evolution, one way or another; what class ideology and class aspirations it reflects. The Marxian critic would not come to the writer with demands. He would give no ultimatums. He knows well that such demands are vain. No artist has ever consciously chosen either his way, or his philosophy. The artist is under an unconscious psychological compulsion. His "way" grows on him. And of his philosophy, and especially of the social and economic implications latent in his philosophy, of their class character, he is usually unconscious. Most writers become indignant when told that they give expression in their art to the moods, longings, fears and aspirations of this or that economic class. Their indignation proves nothing. Art is a social product and so is the artist. Art does not merely reflect life; it reflects life from a certain angle. In our class-divided society it really means from the angle of some one social class. But the artist is right in his indignation when he is told that he consciously represents this or that class. Though there may be some exceptions, especially among proletarian artists, this is usually not the case. The deeper, the real motivation behind the artist's art are hidden somewhere deep down in his unconsciousness. It remains for the Marxian critic to dig them out and bring them to light.

This requires hard and responsible work. Our new-fangled Marxists have, instead, chosen the easier road. They content themselves by demanding: Give us proletarian art! Give us proletarian literature! And they believe that simply by demanding what they want, have they done their duty as Marxists! They seem to believe that the only thing necessary

Proletarian Literature in America

to divert the literature of a nation into new and different channels, is to convince the writers that they must begin to treat other subjects in a new way. If the writers will only listen to their demands, everything will be all right; if not, well then, they are social fascists!

What really happens when a writer decides to violate his own native talent and writes as demanded may be illustrated by two glaring instances. Michael Gold is undoubtedly a good and pious Communist. He certainly would wish to create proletarian literature. But his talent lies in a different direction. The only really worth while thing he has done is his "Jews Without Money", and there is not a trace of proletarianism in this book. It is through and through petit-bourgeois in ideology as well as in execution. But Mr. Gold has also written other things. He has written consciously proletarian stories. They may have great value as communist propaganda, but as stories they do not amount to anything. Mr. Edmund Wilson has very aptly called them Sunday school stories.

And here is Sherwood Anderson, who has, it seems, decided to leave Winesburg, Ohio, to see what he can do with proletarians, strikes, communists, etc. The result is "Beyond Desire", the most inferior thing that Anderson has ever done. Anderson knows Winesburg, Ohio. It is in his blood. But, he knows nothing either about the class-struggle or about the revolting proletarian. He has some kind of hazy, vague idea of what he thinks is communism, and this is enough for him not only to give his name to communist statements of which he knows nothing, but also to write a novel about communists. Having to make some kind of a compromise with his former self, he filled one half of his book with the usual erotic and neurotic personages, and one half with communists. If his neurotics of "Beyond Desire" are nothing but shadows, his communists are even less than that. Let us look at Anderson's communists.

At the very beginning we at once meet with an Andersonian communist. It concerns a girl, a school teacher. "She has become a sincere red. She thought there was something

The American Socialist Quarterly

beyond desire, but that you had to satisfy desire and understand and appreciate the wonders of desire first."

The revolution will have to wait for that school teacher. How long the revolution will have to wait for this "sincere red" no one can tell. First of all she must "satisfy desire and understand and appreciate the wonders of desire." At the opening of the novel we find her "trying out" Neil Bradley. She told Neil that she had "tried out" two other men before she came to him. "All the way?" the Communist Babbit asks with awe. "Sure," she said, and if she finds Neil satisfactory, this sincere red will actually "marry him".

Neil is himself a red. He looks at his approaching marriage from a purely revolutionary point of view. "Why not?" he asked. He said people had to prepare themselves. The revolution was coming. When it came it was going to demand strong and quiet people willing to work, not just noisy ill prepared people. He thought every woman ought to begin by finding her man, at any cost, and that every man ought to make the search for the woman" (p. 9).

This then is what Anderson's "reds" are going to do for the revolution. They will first of all find their men and women, and then produce the "strong and quiet people" that are necessary for the revolution.

The book however is mainly the story of "Red", a respectable middle class student, who during vacation goes to work in a mill. "Red" would never have stumbled into a strikers' camp, and certainly never have thought of sacrificing himself for the workers' cause, had not Ethel driven him to despair. She had slept with him once as an experiment and wanted him no more. In "olden times" he would either have committed suicide or found another girl. But we are living in a revolutionary epoch, so out of despair "Red" wanders off to a strikers' camp. The strikers, their camp, their struggles are depicted by Anderson in a purely "Daily Worker" fashion. When Red goes there he does not know what to do.

"Lord, he thought, I am here, in this place now. How did I get here? Why did I let myself get here?"

Proletarian Literature in America

And at the most decisive moment, when Red, unknowingly, unconsciously and unwillingly gives his life for the workers he debates with himself thus:—

“He had wanted to come to the communist camp. No he hadn’t, yes he had. He sat quarreling with himself as he had been doing for days. If I could only be sure of myself, he thought.” (p. 255.)

And that is all! Anderson blundered into a field that is alien to his own, a world about which he has not the slightest idea. And the result is “Beyond Desire”, a book that Anderson himself will probably want to forget as soon as he can. To demand from Sherwood Anderson proletarian literature is neither wise nor just. Anderson could not give what is not in him; neither can Gold, nor any other writer. When the proletarian artist comes along, he will be proletarian even if he has never heard of the “Modern Quarterly”. The problem for the Marxian critic is not how to make the naturally non-proletarian writers become proletarians, but to interpret the American writer from a Marxian standpoint, to find what Plekhanov designated as the sociological equivalent in artistic creation. With the exception of V. F. Calverton’s book “The Liberation of American Literature”, which does not seem to be very popular among these “Marxists”, no attempt has been made to apply the Marxian method to the analysis of American literature. They have contented themselves with laying down demands. A poem or a story needs merely to flaunt the catch-phrases of the communist movement to be declared the artistic expression of the class-struggle. A host of talentless novelists and poets made good use of this “new fad” and had their worthless “creations” published in the “New Masses” and other such magazines. And people who otherwise know how to distinguish art from trash somehow believe that “art” like the “New Masses” poetry, for instance, is of any value. Here is a fair example of this “proletarian art”:

Ai Ai

Manchuria is a house of slaughter

Chiang Kai-Chek has betrayed China

The American Socialist Quarterly

*The brave Nineteenth Route Army is become an old woman
Pu Yi dances to Tokyo's tune
Ai Ai*

(A. HAYES)

And here is another:

*Alabama, Alabama,
You have heard
The white workers' word;
Let the sound strike the ground
Of the South till it cowers:
These nine—who are black,
Give them back—they are ours!
White boss of Alabama,
Give them back without a hair
Burned upon the bloody chair,
Alabama!*

(ORRICK JOHNS)

The sentiments expressed in this poetry may be very fine, they may be even in complete correspondence with the Communist program, they may even be very proletarian, but they have nothing in common with art, and proletarian art must first of all be art, or it is useless in spite of its proletarianism.

The truth is that the so-called Marxian group discovered not Marxism but Communism, which they confuse with Marxism. The Marxian view of art is however an entirely different thing from the Communist view of art. What perversion the Communists have brought into Marxism is a very interesting subject in itself, and must be treated separately, but the official Communist view on art is not even a perversion of Marxism. It has nothing to do with it.

For the Marxist, art is a given social product, a part of social ideology which he wants to interpret from his point of view. When he has succeeded in finding "the sociological equivalent of the artistic creation", and he happens not to agree with it, or he thinks it even dangerous, he will certainly try to combat it. He will not combat the "artistic creation"

Proletarian Literature in America

but the "sociological equivalent". An artist giving expression to reactionary ideas, will nevertheless remain an artist. A proletarian disagreeing with the bourgeois ideas of a poet, will nevertheless enjoy his poetry, if poetry it is. Of course, the Marxist would like to see a great poet, or a great novelist, or a great painter come along, and give artistic expression to the moods, ideals, longings and aspirations of the working class. He believes that with the growth of the revolutionary movement, with the growth of the working class as a social power, such artists are bound to come. But, he also knows that the coming of this proletarian artist is not dependent upon editorials, or appeals, or the calling of names.

The Marxist is careful to distinguish between art dealing with proletarians or even with the proletarian movement, and proletarian art. To demand that the artist treat social themes, that he reflect social life and social struggles, has nothing to do either with Marxism or with proletarian art, though it may be of importance in itself. The Marxist may join in this demand, but he certainly has no monopoly on it.

The Communist view of art is entirely different. He demands that art should put itself at the service, not of the working class, but of the Communist party; not of the Communist ideal, but of the daily tasks of the Communist party. The artist is expected to "do his bit" in whatever daily campaign the party happens to be engaged. The critic is expected to do the same. The result is cheap, worthless propaganda of the "New Masses" kind instead of Marxian criticism.

Among the entire group of the new Marxists Mr. V. F. Calverton is both more prolific as well as more true to the Marxian method. His book "The Liberation of American Literature" is the only real contribution of this school to the understanding of American literature. Of course, the book has its faults. It is overstuffed with quotations. It is sprinkled all over with Communist "catch phrases" that really have nothing to do with the subject treated in the book (as if he could hope to soften William Z. Foster's heart by such meaningless repetitions of the "Daily Worker" "beauties"). Some of his historical facts seem to be incorrect. Nevertheless, it is

The American Socialist Quarterly

the one book which approaches the history of American literature from a Marxist standpoint using, often very successfully, the Marxian method of analysis. Mr. Calverton also well understands and warns his readers that "proletarian writers are not to be confused with literary rebels," that a proletarian writer is not one who is either himself a proletarian or writes about proletarians, but one who is "imbued with a proletarian ideology instead of a bourgeois one. They are writers who have adopted the revolutionary point of view, and who try to express that ideology in their work."

In spite of his realistic and often sober view on this subject, even Mr. Calverton is not immune to the official Communist optimism on the subject of proletarian literature. In his article "Can we have a proletarian literature?" he says:

"American literature in the midst of its wanderings in the wilderness has been struck suddenly by a proletarian bombshell. It is still shivering from the shock."

Struck by a proletarian bombshell! That bombshell can not be anything else but the accomplishments of proletarian literature. Articles, or appeals, for proletarian literature, if they are not followed by literary accomplishments, can certainly not be the bombshell that could strike any literature. What then are the accomplishments of proletarian literature in America? In his "Liberation of American Literature" Mr. Calverton recounts the success of proletarian literature in the following words.

"In the main stream of the proletarian tradition today are to be found a fresh group of authors who have supplanted the earlier dominancy of Eastman and Dell."

Max Eastman and Floyd Dell are thus put among the "have beens". And who are those in the forefront of the "proletarian tradition" today?

"In the creative field this leadership has been seized by such novelists as John Dos Passos, Michael Gold, and Charles Yale Harrison."

Proletarian Literature in America

And this is the beginning and the end of the accomplishments of American proletarian literature; and this is the bombshell that struck American literature!

It is interesting to hear what Dos Passos has to say on this subject:

"Theodore Dreiser is, and has been for many years, a great American proletarian writer. He has the world picture, the limitations, and the soundness of the average American worker, and expresses them darn well. Sherwood Anderson does too. So did Jack London. We have had a proletarian literature for years, and are about the only country that has. It hasn't been a revolutionary literature, exactly, though it seems to me that Walt Whitman's a hell of a lot more revolutionary than any Russian poet I've ever heard of."

(The Modern Quarterly, Summer 1932, "Whither the American Writer",
a Questionnaire.)

Dos Passos is of course wrong, whereas Mr. Calverton is right when he declares both Dreiser and Anderson to be petit bourgeois writers—but then Dos Passos is the only real ace that Mr. Calverton could produce!

Will we have a proletarian literature in America? Undoubtedly, but as yet there is no trace of it.

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The American Trade Union Movement

JAMES ONEAL

SO long as American trade unions continue conservative policies the trade union question is certain to occupy the attention of Socialists. To the novice the problem is simple and the solution is equally simple. Union conservatism shocks him. If there is a special group organized to "save" the unions he is likely to join it and become one of the saviors.

That the conservative views of union leaders and members do not measure up to the best interests of the working class, that they are harmful to the members, is obvious. The novice becomes bitter and says what he thinks of the leaders, and what he thinks is not creditable to them nor to the rank and file. If there is a factional struggle within the union he concludes that he must get into the fight with the insurgents ranged against the leaders and their following. He wants to get rid of the "betrayers" and help the "progressive" side. So he plunges in.

If he is a Socialist he may want the party to enter the factional war either openly or covertly. If he cannot drag the party into it he becomes sour and talks of the party's "conservatism." That the struggle is a fight *between* workers and not *against* the exploiting class, that it may ruin the union and disarm the members before the common enemy, either does not concern the novice or he does not think of it. Professional outside "strategists" may appear on the scene to lead the rebellion. They gather material to show that some leaders are corrupt or dishonest and very often they are correct. Blistering manifestoes are written by the "strategists" which are countered by shells from the enemy trenches. Occasionally, the war is waged to exhaustion but in no single instance has any enduring progressive union of national scope been built by these methods.

The American Trade Union Movement

The miners in the past ten years have witnessed no less than a half-dozen such insurgent movements, an average of at least one every two years, and they are no nearer a progressive unionism today than they were a decade ago. Another such crusade is on in Illinois and we may safely predict that it will have no better result. In some instances Socialists, in others the I. W. W., the Communists, and the Conference for Progressive Labor Action, have tried to bring a progressive trade unionism out of such conflicts and as a rule they have failed. The main result of outside intervention has been to prolong factional war, to leave the workers divided and to prostrate the union before the exploiters.

Communists have thrust themselves into more of these inner union conflicts than any other group and no group is more hated and more completely isolated from the workers they want to reach than the Communist Party and its camouflaged auxiliaries. As a result, in many unions it is enough to ascribe a genuine progressive proposal to a Communist origin to insure that the members will not even listen to it. Intervention has strengthened conservatism and discredited anything progressive.

Strategists not only appear with slogans and plans for inner union fights; they are also sketching ready-made charts of a new unionism. They are getting back to Father Haggerty's "Wheel of Fortune" of 1905 which plotted all industries in the United States in terms of departments, unions and sub-unions fitted into an arbitrary scheme. It was as alluring to the novice then as the Fourier Phalanx was to the novice in the 'forties, but both Wheel and Phalanx are today curios of history.

The writer has heard that in upstate New York a Socialist grocer has designed another wheel for the unions and last October two party branches in Illinois decided on the kind of a union the miners should have and instructed its miner members to work for it. If a union were to instruct its Socialist members to work within the Socialist Party for non-partisan political action and held these Socialist union member to a strict accounting if they refused to carry out

The American Socialist Quarterly

these instructions, we would have a parallel to the action of the two party branches in Illinois. Would party members accept this intervention of the union in party affairs and would they retain those union members? If the union members failed to carry out their union instructions in the party, would the union be justified in expelling them?

Whatever may be the answer, it will involve the advocate of party intervention in the unions in a dilemma. He is compelled to support party intervention in the unions and oppose union intervention in the party. This also brings out his real point of view. The organized workers are regarded as irresponsible human beings that must be led. The union democracy which he claims as his aim is rejected at the very outset of his crusade. His view does not differ from the one ascribed to the conservative leaders. Both think in terms of leaders to lead a mass that is considered incapable of directing itself. The "saviour" and the conservative leader have no confidence in the members.

This whole approach is basically wrong and opposed to the Socialist conception of the working class and the trade unions. A typical representative of this view is A. J. Muste who two years ago was confident that he was going to "save" the Illinois miners. In the *Labor Age* for October, 1930, he wrote:

The very fact that the moment you criticise certain officials and policies, many people jump a hundred miles in the air is itself evidence that there you have touched the real crux of the problem, that you are taking a position that means something. Everybody will speak well of you, or at least leave you alone, as long as you stay away from the essential point and leave the powers that be quite safe in their seats.

This view is pathetically infantile. Muste does not understand the elementary psychology of human approach. Just "hurt" the leaders or those you want to win, make them "jump a hundred miles in the air," and you will make progress. It does not occur to Muste that if he "hurts" others, then the others will be inclined to "hurt" him and instead of establishing a reasoning contact both will be digging a chasm.

No man was more capable of "hurting" those who disagreed with him than Daniel DeLeon. He often made his

The American Trade Union Movement

opponents "jump a hundred miles in the air." To an attack by DeLeon, Samuel Gompers replied in the *American Federationist*, August, 1898:

We shall now merely outline certain incidents which have recently developed in this moribund concern, conceived by iniquity and brutal concubinage with labor's double enemy, greed and ignorance, fashioned into an embryonic, phthisical dwarf, born in corruption and filth and now dying, surrounded by the vultures of its own progeny, ready to pounce on the emaciated carcass of the corpse.

DeLeon made Gompers "jump" and Gompers made DeLeon "jump" for many years. The members of the unions read much of what Gompers wrote of DeLeon and little of what DeLeon wrote of Gompers, but what they read widened the gulf between the Socialist movement and the organized working class. Both DeLeon and Gompers remained "safe in their seats" and the rank and file of their respective organizations remained poles apart as the result of "hurting" each other.

The interventionists of all types do not understand that the union group that needs outside leadership is incapable of inside responsibility. If it is informed and capable it will have no need of outside guidance. Moreover, if it is so lacking in ability that it consents to be led by an outside "strategist," it may be easily misled by that "strategist" or by some other one. The outsider looks upon the human material of the union as clay to be shaped by him; the Socialist looks to that same material to shape its own destiny and regards himself as an educational agent to help it realize this aim.

The above considerations are basic to an understanding of the problem and it is important to stress them because many messiahs have emerged in recent years whose mission it is to "save" the organized working class. They think that they are progressive, but in net results they are reactionary and as a type always have been. To the extent that an outsider functions inside a union he is like a splinter in the flesh—a source of irritation and soreness. As a high-hatter out-

The American Socialist Quarterly

side, he looks down at the workers with a "leadership" complex.

What is lacking in all of these attitudes? Simply, recognition of the fact that if the unions are to become progressive the members must accomplish the change and that the change must be preceded by education of the members so that they will want the change. Any change not based on this education cannot be enduring. Too often an insurgent movement after being successful has turned out to be no more progressive than the regime it displaced. Subsequent events show that it lacked the basic educational preparation that would have given it an enduring character. Mere siding with a group in some factional quarrel of union members who themselves are not intellectually prepared for more progressive unionism is largely wasted energy.

One instance of a progressive unionism emerging from an inner union conflict is that of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers in 1914. It was not the creation of outside "strategists" or of party intervention. It was due to years of that educational preparation which I am stressing as a basic essential to the emergence of a genuine progressive unionism. Socialists were the most important factor in that educational preparation. For at least ten years the Amalgamated was the outstanding example of advanced unionism. If it has slipped back somewhat it is in part due to neglect of continuing that education that made it the inspiring union it has been.

In this article I have mainly considered the psychology of approach as it is fundamental to the job which confronts Socialists. Policies, methods and educational work are also important problems but they cannot be considered in the same article. However, with the unions facing the greatest economic disaster in their history some of the leaders and a restless rank and file are sounding a new note that is encouraging. The fight for unemployment insurance itself in every state provides a splendid opportunity for cooperation with the unions. We should offer that cooperation as a workingmen's organization desiring to help workingmen. This measure is of interest to the whole working class, organized and unor-

The American Trade Union Movement

ganized, and if we approach our duty and our task as Socialists should we will find old barriers to understanding and cooperation crumbling. If we try the role of "strategists" or high-hatters we will remain where we are, without influence and largely isolated from the proletariat whose cooperation and understanding are as important to our growth as our cooperation and understanding are to them.

Another consideration before we pass on to the practical problems that confront Socialists. Unlike a working class party, the trade unions must recruit workers regardless of their political, economic and religious beliefs or there can be no solidarity of organized workers in a struggle with the exploiters of labor. Denial of this basic essential of economic organization of the working class would justify separate organization of Protestants, Catholics, Agnostics, Democrats, Socialists, Republicans, and so on. To be effective the union in composition must include workers of all these varying beliefs.

On the other hand it is the duty of the Socialists through agitation to educate the union members to the necessity of having a class party of their own and to give up the folly of dividing their votes between two parties representing their class enemies. How best to win the members to this policy is the main problem of Socialists, for once it is accomplished union psychology is emancipated from capitalistic views and further progress is possible.

One method of accomplishing this aim was followed by the Socialist Labor Party, the American Labor Union, the Socialists who founded the I. W. W., and is now being followed by the Progressive Miners in Illinois and always with sterile results. That policy is secession from the existing unions. The live and progressive spirits are taken out of the unions, leaving conservatism unchallenged within the unions. It is like performing an operation on a human head; remove the brains of a man and then complain that he does not act in behalf of his own best interests. This operation has been performed on the trade union movement several times and yet there are those who express surprise that organizations

The American Socialist Quarterly

that have been deprived of their progressive elements have not been progressive.

However, like all basic principles of action one can also over-stress this one. As a general principle secession and dual unionism mean disaster, but a special situation may arise when it may be necessary. The same thing is true regarding political action. Socialists insist on political action as a basic form of working class struggle but in some revolutionary crisis when capitalist institutions are crumbling and the situation demands immediate action we would be stupid to wait for the next election. That would be to permit reaction to take the initiative and an opportunity would be lost. But what would be justified in an unusual situation, secessionists have raised to the plane of a general principle. Most secession movements in this country have come to nothing but disappointment because their sponsors have misjudged the situation that confronted them. The fact that secession is as a rule also followed by war between the old and the new unions and has sapped their energy is another reason why it should be rarely approved.

The duty of the Socialist member of a union cannot be defined in relation to every problem that comes up in the union, but there are certain principles that he should keep in mind as a good Socialist and a good unionist. As we have seen above, he can be both but not if the union directs his course in the party or the party directs his course in the union. In either case an outside organization determines the action of a member in another organization and conflict between both organizations is inevitable.

Some party members are eager for the party to direct the actions of its members in the unions and this is urged because they assert that some members do not measure up to their duties in the unions. Indeed, I have heard in recent years that a party member here and there has been implicated in undemocratic practices in the unions and that a member or members are known to have supported or urged the support of capitalist candidates in elections.

Such instances present no difficult problem to the party.

The American Trade Union Movement

Any party member who knows of any other party member guilty of such non-Socialist conduct owes it to the party to bring the matter up through the proper party channels. If a member has knowledge of such actions and does not bring it up in the party his silence makes him an accomplice of the offending member. Such actions are personal and imply personal guilt. If proven against any party member he should forfeit his membership.

Broad and general accusations of this character are harmful and throw suspicion upon every party member in the union where it is alleged such actions are being committed. Innocent members should not be left under such a cloud. The comrade who makes the accusations either has knowledge that justifies them or he has not. If he has such knowledge he is remiss in his party duty by not bringing charges; if he does not have this information he is sowing suspicions and makes other party members suspects. Let us have charges, give the names of the accused if there be any, present the evidence, call witnesses, but let us not indulge in blanket accusations that are futile and harmful.

There is another type of general accusation that is harmful. Some unions are certainly corrupt and are afflicted with racketeering and there is a tendency to refer to all unions as racketeering organizations. This is playing the game of the capitalist anti-union organizations that make the same sweeping accusations in their official organs. If Socialists cannot differentiate their attitude from that of the exploiters on this matter they should say nothing at all. Such accusations carry the implication that all unions are grafting organizations and that the sooner they are destroyed the better. The National Association of Manufacturers can well afford to subsidize such blanket charges but no Socialist should be found in the company of these exploiters. Where the evidence is definite in a particular union that is another matter.

It is obvious that Socialist members of trade unions should be active in the struggle against all undemocratic and corrupt practices and it may be said that the Socialist member who is not so active is neither a good unionist nor a good

The American Socialist Quarterly

Socialist. They should also carry on educational propaganda against union endorsement of capitalist parties and capitalist party candidates as a matter of principle and in behalf of a more powerful and effective unionism. However, to urge that some Socialist candidates should be endorsed to offset the endorsement of capitalist candidates will not aid in bringing about independent political action. To urge endorsement of Socialists is to accept the policy of nonpartisan political action. Moreover, such selection of Socialist candidates may put the Socialist member of a union in the embarrassing situation of having to approve non-Socialist candidates because his own recommendations had also been accepted.

This is not to say that if a union decides to support one or more Socialists in a political campaign that we should slap the union and its members by refusing it. The union action may be the result of a progressive tendency and we should not discourage it. What I am stressing is that party members in the unions should not take any action that will give their approval to the policy of nonpartisan political action.

One thing is essential for the Socialist unionist to avoid. He should not make himself a nuisance by trying to occupy the floor on every matter that comes up. Many a Socialist in the past several decades has destroyed his own usefulness by becoming a bore. Now and then we have seen the same type in party branches. Once the Socialist gives the rank and file the impression that he is eccentric his influence is forever gone no matter how earnest and well informed he may be.

In short, the Socialist member of a union should try to make himself the best member, the most competent, the most useful, the most resourceful, the most devoted and the best informed. He should try to win the confidence of the members by service as well as by his educational work. He should remember also that just as he did not become a Socialist by having it thrust down his throat so it isn't likely that others will ever accept it that way. It is only conscious and willing acceptance of progressive and Socialist policies that will be enduring in the long run.

While the Socialist Party member carries on inside the

The American Trade Union Movement

unions the Socialist Party has its tasks and its duties outside. As a party it can no more dominate the unions than the unions can dominate the party. Socialists and the Socialist Party, however, can win the confidence of union workers by frank cooperation with the organized workers in their struggle for organization and better conditions. Every important strike should find the party, its press, its speakers, and its relief agencies enlisted for the strikers. Moreover, in the big struggles which the unions are now certain to face, a dramatic situation of grave importance may face them as it did in the miners' strike in 1902, the Moyer-Haywood-Pettibone affair and similar episodes. These big situations brought the party into fraternal cooperation with the unions in cities throughout the country. We had the sincere respect of thousands of organizations and, despite the prejudice of Samuel Gompers, before the outbreak of the World War we were a power in seven of the needle trade unions and a big influence in the Machinists, Brewery Workers, the Butchers, the Miners, the Bakers and a few other powerful unions. Quite a number of city central bodies were very sympathetic and cooperated with the party in many matters. That cooperation can be again obtained and there is every reason for it being obtained in the coming years if we think and act like members of a working class party that has no sectarian interests to advance at the expense of the organized workers.

In fact, a turning point has already been reached in the estranged relations between the party and the trade unions in this country. It was registered in the new note sounded and some of the important actions taken at the Cincinnati convention of the A. F. of L. He who cannot see this turn is blind to what is happening. With the unions facing the greatest economic disaster in their history, the Federation has taken action that has scrapped its "individualist" philosophy. The delegates did not act independently of the rank and file. They acted in accord with pressure from below. The fight for unemployment insurance in every state provides Socialists with a splendid opportunity for cooperation with the unions.

The American Socialist Quarterly

This measure is of vital interest to the whole working class, organized and unorganized, and it will meet the bitter opposition of reactionary capitalist organizations in every state. Is there any question as to where our duty lies in such a class struggle? Certainly not, and if we approach our duty as Socialists we will find old barriers to understanding and co-operation crumbling, but if we try the old role of "strategists" or high-hatters we will remain where we are, without influence, sectarians, and largely isolated from the proletariat whose cooperation and understanding are as important to our growth as our cooperation and understanding are to them.

This is the first in a series of articles representing various points of views by Socialists on the American Trade Union Movement.

NEXT ISSUE MARCH 18, 1933

A symposium on Marxism to commemorate
the fiftieth anniversary of the death of Marx.

MARXISM AND THE MODERN WORLD

THE INFLUENCE OF MARX *David P. Berenberg*

LIVING MARXISM *Haim Kantorovitch*

MARXISM AND TRADE UNIONISM *Mark Starr*

A MARXIAN INTERPRETATION OF FASCISM

Vincenzo Vacirco

MARXISM AND GERMAN SOCIAL DEMOCRACY

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MARXISM AND THE AMERICAN

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The German Situation

SIEGFRIED LIPSCHITZ

(An address delivered at the Forum of the Women's Committee
of the Rand School of Social Science.)

It gives me great satisfaction to speak before you on a subject which by its very controversial and rapidly changing character is a constant bone of contention, not only in international public opinion and discussion but to an even greater degree in the ranks of our international socialist movement. Your chairman was kind enough to present me as an authority on German affairs and while I appreciate this very great kindness, I wish to state that whatever I might bring and lay before you, are well known facts and not at all an extraordinary achievement on my part. The rest are conclusions or at best inferences about which every man or woman is entitled to his or her own opinions. With these necessary limitations in mind I shall state the facts as they are and as they should be understood by every socially minded person.

To describe the case of modern Germany, it is best to start with an inference which will make you see the present tangled situation in a flashlight. Domestic and foreign difficulties have brought the class struggle in Germany to a degree of tension where the life of the nation refuses to be bound by established democratic forms and parliamentarism. Looking at Germany of 1932 one must realize that the political, economic and social activities of the masses receive their most characteristic mark from the undisputed fact that Fascism has been able to mobilize the impoverished middle classes, part of the upper strata and certain misguided elements of the proletariat. Today there are two camps in Germany which stand irreconcilably opposed to each other. Both understand fully that the battle will not be decided by parliamentary means but both fight at the same time for the advantages which democracy and parliamentarism, while openly sneered at, gives them. Moreover, neither can win by these methods

The American Socialist Quarterly

and neither is willing to abide by any such decision even if it were possible. The result is more or less clear-cut civil war. This danger together with the disruption of the nation's economic and social life leads logically to an established dictatorship, be it legal or otherwise. The time has arrived where the mechanism of parliamentary democracy, best fitted for less troubled times, is out of order and the basic popular forces pull in opposite directions. Between them there is a no man's land which the ruling handful, keeping apart from the actual parliamentary battle-front, appropriates and uses for its own ends.

This might sound rather complicated but I shall state it in more understandable terms:

You are aware that General von Schleicher has taken over the reins of the government from his predecessor and close friend von Papen. This simply means that the name has been changed but the substance still remains. The same spirit which brought about the governmental rule of the Barons, still triumphs and rides roughshod over the bodies and souls of the German working class. But while this is true, we must not overlook the fact that there has been a decided change in the attitude of the Reich's government toward popular discontent. Due to the pressure of the masses and of organized labor in particular, the new chancellor's first official act consisted in receding from the position of the Papen government and giving the trade unions substantial guaranties by revoking certain decrees of which I shall have occasion to speak later. I mention this fact first, because it is generally unknown abroad—and, second, because it proves that the German labor movement despite all difficulties and persecutions has remained a potential force sufficiently powerful even in the face of a left Fascist government, a government which to my mind is no less dangerous than the third empire which Hitler and his followers have in mind.

But these are daily observations. Greater things are at stake, decisions which will affect and mould not only the fate of Germany but of the whole of Europe and let there be no mistake, also of our continent. Let us understand in the light

The German Situation

of recent happenings that there has been no greater calamity, no greater monstrosity, no greater governmental fiasco than that of which the fate of the late but not lamented Papen regime bears proof. The one year economic plan, put forward by Papen and intended to win for him the acclaim of the whole world, has proven a ghastly failure. According to statistics presented recently by the powerful German Federation of Trade Unions, the plan has given employment to approximately 60,000 to 100,000 men while at the same time it has cost hundreds of million marks of German taxpayers' money and has precariously undermined the structure of labor and social legislation on which the thirteen year old German Republic rests.

Confronted with open hostility on all sides, weakened under the ceaseless hammerings of all parties and doomed to even greater failure with his project of converting the Weimar republican constitution into an openly reactionary document and a vehicle on which the monarchy or at least some kind of regency could ride into power, Papen had to go. True, Schleicher's succession means to all intents and purposes the prolongation of the most outstanding reactionary government in post-war Germany and the strengthening of a system which a new school of German political thought is prone to describe as an authoritarian government, responsible only to the head of the state, namely the Reichspresident.

While not underestimating the issues let us realize that there has been a decided retreat from the stand of the Papen government taken half a year ago. First of all, as I have said before, the Schleicher government was obliged, for the sake of carrying out its program, to revoke certain clauses of the Papen emergency decrees, clauses mainly objectionable to organized labor. Furthermore, the government is very careful to avoid a fight with the Reichstag which must result in a two edged defeat, namely that of itself and of the Reichstag, which will be dissolved and give way to new elections. Third, and perhaps most important of all, the Schleicher government has made it known that it has given up all hopes of altering the constitutional order of things. Instead, it will

The American Socialist Quarterly

devote all energies at its disposal to the creation of work, undoubtedly the most pressing issue in Germany's public life today. The huge public funds formerly destined under the one year Papen plan for subvention purposes to the great industrialists will also be used for the purpose of creating work and it is hoped will thereby ease the economic strain.

Of course, this development must not hide the greater problems at stake nor must it induce observers to believe that the clouds hanging over Germany are rapidly passing away. Nothing can be farther from the truth and nothing can be more tragic than a fatalistic belief that German affairs, by themselves, will improve and become more stable. There is no warrant for such an assumption but there are definite proofs to the contrary. From a realistic, matter of fact viewpoint the Schleicher government might be firmly in the saddle and there might be no visible power to defeat it. But the fact remains that the trend of German economics is running against it and its life is therefore definitely limited. No doubt, we shall see a great many ups and downs, we shall see attacks and counter-attacks and perhaps undreamed of new decisions in the chambers of Germany's mightiest, but unless there is a decided economic improvement Schleicher will travel the weary road of his predecessor von Papen. He, too, will be crushed under the unbearable burden of German economics and under a system which has already proven obsolete. How obsolete German capitalism is and how strong the popular tide running against it, is best demonstrated by the established fact that over sixty percent of the membership of the new Reichstag belongs to so-called anti-capitalist parties, including the National Socialists, the Socialists and the Communists. I mention this highly illustrative fact because I want you to realize that a considerable number of Hitler's followers are firm anti-capitalists. Many of them are workers, almost all young and unemployed, who for one reason or other have been converted to nationalism but are still firmly imbued with socialistic ideas. It will do no good to stamp National Socialism as a whole as a great reactionary camp into which no enlightening rays are penetrating. On the contrary, it was

The German Situation

a well known German Socialist leader who declared that the majority of the Nazis are potential Socialists and I adhere firmly to this belief. Of course, we know that the movement is exploited for reactionary aims and purposes and only for that, but we know at the same time that fissures are appearing everywhere and that the long awaited decay of German National Socialism has at last begun. If the history of these troubled times is written, it will be shown to the everlasting credit of German Social Democracy that it has blocked National Socialism's way to dictatorial power until the time when the highly elaborate Hitler movement could not withstand the pressure from its own overgrown and heterogeneous ranks. We are witnessing this peculiar situation today. The danger of an out and out German Fascist dictatorship *à la* Hitler is definitely on the wane. The future will prove what direction the new development in the Hitler ranks will take and how far it will affect the policy and beliefs of many proletarian and half proletarian followers of Adolf Hitler.

Before the symposium of German democracy enfold itself once more before our eyes let us visualize the present parliamentary situation. We are of course well aware that parliamentarism itself at the present juncture is powerless. It exercises in the main a negative influence and is self-condemnatory. That it has become so, is due not so much to the faulty structure of the Weimar system and even less to the constantly asserted unfitness of the German people for democracy and its parliamentary forms, but to the untiring cynical attacks of the anti-parliamentarian parties which finally have proven so disastrous to themselves. Has it not come about that Nazis, Communists and other sworn enemies of parliamentarism are crying for the return of the Weimar stability? Does not the famous antiparliamentarian and hothead of the National Socialists, Captain Goering, as speaker of the Reichstag say that democracy must be preserved at all costs and that no government can sit on bayonets? This from the same men who have time and again denounced democracy in most abusive terms and insisted upon an out and out dictatorship. Everyone with a sympathetic grasp of the hidden undercurrents of mass

The American Socialist Quarterly

psychology will understand how, with shameless demagogic tricks and under the stress of economic misery, a great part of the normally levelheaded German people was lured into antiparliamentarian ranks with which they have nothing in common.

Germany is in the throes of the world crisis. Approximately six millions are unemployed. The financial stability of the state and municipal administrations has broken down. Relief measures, unemployment insurance and other social safeguards have become woefully inadequate, but still constitute the only bulwark against overwhelming chaos. The Reichstag, and with it numerous state legislatures, are hopelessly divided. By their own division they have allowed elements without parliamentary or popular backing to usurp power and decide the destinies of Germany. Against the so-called Marxian block of 221 votes—121 socialists and 100 communists combined—there is a combined bourgeois front of 362 votes, numerically sufficient but hopelessly split amongst themselves. The Nazis lost in the last elections approximately two million votes and are decidedly on the downgrade. They are definitely against new elections which they know will bring them new losses and lesser opportunities.

In passing I have touched upon the differences within the Nazi ranks which have recently assumed the proportions of open warfare. Gregor Strasser, chief organizer and undoubtedly the most able Nazi leader and Feder, the theoretical head of the party since earliest Hitler days, have resigned from their party posts, in disagreement with leaders' (Hitler) policy of "all or nothing". The irresponsible, under the leadership of Goebbels, Captain Roehm, chief of the brown shirts, approximately 400,000 strong, and the afore mentioned Goering, speaker of the Reichstag, are in the saddle. Anyone who has followed closely developments in Germany, has been aware of the fact that Hitler is only a figure-head, intoxicating himself with his own imaginary glory, indecisive, waiting like a magician of old for auspicious times and signs, and letting the greatest opportunities slip by. The last three years have offered numerous occasions when Nazism was in a po-

The German Situation

sition to seize power or at least to bring irresistible pressure upon the authorities, who by the way were openly in accord with them. The leader, as Hitler is called, remained weak and vacillating, with the result that the party is now overripe and full of countless explosive potentialities. Recent elections have shown that the tremendous mushroom growth of the Hitler movement will be followed by a similar rapid decline, once the popular glamour and the seeming irresistibility of the liberators are gone. It is still too early to forecast the future of the Hakenkreuz movement. I do not believe that the party will soon be wrecked or even considerably weakened; I am firmly of the opinion that the striking power and greatest strength of the Nazi movement has definitely passed. Its climax has been reached; what seemed like the greatest and major promise of a new German Volksbewegung (popular movement) has already degenerated into a routine party affair, subject to the whims, desires and dreams of a few, and suffering, as no other party suffers, from its own contradictions, its hates, its lies and its deliberate misrepresentations. Truly, the Hitler movement can say in the words of the old master Goethe that the ghosts which it called forth against the enemies, have remained to trouble its own days and nights. The ghost writing has appeared on the wall and history will answer the question: What shall become of a movement and a party which more than anything else has converted Germany into an open armed camp and a conspicuous battle field for civil war activities?

This is the line up of the German reaction. We have seen the forces of authoritarian legal dictatorship, consisting of Hindenburg, his trusted lieutenants, the big landowners, the leading industrialists and last but not least the Reichswehr (army). These men are in command of Germany to-day and they are certainly not willing nor prepared to give up voluntarily their power, wielded with an iron fist in the Reich as well as in Prussia. We have seen the Hitler movement with its many strange features, its Hohenzollern princes beside the humble unemployed working men, all of them seem-

The American Socialist Quarterly

ingly—I say seemingly—striving toward some obscure National Socialistic goal.

Now let us turn our eyes toward the one and only force which is historically entitled to bring about the rebirth of Germany and end the nightmare of these last years. Let us look at the German labor movement, at those sturdy men and women who are enduring tremendous hardships for the sake of their socialist beliefs and for the sake of a better future. There has been a numerical decline in the Social Democratic vote during last year's elections, but considering the difficulties—political, economic, social and otherwise—, of the last three years, the costly toleration policy, and finally the unceasing internecine fight between the factions in the German labor movement, the loss has been insignificant. As against 153 deputies in the elections of 1928—a comparatively quiet year with only 12 National Socialist deputies in the Reichstag,—the Social Democracy elected in September 1932 121 deputies. The Communists increased their representation from 54 to 100 deputies, but there too it must not be forgotten that as in the case of the National Socialists this increase is mainly due to unemployed elements. Of course, there is no use denying a certain dissatisfaction within the Social Democratic ranks. Passive tendencies here and there, conservatism induced by decades of steady party growth and its institutions, and finally the close connections between the leading elements of the party and the capitalistic state apparatus (Prussia) have had repercussions. Happily, the definite left wing orientation of the party after the Prussian coup d'état in July has done away with most of the popular criticism levelled against the responsible party leaders. The party can proudly say that it stands today more firmly than ever, a constant threat for Fascist dictators and would-be dictators, and invincible in its close alliance with the more than four million socialist workers in the strong German federation of trade unions.

I am not going to speak today of the internecine fight between the Socialists and the Communists which has also brought intolerable hardships and has actually deprived the

The German Situation

German working class of its historic opportunity to seize power and reign according to the political, economic and social interests of the masses. My short sketch of the German panorama leaves me no room for that. Suffice it to say that the strength of the labor block has not been weakened and that, notwithstanding all present sufferings, German labor has well withstood all shocks and temptations. German labor is purging itself of the sins of yesteryear and is girding once more for the fight which is inevitable, no matter how often it might be postponed. A labor movement which has weathered all these years, is not destined to go down ignominiously but will appear stronger than ever. The call for unity is rapidly gaining ground and we all hope to see the day when both labor parties united will face the common enemy and when Germany, the homeland of Socialist thought, will be converted into a true Socialist commonwealth, open to all laboring men and women and a heaven for all of those who proclaim proudly the principles of socialism and democracy.

The question has been raised and a very just one at that: What does the German development mean to us, socialist adherents in a country where ignorance and political stupidity in recent November days have been blessed with another triumph? What can we learn from these facts, what do they mean to us outside of the sentimental and intellectual attachment for our German comrades? Well, developments have proven that the U. S. A., notwithstanding all proud gestures, cannot extricate itself from Europe, cannot lightly pass by the forces and crosscurrents which determine the lives of our brothers and sisters overseas. It was President Herbert Hoover himself who accepted this theory in fact by proclaiming an all around moratorium on debts, acting on the strength of reports that economic pressure upon the German masses had become unbearable and that an international crash and destruction was imminent.

What was true and is still true in the field of finances, economics and international politics, is certainly equally true of the reverberations abroad of Germany's social strife and increasing unrest. Have we not witnessed the fact that the Amer-

The American Socialist Quarterly

ican Federation of Labor has reversed its proud and more than fifty years old policy of economic laissez-faire and has gone on record with specified demands? Surely, this was not done of the free will of the leaders of American labor but because economic misery coupled with the ominous grumblings of their own membership forced them to take—willingly or not—a decided stand.

Having witnessed these developments in the short space of a few years, and having furthermore witnessed an unprecedented outburst of popular indignation against the powers that be, we are entitled to say that the social awakening begun scarcely two years ago, can not be stopped. It is true that this tremendous outburst of popular indignation went only halfway and brought victory to a man of the same reactionary school of political and economic thought, but these were popular stirrings nevertheless. It took German Social Democracy more than fifty years to awaken the German people and even today only little has been accomplished compared with the goal they are striving for. Under the merciless lashings of misery, American labor is beginning to awake just as European labor has been awakened by the sufferings of past decades. American labor in its philosophy and economic outlook is behind European labor, but even so it is striving mightily forward and with every day looming stronger on the horizon of American public life.

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MARXISM IN THE MODERN WORLD

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Concerning Fusion

DAVID P. BERENBERG

EVERY so often the City of New York rebels against the incubus that normally weighs upon it. For years the political machine known as Tammany Hall is allowed to have things its own way. While this unquestioned dominion lasts the machine grows prosperous and arrogant. This arrogance inevitably leads to brutal carelessness, to a flouting of even the most elementary decencies. Then a storm of protest arises, gathers force and if the omens are propitious protest matures into rebellion. Sometimes the rebellion meets with success. Tammany is overthrown and for a moment the "forces of righteousness" are in the saddle. This happened after the exposures of the Tweed Ring in the 70's; it happened again after the malodorous Van Wyck administration at the beginning of the century; it happened once more in 1913 when John Purroy Mitchell was swept into power on a wave of protest against Tammany mismanagement. Each time the life of the anti-Tammany administration was brief. Each time righteousness and rebellion waned; the average citizen's indifference to politics proved too great a handicap in the face of the professional politician's interest in his job. After a single term of reform administration, the city has always turned with a sense of relief to the familiar and picturesque crimes of Tammany Hall.

The reason for the persistent failure of the anti-Tammany elements to establish a permanent hold on the city government is not hard to find. Invariably the anti-Tammany fusion is composed of incongruous elements brought together rather by animosity for a common enemy than by basic agreement. More than this, **fusion** administrations have always made one serious mistake. They have proceeded on the assumption that the primary need of the city was what they were pleased to call a business man's administration. They have been exceedingly tender of the feelings of the taxpayer.

The American Socialist Quarterly

They have proudly sought to keep the tax rate down, even if that meant the neglect of essential services, the underpayment of municipal employees, and callous disregard of the rights of the masses. The Mitchell administration (1913-1917) furnishes an object lesson which the student of municipal politics may well take to heart. During the entire four years something like four school buildings were erected, although those were years of great population growth. Subway construction was at a standstill. Faced with a demand on the part of the teachers for an increase in salary since commodity prices were rising, comptroller Prendergast remarked that he could go out on the market and find 10,000 girls at a moment's notice who gladly would fill the places of the teachers at \$600.

This attitude, expressed in more ways than can possibly be listed here, has proved to be the destruction of every fusion administration. The new fusion movement which is now arising in New York City promises to be of exactly the same sort as those in the past. It arises from the same discontent. It already shows the same tender concern for the taxpayer and the same callous indifference to the masses. It will perhaps sweep to a successful conclusion in the 1933 election, and unless all signs fail, it will be shipwrecked on the same rocks that proved fatal to the Mitchell administration and to its predecessors. Whether Joseph V. McKee, or Alfred E. Smith, becomes mayor of the city under fusion auspices, or whether some man still unknown is put forward for the honor is immaterial. The fact remains that the main impulse for the overthrow of Tammany Hall comes from the banks and the large tax payer's associations. It is they who have skillfully exploited the present economic crisis to make it appear that the city is faced with imminent bankruptcy. During the years of prosperity they raised no effective protest against the silly extravagance of the Walker regime. They were very free in their extension of the credit; the extravagance was theirs as much as it was Tammany's. A number of the men now indignantly calling for the expulsion of the Tammany rascals cheerfully submitted to extortion at the hands of Tammany henchmen in return for privileges and opportunities

Concerning Fusion

extended to them by the city government. Now, they wish to exploit the economic situation to further their own clear class interests. Municipal extravagance no longer serves their purpose. The days of easy credit are over. Now they need economy and security. Therefore, they are getting ready to give us once more a municipal administration like that of Mr. Mitchell. We shall once more have a regime of penny-pinching, of mean economies at the expense of the children of the city, of starvation for the public hospitals, parks, museums and libraries, and all in the name of the sacred taxpayer.

It is likely that the Socialists will be asked to participate in the coming fusion campaign. The quarter of a million votes that were polled for Morris Hillquit are an important counter in the reckoning of the fusion politicians. The political mind is sometimes more than childishly naive. It is very likely to conceive of these 250,000 votes as a concrete bloc which could be won by the simple process of offering the Socialists a satisfactory trade. It is perhaps a generous deed to disillusion the political bargainers. I am quite certain that a majority of the 250,000 would desert the Socialist standard and vote for a fusion candidate even if no concessions are made to the Socialists. In other words, I have no illusion as to the composition of the 250,000 votes in question. They do not represent Socialist strength. They are not votes that the Socialist Party can either hand over in a trade or withhold, should a satisfactory bargain not be forthcoming.

Socialists have in the past shown a hostility to fusion that has been to the fusionists madly unintelligible. Yet this hostility is based upon the most real and simple of considerations. Such a fusion of anti-Tammany forces as that which now impends, is clearly a combination of class interests representing chiefly those classes with which Socialists can have no political dealings. Their concept of the city is a bourgeois concept utterly repugnant to Socialism. They think of the city in terms of a capitalist corporation; their highest ideal is an honest, efficient, business administration. Certain elements of the fusion have a modicum of social consciousness; these will be used to the full in gathering votes, but they will

The American Socialist Quarterly

be relegated to the background should the fusion gain control of the city government. The Socialist concept of the city as the home of the workers, with the interest of the workers paramount, is repugnant to the fusion elements. We have here a clear cut opposition of ideas between which there can be no reconciliation.

There are those in the Socialist Party who regret the party's attitude toward fusion with "good government" elements. It must be clear to them, however, that there is a vast difference between a government in the interest of the taxpayers, no matter how honest or well-conducted, and a government in the interests of the workers. It ought to be clear, too, that the instability of previous fusion movements, and the absence of any political philosophy back of fusion, offer the best of reasons why socialists should not join with the enemies of the working class.

That Tammany Hall, and all Tammany Halls in all cities, are also enemies of the working class, I do not deny. Tammany offers the workers no service when it gives them a few shreds of charity and a few empty words several times during the year. What prompts the Socialist Party to refrain from joining a fusion is the realization that this battle for workers' government in the city must be fought on two fronts: against the taxpayers' interests and against the interests of predatory politics. Neither Tammany nor fusion is capable of offering a municipal program that holds any promise for the worker. Such a program must include the extension of municipal enterprise to include municipal trading, municipal operation of subways, gas and electricity plants, markets, etc.; improved hospital facilities, more schools, parks, libraries, museums; the maintenance of decent wages and salaries for municipal employees. If by honest administration the present budget can be made to cover these extensions of municipal service to its people, the tax rate may remain the same. If so to extend municipal services means an increase in the tax rate, Socialists are not greatly concerned. They are more concerned with the worker from whose products ultimately comes the money with which taxes are paid. Perhaps, if those well-

Concerning Fusion

intentioned non-Socialists who propose fusion to us, clearly grasp this one point they would be less eager to have us with them.

If it is any consolation to them, they are welcome to all of the 250,000 votes that were cast for Morris Hillquit that can be won away from the Socialist Party by an attractive fusion candidate.

The question of fusion will arise again in New York and elsewhere. It may play the role in American politics that the question of coalition government has played abroad. It is, in fact, the same question. On a national scale, with our peculiar form of government, it is extremely unlikely that Socialists will ever be asked to enter a coalition cabinet, or to participate in a bourgeois government. The likelihood that Socialists will, at some future time, be asked to participate in a parliamentary bloc is hardly less remote. What is probable is that at some time in the near future the Socialist Party may be asked to be part of a fusion of incoherent groups which are bound only by a common enmity.

It is not fair so to characterize the groups that made up the LaFollette movement in 1924. Nevertheless, that movement is a case in point. Viewed objectively, and at a distance of eight years, it becomes increasingly clear that the LaFollette movement was merely "progressive"; it was, in other words, a petty bourgeois impulse, without a philosophy and devoid of class-consciousness, aiming at most at a reform of corrupt governmental practices and at the rehabilitation of the middle classes. As such the Socialist Party had no place in it, even if, for reasons of convenience, the labor movement chose for a moment to throw in its lot with LaFollette.

Such a contingency will arise again, and perhaps in the very next national campaign. The time is ripe for a realignment of political forces. The incoherent groupings in both the Republican and Democratic parties must, sooner or later, cause these parties to disintegrate. In the realignment that is to come, the siren-song of fusion will be heard again. We will be told that "half a loaf is better than no bread," that alone we can attain nothing, but in union with other groups

The American Socialist Quarterly

with whom we have at least a minimum program in common, we can attain something now, and we may hope for more in the future.

That depends on what the minimum program is; on what it is that we can attain now. If the minimum program resembles any that have been put forward by the groups that have so far called themselves Populist, Progressive, Non-Partisan, and Farmer-Labor, the Socialist Party must remain aloof. We can co-operate only with class-conscious labor, headed at least ultimately for a Socialist goal. It is not impossible that the logic of events will develop such a Labor Party with a genuinely class program, but there are no signs of such a development as yet. What is on the horizon is another of the chaotic, hopelessly muddled third-party movements which have bedevilled American politics for half a century.

Therefore we favor no fusion. None locally, in municipal campaigns. None in congressional districts, be the candidate La Guardia or not; none in national politics until a *bona fide* party of the workers is born.

A WORD ABOUT OUR CONTRIBUTORS

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The Results of the Five Year Plan

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EVERY objective observer must confirm the fact that the economic development of Russia during the years of the Revolution, is marked by a very rapid growth in the productive capacity of the country. The Revolution released the creative energy of the millions, awakened the needs of the masses, kindled their activities, and gave a decisive impetus to the rapid development of economic life. This process of "overcoming the economic backwardness" had already begun before the November revolution. It dates back to the overthrow of Czarism and the agrarian revolution of 1917. It passed through all of the zig-zags and convolutions of the Bolshevik phase of the revolution, and proceeded at accelerated pace even during the first year of the Five Year Plan.

The industrial structure of the country has been radically changed. The industrialization of Russia, which had begun long before the War, was carried on within the frame work of soviet politics at a speed and gauge, which greatly surpassed the scale of pre-war development.

The Soviet Government invested more than 118 billion rubels for economic development within the Five Year Plan, more than 23 billion rubels alone for the purpose of industrialization. The percentage of industrial production to gross production has risen markedly. In 1913 industry amounted to 38% of the total product; in 1931 according to official Soviet figures, 68% in value. These figures, to be sure, reflect the "Preisschere" (price differentials) which shift value relationships in favor of industry.

Prior to the war there already were a considerable number of large scale industrial plants in Russia. Following the war, decided progress was made in the concentration of industry. In any one of the industrial units subject to economic planning, there were in 1926 an average of 320 workers; in 1932 over 500 workers. In 1930, 2.2% of the industrial units employed more than 3,000 workers; in 1932 about 5.7%.

Most of the branches of industry have undergone a radical technical re-equipment and reconstruction. According to official announcements, 57.5% of the total industry has renewed its equipment since the end of the war; the corresponding figures for power industry, fuel and machinery range from 50 to 60%. Of the 18,000 machine shops now in operation in the U.S.S.R., more than 12,000 were set up after the Revolution, and of this number 9,000 during the Five Year Plan. The production of available machinery per industrial worker rose 70%; power more than 100%, during the Five Year Plan period. This technical reorganization of economic life necessitates an essen-

The American Socialist Quarterly

tially higher organic combination of collective industrial capital of the country and also establishes thereby the assumption of a rapid development for the future.

The Communist press never tires of juggling with tables and graphs which are intended to prove that the U.S.S.R. has surpassed the level of world production. These methods of proof carry little conviction. One cannot compare the height of production in a country which is pulsating with construction with the productivity in countries which are prostrated by the most severe crisis in history. The fact nevertheless remains indisputable, that the U.S.S.R. in its pig-iron production, its gain in crude oil, and machine production in 1932, a year of depression, maintained second place in world production; coal and chemical, fourth; power, fifth; and that the distance which separated Russian industry from the advanced capitalist countries before the war, has diminished substantially.

The volume of production in a number of important industries has doubled, quadrupled and increased sixfold during the Five Year Plan. The means of production have developed with marked rapidity: the production of tool making machinery and instruments increased 4.2 times during the Five Year Plan, the railway equipment, 3.1; chemical industry, 2.5. The newly created automobile and tractor industry has experienced a tremendous rise. The dependence of Russia on foreign machinery and shop equipment has lessened considerably.

To be sure, the program of industrialization of the U.S.S.R. according to the Five Year Plan has not yet been realized. Official statistics, which speak of a 70 to 80% accomplishment in the Five Year Plan shortened to four years, give no true picture of the real position of industrial development.

In the basic industries the plan has not been lived up to. In the anthracite industry 90 million tons of coal should have been mined in 1932 (75 million ton increase in coal was planned for the last year of the Five Year Plan). As a matter of fact there was an increase only of 62.4 million tons. The quota for pig iron was 9 million tons (The Five Year Plan estimated 10 million tons): only 6.2 million tons were produced. Steel ingots showed only 5.9 million tons instead of 9.5 million tons, provided for in the Plan, (the estimates of the Five Year Plan called for 10.4 million tons). The output of the plants already in operation has not met the essential requirements of industry. The weakness in Soviet economic life is most evident in industrial construction. For industrial development 23 billion rubels were invested in four years; new manufacturing plants could only be put into operation at the same time to the extent of 10.4 billion rubel. And since the invested capital in the first place had been expended for the building of new "Giant industries", the inadequacy of coal, steel and iron production, in the already existing or newly erected plants

The Results of the Five Year Plan

became more apparent. The most pressing needs of industries catering to mass production have been sacrificed to machine producing industries.

In spite of an increase of about 18 million in the population in the last five years, production of consumers goods has remained fairly stationary—at about the level of the period of the NEP. Under the pressure of the demands of heavy industry, the development of textile mills, fertilizer, soap and rendering plants, etc., have been checked or completely stricken from the plan.

The lack of an all embracing economic plan, the lack of a uniform fixed plan, the disturbance of the equilibrium in the development of the individual constituent parts of industry as a whole, the abolition of the markets as a check without their replacement through the development of a truly regulating plan: this is the fundamental defect of the Soviet economy. Frequently, machines and industrial plants are not set up to the extent demanded by the manufacturing plants. The machine making industry does not receive the necessary quantity of metals, the foundries have not enough coal. In one district factories are built which can get no motor power, in another district giant power plants are erected, which find no users for their current. The means of communication cannot cope with the vast growing stream of freight. There is a lack of technical personnel, trained workers and there are neither suitable dwellings nor sufficient food.

No less a cruel enemy of Soviet industry is the lack of quality in production. The percentage of low grade goods exceeds by far the established quota of such goods. And the rapidity with which the product wears out naturally lessens its utility value.

All this indicates that a considerable part of labor's energy and the available revenue of the people in consequence of the hastened pace of industrialization is being dissipated and "deadened". However, this does not disprove the truly enormous growth in industrial investment, and the considerable increase in industrial production. Even if the yearly increase in productivity should not as the Soviet press asserts, amount to 18—25% on an average, but only to 10—12%, Soviet industry would be even at this rate of growth in advance of pre-war Russian industry as well as world economy.

Under the Five Year Plan, the Soviet regime did away definitely with private industry and private trade. The state concentrated into its own hands the management of the entire economic apparatus of the country.

The significance of the proletariat engaged in industry has risen. The population in the cities and industrial settlements is growing rapidly. Landowners and the capitalist class were abolished by the Soviet in the early years of the revolution; at the end of the Five

The American Socialist Quarterly

Year Plan, the class of petty merchants and industrialists also disappeared.

Out of the ranks of the former workers' and members of the middle classes, a new group of bureaucrats has arisen in the service of the state. The intellectuals are no longer representatives of a "free calling", but have been transformed under the stringent pressure of the state into specialists who serve the administrative and economic divisions.

Just as Russia prior to the war was primarily an agricultural country, a country backward industrially, so today the Soviet government belongs to those countries in which alongside of an agrarian economy, modern large scale industry has undergone far reaching developments.

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Vast changes have also been effected in the economic life of the villages. The scattered, and as it were organic, non-profitable, peasant strip farming has practically disappeared. It has been replaced by two-thirds, by large Sovkols and Kolkos, which cover more than 80% of the total available agricultural areas. The old patriarchal agrarian economy is dying out. Machinery and agricultural technique came to the forefront. In 1928 there were still about five million primitive agricultural implements (plows, etc.). In 1932 approximately 90% of the farms were supplied with plows. In 1928 there were 26,700 tractors, 1932 almost 148,000, with a capacity of more than two million horsepower. In 1928 less than 5% of the cultivated areas were prepared for sowing with the help of tractors; in 1932 about 35%. Threshing machines, drills, and in many districts combines have displaced antiquated agricultural implements. Rotation of crops is gradually displacing the old fashioned Russian three-fallow system. The cultivated area approximated 5.5 million hectares in 1913; about 15 million hectares in 1932. The cotton crop has doubled in comparison with the pre-war period. The potato crop has risen 2.3 fold; and flax and sugar beets have also risen, though not to the same extent. The cultivation of grain was 92.5 million hectares in 1928; 104.5 million hectares in 1931; and 101.3 million hectares in 1932. The total grain harvest is on the contrary, in consequence of the low production per hectare only a little higher than in the years preceeding the Five Year Plan. The tax on grain which the state levied in 1932 led to pronounced recessions in agriculture, so that the area under cultivation as well as the quantity delivered to the state is falling off. The forcible collectivization had a decided effect in the diminution of the cattle stock. The government had invested more than twelve billion rubles during the four years in agriculture, above all in the Kolkos and the Soykos; in this manner and through the expropriation of independent peasants, "capital funds" for the "collectivized sectors" were raised. In four years this sum increased almost sixfold.

The Results of the Five Year Plan

The Kolkos have become the decisive factor in the Soviet villages. Collectivization in the villages was realized by blood and terror. It caused important economic damage. Nevertheless, collectivization has also accomplished a number of positive results, which neither the March nor the November revolution had been able to accomplish. A high price has been paid for it and the gains are perhaps less lasting than if they had been obtained by means of more peaceful development. Yet, collectivization, i.e. that entire reconstruction of agriculture in the U.S.S.R., carried out under these pretenses, created the basis for a rapid development of productive forces. The 1917 revolution gave the peasants the land, but left the majority of them without work-horses or stock. (40% of the peasants had no horses, 33% had no plows, 70% were allotted plots under 4.4 hectares). Millions of scattered plots remained idle. The peasants were freed neither from the backward agricultural technique nor from the fear of misery and periodic famines. By means of forcible collectivization, unprofitable, primitive agricultural methods were eliminated and through it the possibility of raising agriculture to a higher level was created. The all-embracing character of collectivization, and its morbid forms, will have to vanish, the moment coercion ceases. But if, as a consequence of all revolutionary changes, favorable conditions for an intensification of agriculture, the system of rotation of crops and the mechanization of production remain, and the peasants organize into voluntary co-operatives of various kinds, then will this constitute, in its economic and socialist significance, a grandiose achievement of the revolution.

It is false to assume that collectivization was the cause for the decrease in the cultivation and of the food shortage. It is less a matter of collectivization, than of the entire agrarian policy of the Soviet government. What happened in 1932 in Russia, has happened many times before. The peasants attempt to defy the government decrees with all of the means at their disposal: they restrict the sowing and refuse to harvest the entire crop. They attempted this during the period of war communism and also during the latter part of the NEP. The cause is today the same as then; it is more far reaching and deeper than collectivization. The government takes the product from the peasant, and takes along with it the incentive for increased production beyond his private needs. This grain appropriation under war communism, was known as grain levy; at the end of the NEP, forceful collection of grain, extraordinary taxation, and forced loan subscription; since collectivization there is added the pressure by the state of the administration of the Kolkos and the threatening danger of "Dekulakization". The essence of all of these decrees has not changed; it still centers around the confiscation of peasant production. Just on this account, the recession includes at the present

The American Socialist Quarterly

time not only the Kolkos but also the individual peasant enterprise. He who seeks to make collectivization responsible for everything leaves out of account the fact that agriculture, in the U.S.S.R. on the eve of collectivization (1928-29) was in a worse cul de sac—the area of cultivation and crops declined even more rapidly than at the present time.

Under the influence of political and social factors the “social aspect” of the village has undergone considerable change. In their mentality and interests, inherently small owners, the Kolkos peasants already show various new traits, which they have acquired through their new working and living conditions, through their work in the Kolkos, in the collective working brigades, and in the village soviets. Machine and technic occupy a much greater space in the mind of the peasant than ever before. The well to do peasants have significantly decreased and play no distinctive part in the life of the village. The landless village proletarian and tenant has disappeared entirely. The century old aspect of the village has been radically changed. The “council of the elders” and the decrees of the village-council (MIR) are replaced by the Communist Youth organization and by the Kolkos. The political narrowness and neutrality of the village population are a matter of the past.

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The growth of productive powers within the Soviet economic frame work are well founded; an accelerated growth in industry, a slower growth in agriculture. As a result of the industrialization policy of the Soviet Government this growth in productive power is expressed in a hasty accumulation of industrial capital. Although the Soviet State arose out of the revolution and calls itself a Socialist State, its methods of capital accumulation are hardly distinguishable from the methods of “Original Accumulation of Capital” in capitalist countries.

The realization of the industrialization plans require a vast amount yearly amounting to about 40—50% of the national income. The amount allotted for immediate consumption, for social or cultural purposes, are cut year by year in proportion as the expenditures for industrial investments are increased. Within industry, the capital to be invested was applied for long periods chiefly to heavy industry to the detriment of the more pressing long felt needs. Until 1929 the “savings” were withdrawn mainly, from the villages. To the extent in which this source failed, the state by further expropriating the peasant with the help of the Kolkos and “Dekulakization” was compelled to make the masses of the workers the object of continuously and progressively growing expropriation of income, thereby decisively cutting their purchasing power. The social aspect of this sort of “expropriation” in the Soviet Union is of course different from the one in private-capitalistic countries. Capital is naturally not accumu-

The Results of the Five Year Plan

lated for the benefit of some exploiting class. But the forced expropriation of peasant property, the forced proletarianization of the masses, the volume of the surplus product, the high rate of taxes, the intensification of labor productivity, the inflation,—these are the means which even the Soviet Government employs to safeguard the forced industrial growth. Even in "Socialist" Russia, the development of the material productive forces goes forward at the expense of the interests of the masses, of the workers and peasants. In the Soviet State the curious condition exists, where the immense increase of the state-owned and operated industry and of the capital in the hands of the state goes hand in hand with pauperization of the general masses, of the population which is supposed to be the only rightful owners of all these new riches. In the year 1932, the cutting down of mass consumption has been driven to the utmost limits. Peasants as well as workers are condemned to a permanent state of malnutrition, if not starvation. Many things indicate that the hitherto employed "Universal methods" of financing the Five Year Plan cannot be employed much longer.

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In a country whose general population is forced to go hungry and in rags, where the per capita income is staggeringly low, in a country where large districts are virtually isolated from each other because of impassable roads, gigantic projects are being built up practically without the aid of foreign capital or foreign credit. The water power project on the Dnieper, the Turkestan-Siberian Railway, and the North Canal, as well as many other projects undertaken by the Soviet Government, had already been worked out in one form or another under Czarism. What was beyond the capacity of financially powerful Russia, is now being realized by the impoverished Russia of the Soviets, thrown out of joint by the Revolution. The government was able to complete these tremendous projects thanks only to the possibilities of dictatorial decrees over the economic life and economic income of the country. The work of construction is being actively carried on by members of the new classes who, having risen to political power for the first time and having for the first time been permitted to lay their hands to this creative work, are still filled with revolutionary enthusiasm.

The great technical achievements of the American and German experts, the power of achievement and the more modest claims of the Russian laboring masses, not to mention the enthusiasm of the revolution—these are the factors which have made the completion of these immense projects possible in so short a time. The rigid, brutal discipline and the chaining of the worker to his job, of course also play their part in the "record breaking achievements" of Soviet industry. But only a blind man could fail to see that the U.S.S.R.,

The American Socialist Quarterly

whatever the compulsion with which masses under the yoke of "record breaking achievements" are driven, can also show true deeds of heroism by the "shock troops" of industry. The divers who descend in winter through holes in the ice to frozen riverbeds in order to complete the work on time, the young men of the Communist Youth Organization who, amid driving snow storms and biting cold establish a record for production of concrete,—these workers still have, to be sure, within them, the long capacity of the Russian peasant for suffering, but his willingness to endure these sufferings can be diverted into creative channels only through his belief that a new world is here in the making.

It took the bitter lessons of two, three, four years of uneconomic methods; the building of the Dnieper power plant, built with so heroic an expenditure of effort (which will remain almost completely idle for years to come), it took a thousand other things to prove that in the U.S.S.R., the land of the proletariat, the proletariat and his poverty are in the "limbo of forgotten myths", so that the romance of construction which served to move mountains, began to yield to a more sober state of mind. However precipitously and senselessly the Soviet Government squandered this constructive revolutionary enthusiasm, this priceless capital which made the Revolution possible comes to light, in the fact that at the end of 1932 in order to combat "slacking" it had to make up its mind to punish the loss of a single working day with the immediate dismissal of the guilty laborer, his family's exclusion from the food distribution, and with eviction. The "Socialist rivalry" and the record breaking performances of the "shock troops" are on the wane. On the other hand, penalties and rewards and "education in industriousness through hunger and privation", flourish in their stead. These things symbolize the disappointment which has beset the great majority of the working masses at the beginning of the second Five Year Plan.

For the sake of technical improvement of the great plants, millions of workers must go hungry and be badly housed. Because the Soviet Government has set as its goal "the overtaking of Europe and America", the commissars of the Soviet Government are taking away from millions of peasants practically the entire product of their labor, driving them to sabotage, to neglect their work of sowing and harvesting crops. Granted it is the function of the state to concern itself with the development of productive forces, granted that foundries and power plants must be built for the sake of the future, even that is no reason for neglecting the imperative, burning, immediate daily needs of the producers themselves.

"Communism is Soviet power plus electrification", said Lenin in 1920 at the establishment of the electrification program. This program of 1920 has been surpassed by the Dnieper power works. The

The Results of the Five Year Plan

Soviet Government has at its disposal power plants with a capacity of more than 2 million kilowatts. "In order to secure the victory of Socialism and to make the peasants adherents of the Soviet State, it is necessary to give the village one hundred thousand tractors", said Lenin in the year of the NEP. About the middle of 1932 there were almost one hundred and fifty thousand tractors at work in the U.S.S.R.

Lenin's "conditions for the victory of Socialism" are fulfilled. Have however Lenin's prophecies come true? The question sounds like mockery. Even among the leaders of the Soviet regime, there are few who will maintain that the growing misery, the increasing starvation indicates the triumph of Socialism. Who will speak of the growing confidence of the peasants in the Soviet dictatorship when the greater part of the peasant population within as well as without the Kolkos, thinks only of means of escaping the expropriation decrees and bears a raging hatred towards all connected with the Soviet regime? Socialism presupposes free creative work by the great mass of the workers, presupposes an equitable and purposeful distribution of rights and duties, presupposes some sort of minimum welfare for the workers. To be sure, Socialism is not established immediately in a finished and faultless form; the road to Socialism demands sacrifice and privations. If however it isn't utopian to expect that one can build Socialism in an isolated Soviet State, if the road is properly charted, one should at least expect that after 15 years of building of Socialism at the termination of the Five Year Plan, that existence should be somewhat bearable, and at least, by and by, take on a Socialist tinge. On the contrary, conditions in the present-day Russia are more difficult, more unbearable, not only materially but also socially, spiritually, and culturally.

The Bolshevik plan for the development of Socialism was in the final analysis primitive and utopian. At the end of the epoch of war communism the Bolsheviks realized that the conditions for victory of Socialism could not exist in Russia so long as it remained a backward and industrially undeveloped country. They decided to conjure these plans out of the ground by force and terror, and this and nothing else is the underlying idea of the Five Year Plan. While the Bolsheviks were making possible the realization of super-industrialization at an accelerated tempo, they thought that this super-industrialization was Socialism in the making. The fundamentals of scientific Socialism they replaced with primitive mechanical theories. But the creation of the necessary conditions for the development of Socialism is an infinitely more complex problem than the erection of hundreds of power plants and machine factories. The development of the productive forces of society is a complicated organic process which embraces not merely the increase of industrial production but

The American Socialist Quarterly

also, far-reaching social processes and the simultaneous raising of the cultural level, the needs and standard of living of the workers. According to Marxian concepts the creation of new means and tools of production is a factor to be sure, which in the last analysis determines also the development of the other factors but, it determines also the development of these other factors only in the degree to which the growth is organic, and capable of industrial and cultural development. When, however, factories and mines are built by terroristic dictatorial methods, hastened by "storm tempo", by sweat-shop methods, inevitably a breach must be created between the development of technique and the development of the remaining factors of social life. At the same time economic disproportions will develop which on their part disorganize industry and open an abyss which can only be bridged after long years of overwork and deprivation.

Thousands of tractors have been produced and millions will yet be produced. But these tractors for many years, cannot be fully utilized, because the lack of repair shops, reserve parts and fuel, and because the lack of roads, and the non-existence of a technically trained personnel and the cultural backwardness of the peasants, are the reflection of that industrial backwardness which can only gradually be made good and which the Bolsheviks seek to make up for by their "storm tactics".

These new industrial plants of the Soviet Union may be marvelous. They may be the portents of future Socialism which only by accident have become involved in modern reality. But this boundless enthusiasm for the building of industrial giants, which overstrains Soviet finances to the utmost and condemns the whole population to deprivation, does not shorten the road to Socialism; it rather retards the development of all other factors, without which there will be no Socialism: it lowers the standard of living of the masses and holds back the cultural up-trend.

The Communists may believe, that with the building of these giant power plants on the Dnieper, they are erecting the scaffolding of the Socialist order. They obstruct the road to this "framework" of the future and open the doors for counter-revolution if they intend to keep on ignoring the material and cultural needs of the working masses living and working today in the factories and fields of Russia as has been the case in the realization of the first Five Year Plan.

The prospect of additional years of wretched existence, of more hunger and deprivation, will achieve nothing but the estrangement of the broad masses from Socialism and the revolution for years to come.

The International Socialist Youth Movement

AUGUST TYLER

○ N October 11, 1932 a world congress of the Socialist Youth International was held at Prague. It called upon the young Socialists to "point out to the youth that individual leaders can not bring about a solution of present problems, but that it is the task of the masses themselves, with full **realization of their collective might, with self discipline and self responsibility**, to fashion their own future."

Modern Socialism is based upon the assumption that the working class in its democratically organized mass movements develops the intellectual and moral capacity to play its historic role, the democratization of industry. Among these organizations the youth movements, because they deal with highly impressionable beings, have been in the foreground. Moreover, not until international Socialism reached the stage where in many countries it represented **the** class conscious movement of the workers, addressing itself to the broadest section of the masses, and organizing them into democratic movements, not until then was there a firm base for a healthy youth movement.

In 1907 the first international youth congress was held at Stuttgart. Those nations played the most important part where Socialism had begun to be identified with the organized labor movement, as in Belgium and Austria. Where there was a gap between labor and Socialism as in England, the movement was weak.

It is also to be noted that to have a strong youth movement it is necessary to have youth issues.

Belgium was probably the first nourishing ground of the Socialist youth movement. Belgium is the classic land for the use of the army against strikers. Its history from the middle of the last century up to 1886 was one long nightmare of

The American Socialist Quarterly

hunger revolts drowned in blood. When in 1886 "the Belgian bourgeoisie by the light of the burning castles and factories were able to see for the first time the full gravity of the social question" they tried to solve it by a brutal resort to arms.

After 1886 a number of Socialist youth organizations grew up whose purpose was to bring one message to the young: "Tomorrow you are a soldier. Refuse to shoot upon your fellow worker!"

In Austria the major issue was not anti-militarism as in Belgium but protection and education of apprentices. It stated its aim: "We wish to make an end of the inhuman treatment and exploitation of the apprentices. We will do for ourselves what the societies for the protection of animals do for the dogs and horses... We will found libraries, and introduce professional, speech, and stenography instruction... We will make amends for the time killing and spirit killing Sunday atmosphere by holding songfests, by presenting theatrical pieces, by arranging swimming and athletic events and comradely excursions." The pamphlet ends with the motto "Education liberates!"

A torrent of ridicule greeted this initial attempt. The capitalist press piled calumny and scorn sky high. They were called "boys infested with the lice of the barricades," and "pigmies with bulging ears who wished to build a parliament of Socialist schoolboys." Ridicule failed and parliamentary persecution began. In 1905 the minister of interior was interpellated: "Is His Excellence inclined to dissolve the organization of apprentices in Vienna, and to forbid the founding of such societies as well as the participation of minors in political societies and meetings?" The deputy decried the weakening effect upon the army brought about by the attitude of "youths, immature elements, who before the beginning of their military careers are brought into such close contact with political propaganda." But the Socialist youth rode the waves of scorn and persecution with success.

Three types of youth organizations appeared at the 1907 Congress. Those dedicated to anti-militarism; those dedicated to protection of young workers; and those dedicated to educa-

The International Socialist Youth Movement

tion. In addition to these three items there appeared very prominently a fourth issue: the war against alcoholism!

This last item sounds very strange to Americans but it is a real issue abroad. The aim of labor organizations is to develop self discipline. The Socialist movement needs sober workers. The motto of the German youth movement is: "A drinking worker thinks not; a thinking worker drinks not!"

The European youth movements are much more than economic and political battalions in the class war. They are the training school where the youth of today prepare to take their place in the commonwealth of the future. They have their own athletic and social clubs, their own schools, their own camps, where are developed a new culture and a new ethical system, where they are trained to live together co-operatively.

The following inadequate quotation from the "Aims and Activities of the Socialist Working Youth of Germany" may show what is meant by a "new culture."

"Our organization includes boys and girls. Many turn up their noses when they hear this. They think of the boys and girls who seek one another merely for flirtations. And they think it is so wherever boys and girls come together... But this is foolish, for in the Socialist youth movement the girls are not looked upon as puppy dogs meant for the amusement of males, but as comrades who have a position in the movement equal to the men...

"What binds us Socialists so closely together is the realization of a common future and a common aim. For us the name 'young worker' is not a burden but a distinction, for we feel ourselves part of the great cause of the working class. Our Red Falcons are no longer the oppressed girl and boy apprentices, who shy and terrorized slink along the street. They are boys and girls who in their dress and their bearing are proud of the fact that they are part of the Socialist youth movement. They do not alone sing, but also feel that 'We are the young advance guard of the proletariat.'"

"We in the Socialist movement are not content to talk of Socialism. We wish to live it. We do not dissipate our

The American Socialist Quarterly

free time; we do not poison ourselves with liquor. We live natural and healthy lives. We strengthen our bodies and minds in order that in the working class movement we may be comrades in arms who are healthy, inspired and ready for battle."

Since the last war "ready for battle" has become almost literally true. Europe has a fascist youth movement today. In 1903 Kautsky wrote: "The capitalist class no longer has any ideals and the bourgeois youth can only surpass their elders in blasé manner, ennui, hopelessness, and contempt for humanity or in their brutality and debauchery." In 1903 there was probably little thought that this "brutality" of the bourgeois youth would be organized for the purpose of crushing working class organizations.

At the last Congress of the Socialist Youth International a resolution was passed calling upon the "Socialist youth organizations to prepare the youth to resist all fascist attempts with physical force, whenever reaction is arming itself to do away with democracy by violence." The tense political situation in many of the European nations has led to a closing of ranks and the development of a remarkable discipline in the youth movements. But as the pamphlet already quoted states: "(This organization) is not built up by military drill, but gains its strength by virtue of the fact that each individual wishes to give his utmost to the Socialist cause."

Despite war, persecution, and dictatorial terror the Socialist youth international has grown without pause. In 1907 it had 50,000 members and seventeen organizations. It was temporarily hindered during the war and the communist split. But in 1926 it numbered 180,000; in 1928, 207,000; in 1931, 251,000; and in 1932 over 270,000. This last number does not include various organizations which are forced to exist underground as in Lithuania, Italy, Russia, and Georgia.

There has been one egregious gap in the chain of Socialist strength—England. Here the youth movement limps far behind the labor movement. This is due to the peculiar development of English Socialism.

During the last century there developed a chasm be-

The International Socialist Youth Movement

tween the English Socialists and the labor movement. Where the Socialists did not become outrightly sectarian as did the left wing of the Social Democratic Federation they set themselves up as school-masters (sometimes unpopular too) of the labor movement. The main task of the English Socialists became educational. It is no more coincidence that the English youth movement was built around the Socialist Sunday schools.

Moreover, during the early part of the twentieth century the English Socialist movement was not Socialist but trade unionist. The Labour Party was not an aggregation of individuals but of trade unions. Those young people who were in the movement usually got in thru the union.

Moreover, the English youth had no compulsory military training issue. The reform bills of the nineteenth century which fell to labor in the course of the fight between the landholders and the capitalists lessened the necessity for independent organizations of apprentices. Education was the only issue.

Not until recently has the Labour Party permitted affiliation thru individuals and has it begun to become outright Socialist. The youth movement showed signs of real progress. It was thrown back, however, by the I.L.P. split which saw its repercussion in the youth movement.

The French youth movement has shown remarkable growth during the last four years. In France the youth movement was launched primarily on the issue of anti-militarism at the time of the Dreyfuss affair. The strong syndicalist movement, and the peculiar structure of the French Party which makes it essentially an electoral machine, caused fatal splits in the youth movement and left them no integral place in a real mass movement. The war and the additional Communist split left it prostrate. In 1928 it had about 3,500 members. Since that time, however, the question of militarism has come to the fore in France with a vengeance. It is one of the major issues of the party and has always been, when coupled with a system of universal military training, the

The American Socialist Quarterly

breeding ground for a real youth movement. The French movement now counts over 10,000 members in its ranks.

Since the Spanish revolution the Socialist Youth organization has been able to come above ground and display 17,000 members in that country. In countries like Sweden and Denmark there are powerful youth movements. This is largely due to the fact that the people in these nations not only talk and organize for Socialism but have begun to live cooperatively. The Socialist movements in these nations are held together by quadruple bonds of common interest: political organs, economic organs, educational societies, and co-operatives.

The American Socialist youth movement is also marked by peculiarities. It is weak, but so is the Socialist Party, and for the same reasons. American historical conditions have retarded the development of clear cut class lines and class consciousness.

There have been no particular youth issues. America has never had a system of compulsory and universal military training. Nor has there been an apprentice problem, largely because of the many opportunities open to a young man in the rapidly expanding America. Nor was there need of organizing independent educational facilities among the working class youth because of the widely extant free school system.

The American Socialist youth movement is ideologically confused, as is the membership of the American Socialist Party, and for the same reasons. A Socialist movement without the support of the great body of organized labor is a spirit without a body. It must of necessity be insubstantial and ethereal. It can be tossed hither and yon with every passing ideological current.

Post war historical conditions in America have minimized the part that Socialism plays in the organized labor movement. There has developed a chasm between the Socialist and the trade unionist. The anti-war stand of the Socialists not only drove many from its ranks but also placed a barrier between it and organized labor. The superficial prosperity of the post war years led many former radical trade unionists

The International Socialist Youth Movement

to drop their class consciousness and take up "job consciousness." The rapid reorganization of industries and the Communist splits left many unions so weak that they were forced to sell their souls to the devil (local politicians) in order to preserve life. War and post war conditions in America made labor psychology remarkably unlike socialist psychology. The organized labor movement and the Socialist movement were miles apart.

Wherever such a situation exists there are strong tendencies toward sectarianism. Three factors have saved the American Socialist Party from this fate. First, it is not a new movement without experience. It once was an important factor in the American labor movement. Secondly, a Marxist tradition and the example of Socialist parties abroad prove the necessity of mass parties. Thirdly, those radicals with strong sectarian tendencies join the Communist Party.

But where the Socialist movement has not become identified with the labor movement, where it has no body of immediate experiences upon which to base its decisions, and where its membership is not in close and intimate contact with the realistic problems of labor, there the movement, of necessity, takes on the aspect of a naive child groping this way and that for a solution to even the simplest problems. Such a condition obviously is conducive neither to the numerical or intellectual growth of a Socialist youth movement.

The Socialist youth movement in America is further confused by the advent of that phenomenon—the college radical. The college radical is a depression radical. He thinks that Socialism is a "Good Idea" for the solution of the crisis problem. We ought to give Socialism "a break." Socialism as an inevitable movement expressing the ultimate needs and aims of the working class is not comprehended at all by the collegiate.

To him Socialism is practically synonymous with planned economy. And since he was brought up on post war cynicism, so aptly represented by Mr. Mencken's attacks on democracy, a plan carried thru by a dictator is as good as any other. To this cynicism is added a distrust for the masses fostered by

The American Socialist Quarterly

the sublime snobbery of the American college. The result is that the collegiate radicals have many of them a steady sneer, and often a lively distaste, for democracy. They are excellent timber for communism or fascism.

These collegians yearn for a "respectable" Socialism which they can sell to "intelligent" people.

Some of these are in the Socialist Party, some in the Y.P.S.L. Most of them are in the League for Industrial Democracy because this last organization is in closest contact with the campuses. They also turn to the L.I.D. because the latter has championed a sort of catholic radicalism. To join the L.I.D. was not to commit one's self to Socialism but merely to "radicalism." Some preferred to be called liberals.

* * *

The depression of 1929 marks a new epoch in American history. Class lines are being sharply drawn. Class consciousness must develop. Socialism today in America is facing a renaissance. Even our college radicals, faced with the hunt for a job and a secure livelihood, will begin to understand Socialism as an expression of class consciousness upon the part of the worker. To the extent that the Young People's Socialist League and the Socialist Party can become part of this working class movement, to that extent will the youth movement find stability and success.

* * *

In addressing the Austrian youth in 1903 Kautsky stated: "The working class is today the class of revolutionary idealism, and the political role which the students played a half century before, now falls to the young workers—they are the source from which the enthusiasm of our great cause is ever drawn anew, they are the means whereby the spiritual and moral progress of the working class can best be measured."

History has proven the truth of this statement. The growth of the Socialist Youth International from a mere handful to over a quarter of a million, its capacity to live and fight despite colossal difficulties, have proven that the revolutionary idealism of the working class can draw ever fresh nourishment from the Socialist Youth movement of the world.

Book Reviews

Krieg und Demokratie (War and Democracy)

by Karl Kautsky

Verlag J. H. W. Dietz, Berlin, Germany.

Once more Karl Kautsky is enriching socialist literature with a work of epochal significance. It is to be in four volumes of about 500 pages each, the first of which is under review here. The second is ready for the press.

It would be futile to attempt to present an adequate account of the new work within the limits of a short magazine article. All one can hope to do here is to indicate its purpose and substance. When completed it will be a veritable encyclopedia on war, and together with Kautsky's recent two-volume "Materialist Interpretation of History" (800 to 900 pages each) will constitute unquestionably the most important contribution to socialist thought since Marx and Engels.

Kautsky was prompted to write his new work after reading the memoirs of Angelica Balabanoff, which presented an account of the Zimmerwald conference considered by Kautsky to be one-sided and lacking in objectivity. As he explains in the introduction, what was intended to be an article in reply to Balabanoff, a member of the Zimmerwald executive committee and subsequently secretary of the Third International, until her break with the Bolsheviki, became a huge literary undertaking. The more Kautsky felt himself drawn into the discussion the more he became "a prisoner of war, although not one eager to take flight from his captivity."

"I could not free myself from the subject," he writes. "It dominated me with such intensity that my presentation of the war policies of our epoch and their connection with the democratic movements assumed much greater proportions than I had foreseen."

Those who remember the Zimmerwald conference, held in 1915, in the very midst of the war, will recall that it was characterized by the clash of two currents which ultimately

The American Socialist Quarterly

found expression in the conflict between the reunited Socialist and Labor International and the Third International founded by Lenin in 1919.

The position taken by Lenin at Zimmerwald was that the International was dead, killed by the "war betrayal" of the Socialist parties. Lenin saw but one way out of the situation—the formation of a new international on the basis of the exclusion of the "traitor" parties. Opposing him was the majority of the conference, composed of representatives of those minority factions who had repudiated the war policies of their respective Socialist parties. The chief spokesman of the majority, the man who took the lead in the opposition to Lenin at Zimmerwald, was Paul Axelrod, one of the fathers of the Russian Social-Democracy. The position defended by Axelrod was that the aim of Zimmerwald should be reunion of the Socialist parties for the purpose of bringing the war to a speedy conclusion and restoring the unity of the proletariat for the class struggles that were to come.

Balabanoff sided with Lenin, and later, after the October revolution in Russia, helped him found the Third International. She was one of the first victims of its sectarianism and before long led the procession of dissenters who have since found it impossible to submit to an agency which is nothing more than a rubber stamp of Moscow, a branch of the Russian foreign office for the promotion of Russian national interests, an instrument of the new Red imperialism.

Because he felt that Balabanoff had failed to present an accurate picture of the proceedings at Zimmerwald, Kautsky, who subsequently played a leading part in the reunion of the Socialist and Labor International (1923), undertook to draw that picture on the background of a study of the policies of the various Socialist parties before the war and the effect of these policies upon their attitude in the war. He discovered, however, in the course of his initial attempt, that the policies of the Socialist parties in the twentieth century, their main-springs and effects, could not be understood without a close inquiry into the attitude of the various democratic movements and parties during the past one hundred years on the wars

Book Reviews

which they had influenced and by which they had been influenced. What Kautsky will have produced when the four-volume work is completed will thus be a history and a social-political study of modern democracy and modern war policy.

Viewing the whole question from this historical point of view rather than from the viewpoint of abstract revolutionary slogans, Kautsky moves to the conclusion that the real point at issue is not the "betrayal" which so agitated Lenin in his efforts to become the dictator over the world proletariat through the Third International, efforts which had already become apparent at Zimmerwald, but a sober realization of the governing forces involved. This Kautsky considers an essential prerequisite to the formation of future policy and conduct and the maintenance and strengthening of the international solidarity of the working class in its task of curbing, controlling and eventually paralyzing the forces making for war. Not the transformation of the war into a civil war within the ranks of the proletariat—the effect of Leninist policy—but the utilization of the lessons and experience of the war for the purpose of regalanizing the power of the international socialist and labor movement is the aim Kautsky seeks to serve. It is an aim worthy of his great effort in this new work.

Kautsky's work is, therefore, more than historical and theoretical. It is of the most emphatic practical significance.

As the publisher well says, "it lives in the present, for in its analysis of the past it discusses for the most part events and phenomena closely related in character to the events and aspirations to today and casts an illuminating light upon the problems now confronting us."

The period to be covered in the work embraces the last three centuries.

The first volume before us presents a general theoretical analysis of the nature of war and democracy, coupled with a study of the revolutionary wars from the time of the secession of the Netherlands to the end of the revolution of 1848. The second volume will cover the period of the wars for national independence, 1850 to 1880. The period of the rule of

The American Socialist Quarterly

finance capital, from 1880 to our own day, will be the subject of the third volume. The fourth volume will be devoted to an exposition of the views and attitude on war developed in the camp of modern socialism. In this last volume Kautsky will draw his final deductions.

A conclusion of Kautsky's researches in the first volume is that there is a certain connection between war and democracy. But whereas until 1848 every great war began with a revolution, the process since 1850 has been reversed, war being no longer the consequence of revolution but its impetus. This connection between war and revolution will be analyzed in the second and third volumes.

As Kautsky sees it, the struggle for the abolition of war is essentially a struggle for the supremacy of democracy in international affairs, a continuation of the struggle for the democratization of life and institutions within nations. On the extent to which this struggle is victorious and upon the contribution made by the working class to this victory will depend not only the abolition of war but also the expansion of labor's power and influence in the struggle for socialism. This leads Kautsky to one other conclusion: to the extent to which any group within the working class seeks to impose its will upon the working class as a whole and to transform the class struggle from a struggle waged by democratic methods into a civil war promoted by the weapons of dictatorship—to that extent is the struggle for peace and socialism obstructed, vitiated and rendered impossible.

Once more, as did Marx, Kautsky appeals not for "the criticism of weapons but for the weapons of criticism."

It is, indeed, a mighty weapon that Kautsky is forging in his new work.

Joseph Shaplen.

Farewell to Reform—by John Chamberlain

Liveright, Inc., New York, \$3.00.

"By 'reform' a host of political leaders, Bryan, LaFollette, Wilson, Theodore Roosevelt at times, and Franklin D. Roose-

Book Reviews

vult to-day, have hoped to 'return' to the ways of their fathers—to the methods and the possibilities of a more primitive capitalism." This quotation from Mr. Chamberlain's book contains the nub of the matter. His interesting historical analysis of all the reform movements that have flashed across the political horizon since civil war days leads inevitably to the conclusion contained in the words quoted. The book is therefore important, even if the idea it chiefly represents is not particularly new. A new generation of minds inquiring into the phenomena of capitalist society,—its inadequacy, its creakings, its political corruption, its inability even to comprehend the problems it creates,—will find in "Farewell to Reform" much laboratory material that should prove of value. The inadequacy of Populism, of the Single Tax, of the Rooseveltian brand of Progressivism, of the programs of LaFollette and Wilson, are traced back here to their fundamental error; i.e. to the failure of their founders and leaders to understand the class structure of capitalist society on the one hand, and on the other the inevitability of such phenomena as the trusts, imperialism, and the concentration of wealth. They relied on "moral principles," on "natural rights," on "theories of good government," on anything in fact but a sound understanding of capitalist society.

Similarly Mr. Chamberlain pays his respects to such moderns as Walter Lippman, Stuart Chase and George Soule, whom he convicts of like astigmatism in their strictures on the maladjustments of the present. He is sufficiently clear in his logic to perceive that the hope for social planning, for planned production, within capitalism is utopian. "The situation begs for a 'demand' politics along socialist lines" he says. And again "planned capitalism, being a contradiction in terms seems no permanent way out."

Part of Mr. Chamberlain's method is an analysis of the literature produced under the impact of social forces. If here and there his presentation lends to a book or a writer undue importance, and if the present reviewer finds it difficult to subscribe to all his judgments, the ensemble is nevertheless impressive. The American writer emerges from the court room

The American Socialist Quarterly

absolved in great measure from the charge that social problems do not concern him. If his treatment of these problems has proved unsatisfactory, he shares that defect with the statesman, the philosopher, indeed with the population.

It would be pleasant to be able to report that Mr. Chamberlain, having said "Farewell to Reforms," had also said "Hail, Socialism." There is no evidence in the present volume that he has not done so; none that he will not. Logic demands that he throw in his lot with the Socialist movement. There are however disconcerting hints in his book that he is somewhat deceived by the glamor of Russian propaganda. His association with the group that has recently undertaken to publish "Our America," a maverick group representing nothing but themselves, is regrettable. So clear-sighted an historian and so adequate a writer will render worthy service to the movement of the workers in any case. That service would be many times more significant if back of the writer were a powerful, class-conscious organization such as the Socialist Party will one day be.

DAVID P. BERENBERG.

A something more than music; something grand,
Something to move the too complacent town,
This was his secret wish. A little frown
Lay on his brow; he hid it with his hand.
How many years it had been his to stand
On yonder stone. A prophet? No, a clown
Burning within to tear their madness down
Who in their greed would tear apart the land.
Swift were the words that then came from his lips.
How many shafts he'd sent into their hearts!
And they? They sat and listened to his quips
Too dull to fear his faintly poisoned darts.
He had not moved them. He was silent now,
Time for the younger men to take the plough.

D. P. B.