

# **SOCIALIST REVIEW •**

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HERBERT ZAM: Editor

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## The Crisis in Spanish Socialism

by Francisco Largo Caballero

Comrade Diaz Alor.

Dear Fellow Socialist:

I received your letters of July 20, 23, 27, and 29, and of August 8 in due time, with newspapers, clippings, and so on. Many thanks for them.

When a supreme event is expected and then a fiasco follows, they say "the mountain labored"; in this case the more exact epigram would be the "abortion of the mountain". The National Committee has unanimously approved the actions of the Executive Committee. All Spanish Socialists know this already. Their complaints about the negligence of the Party Administration are unjustified, the product of their feverish imagination! All goes well; there is absolute respect for the rights of Socialists at the front and behind the lines.

The stories of murders and assaults upon our fellow Socialists are slanders of a few malcontents; the stories of the attacks on Socialist locals, federations, and periodicals are malignant inventions of "social fascists"! When has our party been better directed and administered? During what period of the 50 years of its life has greater and more complete internal democracy been practiced? Thanks to the way that Executive Committee of ours has been conducting affairs, the war against the rebels and invading nations moves toward victory in double-quick time; all is perfect in the military, diplomatic, political, health, commissary, and social departments! This is attested to by the thousands of letters of support and congratulations and the utterances of the Communist Party! Forward then!

The actions of the Executive Committee since the last regular meeting have been approved, including all of

the acts taken during the time when I presided over the government—until the crisis of May, 1937. But here is proof of exquisite impartiality—I have not even been summoned to report! Why? If by my accusations against the Executive (they will say) I may in any way contribute to loss of the war, it is best not to call me! At any rate the result would have been the same. Well done! "The first thing is to win the war." If they had summoned me it would have given satisfaction to the everlasting disrupters of the party and would have prejudiced the work of peace and fraternity that the Executive Committee has been realizing with such good effect!

What does it matter to Socialists and to all Spaniards—the why and wherefore of the political crisis of May, 1937?—the fact that the then Minister of War [meaning Caballero.—ED.] wanted to eliminate the preponderant influence which the Communist Party was acquiring in the Ministry of War and the army commands through unscrupulous means? That was madness, because, according to the Communists themselves, they are the only ones who are fighting against and conquering the enemy; all others are pretenders who cover themselves with the safe-conduct of being indispensable to the political and trade union organizations! The best proof of the error of that minister is that today those elements do *not* predominate in any of the bodies of the state! The courts, the police, the Assault Guards, the carabineros, army commands, the health and the administration directors—everything is in the hands of Republicans and Socialists. What more can we ask? And all this because of the tact and talent of the Executive Committee!!



The then minister of war had the absurd idea of starting a campaign which he had already prepared—a campaign to cut the enemy's communications between Cordoba and Seville, capturing Penarroya and Merida. That was a delusion of grandeur, vanity, madness, a desire to be a "little Napoleon". Why such sacrifices? Something had to be done to prevent the execution of this campaign, which would benefit only the enemy if it were successful. The campaign was made impossible by the crisis. In the last analysis, the facts have shown that this operation was unnecessary, inconvenient and dangerous—as long as the command was not turned over completely to the Communists! Besides, was not the province of Estremadura, under the command, as it was, of neo-Communist [probably means Stalinist—ED.] leaders, completely safe? The facts have proved this.

On the other hand, the Premier [Caballero—ED.] had the ridiculous pretension of being opposed to the intervention of other foreign governments in our political life, both national and international. It was proper to take up arms against Franco, Italy and Germany in order to defend our political and national independence—but how can anyone oppose the intervention of other governments? We would be ungrateful and unobliging to those who sell us arms—arms which are paid for in gold, cash on the line, and which they use even for blackmail, removing and installing ministries at their pleasure. We understand, of course, that all of that is done with the "good intention" that we should "win the war" after we are exhausted physically and economically. But during Largo Caballero's government Malaga was lost—just as other cities were lost before and since. Caballero and his comrades were traitors; it was their fault that Malaga was lost! The only ones who defended it with blood and iron were the Communists! Let this be attested to by Deputy Bolivar and his comrade, who has remained with the rebels—no doubt some day to give the enemy the coup de grace!

And what does it matter that the accusations against the Undersecretary of War, General Asencio, have been withdrawn, leaving him exonerated? According to the Communists, the people will correct these judicial errors. Besides, have not the benefits of these crises been proved, since immediately thereafter not only have we not lost an inch more of ground—oh, no!—but nearly all towns lost during Largo Caballero's government have been recaptured? As for our international relations, when in the history of Spain have they been invested with more authority and respect for us than since the fall of that government? Never! The visit paid to Caballero by an English admiral was not a manifestation of friendship and sympathy for republican Spain, as our vanity led us to believe. No, its purpose was to pull Caballero's ears for his splitting

job and to demand of him repentance and reform! Absolutely! As soon as that pernicious government disappeared, England and France had nothing but aid and support for us!

But let us put aside this childishness and go on to more serious things.

On August 12, there came to my house a commission of five comrades: Narciso Vazquez, Huerta, Romero Solano, Manuel Cordero, and Puente, and they gave me the following letter:

#### SPANISH SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY

Barcelona, August 12, 1938.

Comrade F. Largo Caballero, Barcelona.

My dear fellow-Socialist and friend:

The 23rd will mark the 50th anniversary of the Spanish Socialist Labor Party.

The Executive Committee of our party entrusted us with the task of preparing the commemoration of this extraordinary event in our national life. One of our purposes, and one to which under the circumstances we give decisive political importance and which has already been approved by the Executive Committee, is to organize a meeting with the collaboration of yourself and of Comrades Julian Besteiro, Indalecio Prieto, and Negrin. Hence we solicit your collaboration for this event, which we hope will be granted in the interest of the high purpose which we pursue both for the party and for the country.

Awaiting your favorable reply, we remain your comrades and friends.

For the Commission,

MANUEL CORDERO

The gist of my reply is in this letter:

Barcelona 8/13/1938.

"To the Organizing Commission of the meeting to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the founding of the Spanish Socialist Labor Party:

"I am writing this to confirm the statements that I made to you orally yesterday and also to amplify them in order to justify my refusal to take part in the said meeting.

"As some may have forgotten it, perhaps it is well to recall that I joined the party on March 9, 1893, that is to say, forty-five years and five months ago. My affiliation with the U.G.T. [General Workers Union] was earlier, in 1890, forty-eight years ago. I do not mention this as any special virtue, but to indicate that I have never been a passive member; from the first day of my affiliation I devoted my whole life to the service of the Party and the U.G.T. In both organizations I have been placed in posts of the highest responsibility, both at home and abroad; my actions have never called forth censure. Nevertheless, and especially since the political crisis of May, 1937, a crisis which was provoked by the Executive Committee, the latter, and most of the Socialist press, controlled by that committee, have, with the able assistance of the Communist Party, waged a campaign of defamation against me such as has never been known in the annals of the Spanish labor movement. If special newspaper articles and official statements or speeches at meetings and conferences were to be believed, I was a breaker of discipline, a trouble-maker, a bad Socialist, an Anarcho-Syndicalist and a nefarious splitter of the Socialist Party and of the working class—practically a traitor.

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"I had been suffering all these insults and slanders in silence for many months and when I finally decided to speak out publicly, I was permitted to hold the first meeting [in Madrid—the speech was summarized in the *Socialist Review*, Vol. 6, No. 4—ED.] because it was expected to be a failure; but since it turned out to be just the opposite, a Socialist minister, backed up by the Executive Committee, prohibited me from continuing my speeches. I was even confined to my residence so as to prevent me from getting in touch with Socialists. Furthermore, with the aid of the police and Assault Guards, Socialist newspapers and organizations which protested against these abuses were forcibly taken over. I was summarily ousted, without any explanation, from the Secretaryship of the U.G.T., to which I was unanimously elected at the 1932 Congress. I was also ousted from the presidency of the parliamentary minority and of the Permanent Committee of the Socialist Parliamentary delegation.

"As a result of this campaign, unquestionably certain groups of the organized working class have been incited to a feeling of hostility against me that will not disappear as long as things are not clarified at a convention—a convention which I desire as much as life itself—at which justice can be done when the truth, now hidden, is made known!

"What has been done to me can only be done to a bad Socialist. Am I one? In that case I cannot take part in such an important and historic event as is being planned. And if, on the other hand, I am a good Socialist, deserving the confidence of the Party Administration, let it be declared publicly and let the campaign against me be rectified beforehand.

"Besides, what could one say at such a meeting, presided over by the secretary of the party? Could one comment, not on the facts just mentioned, but on the criminal schism in the party that took place in 1921, if my memory does not fail me, and to the events that followed and cost the life of a fellow Socialist, pointing to the person presiding at the meeting for "spiritual unity of the party", the direct author of it all? And if I mentioned these matters, about which my conscience would not let me keep silent, would it be possible to continue the debate if the person referred to should answer? Moreover, at such a meeting would it be necessary to approve the policy of the Socialists in the government, even when one did not agree with it, or to make a loyal and just criticism of that policy before the Premier, another speaker at the meeting?

"As you can see, the matter is more serious than it appears at first sight. But it will be said, 'All that should be forgotten for the sake of winning the war!' However, to this argument I must reply that I did just that in September, 1936, when I set up the government which I headed. And to be sure, that example has been of no avail.

"For these reasons, then, and for many others I could cite, it is with sincere feeling that I must say to you that I cannot take part in the meeting you are planning. Moreover, I am convinced that my absence will in no way influence the course of the war.

Always for Socialism,

FRANCISCO LARGO CABALLERO."

I am not prepared to be a puppet in the hands of any Machiavellian in order to maintain conditions I consider destructive to the Socialist Party and to the country. I shall be blamed if the meeting is not held (although I believe that others did not accept), but

that does not bother me. My conscience is clear, and in a way I am happy, because I have saved the working class from another deception. Will the policy of the party and of the government be modified after the meeting? No? Then it's not worth the trouble. That is what counts; men are secondary.

The post of the party vice-president, which Anastasio de Gracia resigned some time ago, as well as the posts of the three Executive Committee members, Fernando de los Rios, Jimenez Asus, and Jeronimo Bujeda, who have been absent from Spain since the start of the war and, according to their own words, are fulfilling important international functions abroad, have been declared vacant. Alejandro Otero, Antonio Huerta, Ricardo Zabalza, and Lucio Martinez have been designated to take their places. According to official notices, these designations will be submitted to a referendum or plebiscite for confirmation. Nothing could be more absurd! A referendum, like a plebiscite, simply permits approval or disapproval, a yes or no vote; that is to say, organizations cannot change in part or entirely the decision of the National Committee. You say that is not authorized by the Constitution? That makes no difference! "We are at war" and "the main thing is to win it." What a magnificent political godsend the war has turned out to be!

Article 44 of the Constitution of the Party reads: "All the members of the Executive Committee shall be elected by the convention. Should any of the persons designated by the convention to constitute the Executive Committee not accept the position, or should a vacancy occur for any other reason whatsoever, the party membership shall elect the successor." As Maura said: "Is it clear?" And how clear! That is why they are attempting deception. If this article were strictly obeyed, the organizations would be perfectly justified in electing to the vacant offices either those men who have been designated by the National Committee, or else other Socialists—and their admission would be mandatory.

Another typical decision: the National Committee, as the result of grave and judicious deliberations, has created a new category of members of the Executive Committee, ex-officio members, a class of elder statesmen, consisting of the ex-presidents of the party and the ministers! I can hear you murmuring, "But in what part of the Constitution or in what decision of the party have they found authority to create these offices?" Don't let it worry you too much. In neither. Nor is it necessary! These are obligations of the war! "The main thing is to win the war!" And of course the war is certainly won as soon as we confer the title of ex-officio members on Besteiro, Negrin, del Vayo, Paulino Gómez, and myself.

(Continued on Page 14)



# THE 1938 ELECTIONS

by David P. Berenberg

## I.

THE SWING to the right has begun. After the fiasco of the president's attempt to remodel the Supreme Court, which unleashed all the latent hatred and fear felt by the masters of society of the "vagaries" of the New Deal, the swing to the right set in quite definitely. It was evident in the pressure put on certain congressmen and senators to force them to vote against the Supreme Court measure. It was evident in the renewed drive on the Wagner Act. It was to be seen in the concerted newspaper drive on the W.P.A. on the T.V.A., on the unbalanced budget and on the government's spending policy. It was to be seen in the open scorn with which the organs of public opinion mocked the New Deal for having caused the "recession", which some of them named the "Roosevelt depression".

It was inevitable that the election of 1938 should have registered an increase in the Republican vote, and a corresponding loss of power and prestige for the New Deal. Not even the Republicans, however, for all their pre-election predictions, expected quite so emphatic a come-back as the votes registered. They gained fourteen governorships, fourteen senators and eighty-one members of the House of Representatives. Their popular vote rose from something like 36% to nearly 49% in 1938. They are vastly encouraged. They think now that they have a chance to elect a president and a congress in 1940.

They have good reason for so thinking. The election has shown the New Deal on the wane. The defection of large middle class elements, which until now had remained faithful to Roosevelt, exposes fatal weaknesses in the government. It must do something to win back the wavering elements. How can it do so without causing disaffection among other groups, among W.P.A. workers, among workers who depend on the strength of the CIO for their newly gained rights, and for their wages and conditions? How can it win back the budget balancers, and the advocates of government thrift, and at the same time furnish relief to the millions still unemployed by private industry?

Unquestionably, the government will try to do something to save the situation. It is already clear that, while there will be funds for relief in its various forms, a serious effort will be made to curtail them. A very definite effort will be made to canalize relief into the new large armaments, which will be demanded in the name of a holy fight against the dictatorships. The appropriation of billions for armaments will, it is hoped, cut off the active opposition of steel, and of re-

lated industries; please Wall Street and the banks; head off the criticism of the important journals; and hence turn the dissident middle classes back into the Roosevelt fold in the name of patriotism. It is understood, of course, that the money so spent will give employment to numbers of men, and so make the reduction of the W.P.A. and of the other relief rolls, less painful. A budget need not be balanced when the sacred name of "national honor" is invoked. An administration that re-arms will be forgiven much, even the attempt, now quietly abandoned, to remodel the Supreme Court.

But the question arises whether such a program will succeed in keeping the middle classes in line. There remains one of those frivolous questions which yet are very stubborn facts in our political life. Whom can the Democrats nominate in 1940? Roosevelt? If they do, and he is still their best bet if they take the New Deal seriously, they face the "third term" issue. Now this question is loaded with even more dangerous dynamite than the Supreme Court issue. There has never been a president who successfully challenged the third term taboo. Grant tried it and came a cropper. The first Roosevelt tried it, and failed, even though he had the argument that his "third cup of coffee" was really a second, inasmuch as his first had really been the unfinished term of his predecessor, William McKinley. The intellectually barren, but politically astute Calvin Coolidge "did not choose to run" for a third term. Franklin Delano Roosevelt is very popular, as the Gallup poll still shows, but whether he is popular enough to overcome this particular taboo is very doubtful. He will be charged, as he has already been, with the intention of becoming a dictator. He will be charged with over-weening pride, in taking upon himself more than did George Washington, who inaugurated the third term tradition. If Roosevelt accepts the nomination in 1940 he will give his Republican opponent all the trumps. To the very real reasons for which the money powers oppose him today, there will be added the imponderables based on unreason, on tradition and fear, on carefully fostered hysteria.

But if the New Dealers do not nominate Roosevelt, whom have they? Murphy of Michigan? He is a Catholic and for that reason alone, to say nothing of his stand in the sit-down strikes, he is unavailable. Jackson? Roosevelt could not even force the Democratic Party in New York State to accept him as its nominee for the governorship in 1938. However able he may be, and however sincere a New Dealer, Jackson could not be nominated by a convention to be dominated once more by the Southern Bourbons and by machines such as Tam-

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many's and that of Hague of Jersey City, nor, if by a miracle he were nominated, could he be elected. The fact is that there is no New Dealer who, in my opinion, could be elected. Certainly not Harry Hopkins, who is apparently being groomed now, as his appointment to the Secretaryship of Commerce would seem to indicate. It will be sadly amusing to see what the newspapers would make of Harry Hopkins' record as head of the W.P.A., should he be the New Deal nominee in 1940.

While the Democrats, or at least the New Deal Democrats enter the home stretch without a candidate, or with only F.D.R. as their available choice, the 1938 elections produced four or five young Republicans around whom the middle classes, who will be the deciding factor in the coming election, can rally. Thomas Dewey, of New York, did not lose prestige by his defeat at the hands of Governor Lehman. Lodge of Massachusetts and Taft of Ohio are other possibilities. They are being boomed now as young progressives, who will retain all that is really good in the New Deal, but who have sufficient sense to reject "the mad spending policy" and to give business a "chance" to show what it can do when not hampered by unnecessary restrictions. If even one of them comes through the next eighteen months with no serious blunder marked up against him he will be available as the nominee. And whoever he is, unless the Republican Party is so inept as to turn to one of the Old Guard, his chances for election will be excellent.

The money powers will be for him, no matter how "progressive" his program. The papers will be for him. And the middle classes, the owning farmers, many of the skilled workers in the A. F. of L. unions, and in no unions, will be for him. He will have a gaudily progressive program, full of all the gadgets of "social security" with a few Townsend trimmings; he will be all for relief, controlled, however, by the local authorities. He will be for greater armaments, and against the dictators—of Europe. And if the present government plays its hand badly in the next few months, and I have suggested that this is very likely, the Republican nominee will have for him large numbers of disaffected workers.

## II

The recent elections give little indication that America is ripe for a labor party. Wherever, with a few minor exceptions, labor parties participated in the elections, their showing was disappointing. In New York, for example, the American Labor Party polled fewer votes than in 1937. On the surface of the returns, it is true, the A.L.P. votes furnished the balance of power that put Governor Lehman back into office. Actually, of course, it is impossible to say how many of these votes would have been recorded for the governor

on the Democratic line, had there been no Labor Party in the field.

In Minnesota and in Wisconsin the alliance of Labor with middle class political elements also proved a failure. In Wisconsin, for the first time in many years, a LaFollette was defeated for office. The failure of LaFollette's third party movement, which Philip LaFollette as yet refuses to abandon, is especially significant. Philip LaFollette had staked his political future on the National Progressives. Its failure, must be interpreted as a distinct set-back for the idea of a large "third party" on the traditional all-class lines.

The success of Jasper McLevy in rolling up a large vote in Connecticut has seemed to some to indicate a growth in radical sentiment in that state. When, however, the situation in Connecticut is examined more closely it becomes evident that the McLevy candidacy was used by the Republicans to defeat Governor Cross and to inflict another defeat on the New Deal. McLevy's basic strength was among small landlords and homeowners whose main concern was tax-reduction. In New York the American Labor Party has lost all its representatives in the legislature as the result of its deal with the Republicans.

The sorry doings of the A.L.P. in the recent elections emphasize a point that Socialists have been making since the formation of a labor party was first bruited. There is room for a labor party in America. There is need for a party of farmers and industrial workers. But any labor party that seeks a short cut to power by means of alliances with bourgeois organizations, no matter how "advanced" or how "liberal" is foredoomed.

The C.I.O. (through the Labor Non-Partisan League) and the A.F. of L. both played sorry roles in the election. The C.I.O. was the tail to the Roosevelt wing in the Democratic Party, participated in the Democratic primaries in support of Roosevelt candidates, and when defeated, like "good Democrats" went along with the victor. The A.F. of L. policy nationally was very simple: see whom the C.I.O. support and then support the other fellow—a policy of pure spite, which was repudiated by numerous local and state organizations (notably in Pennsylvania and California). Neither organization followed a course which would promote independent labor political action, or which would enhance the interests of the working class.

Particularly reprehensible is the statement of Lewis since the elections that the C.I.O. policy must be participation in the Democratic Party in order to strengthen the hand of the New Deal wing. As was pointed out in the *Socialist Review* some time ago, this is a policy of liquidating the Labor Party movement, not of building it. Labor has nothing to gain through an alliance with or working inside of the old parties.



That the Republicans too regret their brief adventure with the A.L.P. becomes evident from post-election statements by local leaders like John Crews. How Republicans can be otherwise than angry, in view of labor aid to Lehman, or how the Democrats can approve of the working alliance with Simpson and Crews passes understanding.

In connection with the attempt of Kenneth Simpson, the chairman of the Republican Party in New York State, to rehabilitate his party by alliances with the A.L.P., it is interesting to note how Mr. Simpson fared after the elections. There was a meeting of national representatives of the Republican Party shortly after the election to consider ways and means of capturing power in 1940. Mr. Simpson was there, obviously expecting to be patted on the back and to be advanced to national recognition for his feat in bringing the New York Republicans within an ace of victory.

The "progressiveness" of the re-born Republican Party had been much advertised. The Old Guard had, so it was reported, been shelved and new blood was in control. The younger men, it was said, were all keenly aware of the necessity of a more liberal approach to national problems.

It was a shock to Mr. Simpson and to his backers when he was pointedly ignored, left off the Executive Committee and given clearly to understand that, while he could not be repudiated, he was distinctly *persona non grata*. Even the "Herald Tribune", the "Daily Worker" of Wall Street, was annoyed at the brusque way in which the carefully synthesized liberal camouflage of the "new" Republicans had been brushed away. The Old Guard was in the saddle and it meant to stay there. As long as the Old Guard attacked the New Deal as "red communism" it had no intention of fostering the same type of "radicalism" within its own ranks. It left nothing to the imagination. In 1940 it will, if necessary, nominate one of the "young liberals"—but it will take him only if it is sure that it can control him absolutely. It makes no secret of its intentions to swing as far away from the New Deal as it can, in the event of a national victory.

How far is that?

It is a commonplace to assert that even the Republicans can never entirely retrace the steps taken by the Roosevelt administration. The social security laws are here to stay. A Republican victory will merely mean that they will be administered by one set of politicians instead of another. Deserving Republicans will then receive most of the benefits, where deserving Democrats receive them now.

The need for relief will remain as long as industry does not absorb the millions of the unemployed. Industry will never again fully absorb them. A Repub-

lican administration will therefore be compelled to subsidize relief. It will try to do so by increasing the burden of taxation on the masses. It will try to transfer the burden of relief to the "local authorities", which in many cases will mean starvation. It will try to borrow less. But it will discover that neither the local authorities, nor taxes alone will be adequate. The borrowing it will be forced to do will unbalance the budget just as much as does Mr. Roosevelt's borrowing.

A Republican administration will crack down on labor. It will re-write the Wagner Act. It will in its administrative measures be less friendly. But so will the Roosevelt administration before long. That is, it will be if it wants to regain the support of the Senate insurgents, of the Byrds, the Burkes, the Garners and the Holts. It will, if F.D.R. decides that it is more important to reconcile the middle class elements that have strayed from the fold than the labor elements that have thus far remained faithful.

### III.

In response to the election, Roosevelt has already swung to the right, as expressed by his message to Congress, his huge armaments program, his willingness to use relief funds for war purposes, his new foreign policy. On the basis of a war-and dictatorship-scare, Roosevelt cries for national unity, of course behind his administration. The national unity between Hull and Landon at Lima was a clever move. The Republicans, on the threshold of power, however, are hardly likely to be taken in by this maneuver.

A possibility that has sometimes been suggested is an anti-Roosevelt deal between dissident Democrats and the Republicans. That was tried in 1936 and was so dismal a failure that it is not likely to be tried again. But a real possibility, the most probable of all, is that the next two years will see a struggle for power within the Democratic Party. In this struggle it is not at all certain that the New Dealers will win. On the contrary, the great growth of the Republican vote, added to the virtually complete failure of the president's efforts to read out of his party those who voted against the Supreme Court measure, will give added strength to the bourbon wing of the Democratic Party. This wing has never loved the New Deal. It welcomes a chance to end it—and to end it from within. It welcomes a chance to settle scores with Ickes, Hopkins and Jackson. It welcomes a return of the old-time patronage, of the game as it used to be played.

It is possible that this right wing revolt will carry the 1940 convention and that it will nominate some one like McNutt or Bennet Clark. It is even possible that such a candidate will win. In that case the Democratic Party will do just what the Republican Party contemplates

(Continued on Page 15)



# THE HAPPY HARVEST SEASON

by Frank N. Trager

LAST SPRING in these pages "an examination of the current Roosevelt-Wallace farm act indicated that its program of modified scarcity and 'sales-tax' subsidy to the producing farmers (in order to preserve the present ratio of industrial prices and profits) may temporarily prevent a complete collapse of the farming industry in America but essentially it but *staves off* the impending doom of capitalist farming in America." (*Socialist Review*, Vol. 6, Nos. 5 and 6, 1938.)

By the summer of 1938 the Agricultural Adjustment Administration began to experience difficulties which mounted steadily.

1. In June 1938 the National Emergency Council presented its fact-finding report on "The Economic Conditions of the South," "America's Economic Problem Number 1." It revealed and, to a certain extent, dramatized some of the problems which the current A.A.A. significantly omitted from consideration.

2. July, 1938 found farm prices for cotton nose-diving from a 1937 high of 14.5 cents per pound to 8.75 cents; wheat followed a similar downward course from a 1937 high of \$1.62 per bushel to 81 cents per bushel.

3. By August it was apparent that bumper crops for the United States and other countries increased crop "surpluses" here as well as diminished export marketing.

4. When the Harvest "was in" farmers' cash income, plus government subsidies, had dropped a billion dollars between 1937 and 1938. The farmers' (roughly 20% of the total population) share of the national income fluctuated as follows: 1910, 17 per cent; 1920, 13 per cent; 1930, 6½ per cent; 1932, 4 per cent; 1934, 7½ per cent; 1936, 9 per cent; 1937, 8.8 per cent; 1938, 8 per cent.

5. In October and November, Wallace sent experts scurrying to Europe to look for new markets for the bumper crops and at the same time announced a variation in his original program. This was to be in effect, a form of domestic dumping along Federal Surplus Commodity Corporation lines, i.e., relief—partly because the "one third of the nation" really needed the crops; partly to avoid a growing farm revolt (which actually affected the November elections and aimed at junking the crop control plans for export-debenture schemes. (More of this latter below). Under this pressure the Administration dumped 100 million bushels of wheat abroad by subsidizing the exporting farmers.

6. December brought little cheer to the Department of Agriculture because its referenda on crop control suffered jolts from voting rice and tobacco farmers. The

cotton farmers voted to continue crop control in face of a 12 million bale carry-over.

7. Learning little, the A.A.A. for 1939 calls for further acreage reductions in order to "reduce surpluses"; plans to spend 750 million dollars in subsidy; hopes to get processing taxes through the current Congress in order to be prepared for additional subsidy; and thus expects to achieve parity prices for wheat, cotton, rice and corn which have reached to-date approximately one-half parity-prices (based on the 1909-1914 average prices, adjusted to the prices of commodities farmers buy)!

All this did not go unnoticed and unchallenged in the farm belt. The usual and correct estimation of farm opinion couples it with the fluctuation in size and price of crop. Bumper crops and falling prices created the to-be-expected reaction. Clamor arose for the *immediate* payment of parity prices, despite the fact that these payments could not, according to the law, be paid before 1939 "cooperation" had been established. Even so, only 212 million dollars were *available* for these payments whereas a conservative estimate would place the amount required at one billion seven hundred and fifty million dollars!

Undoubtedly, the Republican gains in the mid-west farm belt reflected farmer discontent. Senators McGill and Pope, co-sponsors of the 1938 Act, were defeated and other Democrats gave way before the rejuvenated elephant. To stave off defeat, Wallace, just before election announced his "Two-price plan". No details have as yet come forth but essentially the plan calls for what I have called "domestic dumping". That is, the government will purchase the unmarketed surplus and redistribute it to the lower-income population. This can be done as straight relief but the cost and management would be almost prohibitive in bumper crop years. Or it can be done by charging a lower price in government controlled markets. In either case, the two-price plan seems at this time to be still-born.

To be fair to the Administration, it should be pointed out that the "two price system" or domestic dumping which retains useful and necessary farm produce for our own population is, in principle, immeasurably superior to the renewed demands heard in various farm quarters for export dumping of surplus crops. This latter proposal is mainly a Republican Party brain-storm that in one guise or another has found backing since the 1920's. It is important to understand and defeat such proposals even though support comes to them, by historical association, from the otherwise progressive National Farmers Union.



Briefly the idea is to fix a "fair" price for domestic farm consumption, allot to each farmer his "fair" share of this quantity, sell the surplus abroad at any price it will bring, and reimburse the farmer for the difference between domestic and export prices. This sum is to be paid out either from the Treasury or through special domestic taxes.

The inevitable effect of such export dumping is to hike up domestic food prices in order to make up this difference between domestic and export prices. Also, since it permits the country of export to sell at *any* price in the foreign market, it creates a trade war among the crop exporting countries which must necessarily adversely affect the other aspects of international trade. If such a plan were adopted, the twenty-odd trade treaties negotiated by Secretary Hull would be nullified and broken overnight. For this and other reasons the Administration has thus far shied away from these export-debenture schemes.

This picture of farm ferment would be incomplete without a glance at three recent significant farm gatherings:

*National Farmers Union:* I doubt whether any previous convention of the N.F.U. rivaled in importance or approached in social and economic perspective this 34th annual convention. More and more, this organization, purged of disrupting influences, begins to emerge as a truly progressive organization of small farmers. Space prevents reprinting the "Resolution and Legislative Report" passed at its three-day session in November. The convention clearly condemned the profit-system of controlled scarcity and clearly advocated a "system of cooperative business owned by producers and consumers." It recognized the imperialist nature of modern wars and advocated a program similar to the Keep America Out of War Committee; it expressly rejected "Collective Security—(as) favoring one set of imperialist nations as against another." It sought to bring about close cooperation between farmer and industrial worker.

For its immediate farm program it continued to advocate the guaranteed "cost of production" plan. At no time has this plan been clarified beyond debt-adjustment and refinancing. Actually the N.F.U. leans toward the domestic allotment and export dumping program though its own interests would be better served if its program geared into Wallace's two-price system. Some of its leaders must soon tackle the job of analyzing its long-upheld but none too clear slogan of "cost-of-production". This is especially desirable because of the soundness of its general analyses and perspective on international economics and world peace. (A more extensive report by Paul Porter may be found in recent issues of *Socialist Call* and *Kenosha Labor*.)

One month later, the *American Farm Bureau Federation*—a semi-official Administration farm organization—met in its 20th annual convention. John M. Collins

remarked in reporting the convention to the *New York Times*: "As was expected, the Federation gave general endorsement to the principles of the present Federal farm program and then went on to ask President Roosevelt to call a conference among the three economic groups of the nation to work out a program promoting economic balance."

The Federation in contrast to the *National Farmers Union* (and the *Grange*, the third group meeting during this period) went on record supporting the A.A.A. in its effort to promote parity prices through controlled production. Actually the Federation represents fewer dirt farmers than either the N.F.U. or the Grange. It has been built up throughout the last twenty years by its close control over the appointments of the three thousand county farm agents—one of the most effective and far-reaching arms of the Department of Agriculture. This particular convention was interesting in that it invited a favorite son of Arizona, Mayor La Guardia of New York, to address its sessions. The Mayor spoke for the "American Public".

The present Congress will again have to tackle the farm problem. There is no need for repeating here what I said last Spring on the character of a sound farm program. Controlled scarcity production, the Roosevelt-Wallace program or domestic price-fixing plus subsidies for export dumping, the probable Republican program, are equally futile. Short of a Socialist and cooperative solution to the farm problems, it would seem to me that the Wallace two-price system or domestic dumping is a better expedient than any other capitalist solution yet advanced to the problem: What to do with our "surpluses". It has the merit at least of *consuming* domestically what we produce—always remembering that save for cotton *we still produce too little* in the United States to provide healthful consumption of farm goods for our thirty million families.

The recent farm revolt as reflected in the election will do little more than irritate the Wallace farm administration, this for two reasons. First, because the Republican minority is not strong enough to bring about any change in which it has confidence; secondly, because it will be tactically useful for the Republican Party from the standpoint of the 1940 national campaign not to have had a chance to *try* its farm theories. Then in 1940 it will be able to "indict" the Roosevelt-Wallace program and offer its old, sour wine in new bottles.

In the interim, the organized farmers—particularly in the National Farmers Union and the sharecroppers in the Southern Tenant Farmers Union—will have the chance of preparing themselves for their next stage: Cooperation with Organized Labor in a joint program to increase the toiler's share of the national income which he produces.



# FRENCH SOCIALISM, 1938

by James Loeb

## II.

WHEN, at the Royan Congress last June, the suspension of Marceau Pivert was upheld by a vote of 4824 to 3802, with 354 abstentions, the French Socialist movement remained with the same three tendencies that have existed in recent years, with the important difference that *one* of those tendencies left the official Socialist Party (affiliated to the Second International), and formed an independent organization affiliated with the London Bureau. The three tendencies have naturally grouped themselves around the three independent publications which appear somewhat irregularly as *Le Socialiste*, *Juin '36*, and *La Bataille Socialiste*.

*Le Socialiste* is published twice monthly and represents the opinions and the program of Paul Faure, secretary of the Party, his first assistant, Sévérac, and in general the ruling apparatus of the official organization. To define it in terms easily understood in America, *Le Socialiste* is the paper of the French "Old Guard." With some slight variations, the policy of *Le Socialiste* has been the policy of the French Socialist Party. What is that policy?

Much like that of the British Labor Party, the domestic policy of the French Socialists is "sound" economically, intelligent and rational. Frankly reformist, it is based entirely on the possibilities inherent in parliamentary action. Typical of its implications was a remark made to me last summer by Jean Longuet, whose sudden death occurred only last September. In answer to a question as to the attitude of the Party toward Daladier, Longuet expressed his doubts and hesitations, but concluded that "*before we can oppose Daladier, we have to have something with which to supplant him.*" This remark was a reflection of one of the most bitter disputes that occupied the Royan Congress. On that occasion, the Faure group insisted that the Socialist deputies, while criticizing the reactionary policies of the Government, should not commit themselves to open opposition until such opposition could result in a new government more in keeping with the Popular Front. This idea was incorporated in the final general resolution, drawn up by Leon Blum, in the following terms:

"The Congress foresees the dangers of governmental instability, already pointed out by the resolution of the last National Council. It is resolved to oppose any change in the majority which will profit reaction."

In a very definite sense, the reformist policies of the leading Socialist group are not only intelligent but far to the left of the Communist program. Realizing that no lasting reform is possible in France without structural changes in the French State, the Socialist leaders have

long been demanding that such changes as the reform of the Senate and the control of finances be added to the original Popular Front program. The French Senate, elected by an artificial electoral college rather than by universal suffrage, was twice responsible for the fall of Socialist-led Governments. It finally accorded to Daladier what it had explicitly refused Blum. Until this bulwark of property is checked, no government, however remotely anti-capitalist it happens to be, can expect to survive in France. Likewise French capital can always create an artificial financial panic whenever it becomes seriously worried by the progressive measures of a Government which it dislikes. In other words, permanent reform in France depends upon the possibility of eliminating these two trump cards from the hands of the industrialists.

While this domestic program is essentially reformist in character and is put forth by reformists, in the present French situation its application would be thoroughly revolutionary since it would undoubtedly call forth revolutionary resistance from the right, much as occurred in Spain. In defense of the French right-wing Socialists, it must be said that they always considered the original Popular Front program as a beginning, and only a beginning. Thus the preamble of the Popular Front formulation said that "these immediate demands will have to be enlarged by more profound measures in order to wrest the State once and for all from the feudal hands of industry and finance." It must be recalled that, from the very first days of the Popular Front, the Socialist Party and the C.G.T. were anxious to enlarge the original program in order to insure even the most immediate of the demands. The other two forces within the Popular Front, however, opposed all such efforts at extending the program. Those two forces were the Radical Socialist Party and the Communist Party. The latter insisted that the original program should first be completely enacted into law. It will be remembered that at that time the Communists were not anxious that the French State go too far to the left, since Soviet foreign policy was convinced that a liberal French State would be strong enough to draw England into the Franco-Soviet orbit. In the light of events, this "hope" requires no comment!

There has long been a different emphasis in the policies of Blum and Faure on foreign affairs. It goes without saying that both accepted fully the program of collective security, with all that implies in the way of national defense, capitalist military alliances and the rest. They were in accord on the original Blum



policy of non-intervention, as was every other group in the Party with the single exception of Zyromski and a minority of his own followers. They did not differ in their insistence that Czechoslovakian independence must be maintained at all costs. The Resolution of the Royan Congress, formulated by Blum and supported by Faure, says:

"French Socialism wants peace even with the totalitarian imperialisms, but it is not disposed to yield to all their demands. If it were reduced to that extremity which it shall attempt to avoid by all possible means, it would know how to defend the independence of the national soil and the independence of all nations guaranteed by the signature of France."

While uttering such belligerent sentiments, both Blum and Faure were very soft-spoken in their daily articles in *Le Populaire*. When Runciman first went to Prague this summer, every observer of European affairs knew that it was the beginning of the end, that Runciman's real mission was to wear down all Czechoslovakian resistance, a mission which he carried out admirably. And yet Blum welcomed the Runciman voyage, asserting his great confidence in the peaceful motives which inspired the British Prime Minister and his representative.

When the Munich pact was consummated, when France had failed to recognize her own signature, when the policy of collective security went bankrupt once and for all, the Socialist deputies in the Chamber supported Daladier in a vote of confidence on foreign affairs. Only one Socialist voted with the Communists and the rightist De Kérillis against the Munich settlement. Leon Blum was honest enough to write in *Le Populaire*, on October 1:

"There is not a woman and not a man in France who will refuse Mr. Neville Chamberlain and Edouard Daladier their just tribute of gratitude. War is averted . . . We can take up our work and again find some sleep. We can enjoy the beauty of an autumn sun."

Those lines express the relief which Blum and thousands of French workers felt at the avoidance of war. (I have been informed that even many rank and file Communists were caught in the general feeling of relief and joined in the demonstration of welcome to Daladier on his return from Munich.)

But since Munich the Hitlerian expansion has not ceased. Czechoslovakia has not remained a democracy, as Blum had hoped. The consequence has been an undercurrent of change within the Socialist Party and a widening of differences between Blum and Faure. The latter, who as long ago as 1936 led a delegation to the then Premier Sarraut to protest his strong speech on the occasion of the German occupation of the Rhineland, seems to be leading a group of "peace at any price" Socialists. Blum, on the other hand, tends to favor a stronger stand of the French Government in the face of the German

and Italian demands.

A final characteristic of the official leadership of the Party is its attitude toward the Communist Party. Blum's position is somewhat at variance with that of Faure and Sévérac. The most bitter anti-communism in the Party is that of the group which publishes *Le Socialiste*. When the Popular Front was formed, Blum was one of the few who favored cooperation with the Communists. While the Pivertists have violently opposed the Communists because of their "new line" of class collaboration, they have always welcomed Communist cooperation in militant action. The opposite is the case with Faure and *Le Socialiste*. With them it is Leninism itself that they abhor in all its forms, and they have seized upon every technical pretext for vehement denunciations, many of which have been thoroughly justifiable.

When still part of the official Socialist Party, the followers of Marceau Pivert published a bi-monthly paper, *Juin '36*, as the organ of the Federation of the Seine of which Pivert himself was secretary. Since their withdrawal *Juin '36*, named for the semi-revolutionary days of the sit-down wave at the beginning of the first Blum Government, has become the weekly organ of the Workers' and Peasants' Socialist Party of France, PSOP. Formed by a combination of extreme pacifists, Leninists and near-Trotskyists, the Pivertists found themselves in general agreement with the extreme right wing of the party in opposition to what they considered the war-like proposals of the Zyromski group, although for different reasons. Similarly, the delegates of the two extremes often agreed at Socialist congresses in their opposition to cooperation with the Communist Party, again with different motivation. On the other hand, the Pivertists were closer to the *Bataille Socialiste* group on matters of method, advocating increasing mass pressure and direct action as opposed to parliamentarism. The split finally took place on the issue of Socialist participation in a modified "union sacrée." The secretary of the PSOP, Comrade Jacquier, claimed this summer that his organization had 16,000 members, of whom 8,000 were in Paris. It is impossible to say with any exactness how the PSOP has been affected by the war crisis of September. Demonstrations against the imminent war were conducted in Paris, and promptly put down by the Government's police. When peace was finally preserved the PSOP frankly admitted its satisfaction, but simultaneously declared its unalterable opposition to the reactionary Daladier Government on all other aspects of its program.

The purposes and program of the PSOP itself are clearly stated in the manifesto issued at the moment of founding the organization last summer. Attacking the capitulations of the social democratic leaders since the formation of the Popular Front in 1936 and, with equal vigor, the responsibilities of the Communist Party for



holding back the masses in the semi-revolutionary days of 1936, the PSOP resolutely asserts that the struggle against Fascism can be conducted effectively only if it is combined with a vigorous struggle against capitalism itself. Having eliminated from serious consideration the roads of social democratic reformism and of what it calls "neo-bolshevism", the PSOP claims the right to the inheritance of the three great Socialist principles: the class struggle, internationalism and democracy. It calls for the unity of the working class in a "front de combat" or fighting front, against international war, against a national front, against capitalism, for a revolutionary struggle for Socialism.

As regards Spain, the PSOP's policy is tantamount to support for the POUM, although I was informed that there were certain political differences between the two parties. However, the presence of Gorkin's wife at the organizational convention of the PSOP in Paris pretty well indicates that the party's relationship to the POUM is intimate. What is more, the PSOP forms part of the London Bureau along with the POUM, the Independent Labor Party of Britain and the Lovestoneites in America. At the beginning of the Spanish war, Pivert supported Blum's policy of non-intervention, on the theory that the workers must act independently of their governments, even if Socialist-led, in sending help to Spain. The futility of the non-intervention policy and the obvious impossibility of sending sufficient aid to Spain through the independent action of workers' organizations (while the fascist governments were pouring in arms and men) convinced Pivert and his followers of the necessity of governmental action. The PSOP now points out, in its manifestos and resolutions,

"the very grave error committed by the Blum Government" and "affirms that material aid to Spain from the Popular Front Government would have allowed the victory of the revolution in the peninsula, powerfully aided the French workers' movement, seriously shaken the strength of international fascism, and thus consolidated European peace."

The most constructive aspect of the PSOP program is in domestic affairs. Here it attacks that great contradiction in present-day labor and socialist policies, the contradiction between the immediate interests of the workers and the implications of the capitalist government's "anti-fascism." Placing its emphasis on the demands of the workers, the PSOP calls for the nationalization of the capitalist trusts, workers' control of production, the suppression (not reform) of the Senate, political liberty in the army, disarmament, and a boycott of munitions-producing raw materials to Fascist states. Only if satisfied workers control their government, the PSOP insists, can a successful anti-Fascist struggle be conducted.

*La Bataille Socialiste*, led by Jean Zyromski, seeks to combine the anti-fascist program of the Franco-Soviet

pact with a revolutionary policy at home. Its twofold attack is against

"the capitulations of a stupid pacifism which encourages fascism" (Faure) and "revolutionary infantilism which thinks it can struggle effectively against external fascism by general strikes and insurrection." (Pivert)

The *Bataille Socialiste* group is small in numbers, owing its influence to the fact that many of the Party's secondary leaders are counted among its sympathizers. It has nine of thirty-three members of the C.A.P., the highest governing body of the Party. While it differs at times violently from the policies of the Party leadership, it has managed to maintain close personal and political relationships with that leadership, thus distinguishing itself from the "Revolutionary Left" of Pivert which was constantly at swords' points with its political opponents within the Party. This summer several of the group admitted that the *Bataille Socialiste* had lost considerable of its influence in the Party. This loss was due in large measure to the fact that Zyromski himself defended certain aspects of the Russian purges at the Royan Congress.

This brings up a question of key importance in the program of the Zyromski faction, namely the relationship between the Socialist and Communist Parties. Zyromski himself is far closer to the Communists than most of his followers, although no French Socialist accuses him of ulterior motives. One Pivertist remarked that Zyromski is today playing the same rôle in France that Caballero played in Spain in January and February of 1936. The *Bataille Socialiste* group as a whole calls for the resumption of negotiations with the Communist Party with a view to eventual organic unity. But it makes at least two conditions: (1) Disaffiliation from the Third International, and (2) the democratic organization of the united party. Followers of Zyromski maintain that the leaders of both parties do everything possible in practice to prevent unity, a unity, they maintain, which is essential to any revolutionary program. Programatically, the *Bataille Socialiste* opposes what it calls a government of "classical national unity" and demands instead "a real Popular Front government." In practice, however, it has made concessions to some of Leon Blum's vague formulations of the early months of this year. In domestic affairs, Zyromski makes the same demands as does the PSOP, adopting the famous C.G.T. plan for structural changes in the French State: nationalization of basic industries, workers' control of production, suppression of the Senate, democratization of the army, institution of democratic procedures in the colonies, etc. It is in matters of foreign affairs that the two left groups differ most radically. Here the Zyromski program can be summarized as that of a militant collective security, implementation of the Franco-Soviet

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# TRADE UNIONS AND REVOLUTION

by Luis Araquistain

IN GERMANY more or less the same thing occurred. Marx and Engels opposed the frankly reformist Gotha program of the new unified socialist party. To that they preferred a split, just as Lenin did later in the Russian party. (See the circular letter from Marx and Engels, of April 1879, to Bebel, Liebknecht and Bracke, against Bernstein, Hochberg and Schramm). "Unity," wrote Engels to Bebel in 1881, "is an excellent thing when it can be maintained; but there are more important things than unity." Revolutionary purposes, undoubtedly.

At its very birth, the German party betrayed the Marxist doctrine. "Our party smells rotten in Germany," wrote Marx to Sorge in 1877, "not so much in its masses as in its leaders ('workers' and members of the privileged classes)." One of these leaders was Schweitzer who had begun to denature the revolutionary function of the trade unions. "The working class either is revolutionary or it is nothing," Marx wrote to Schweitzer as early as 1865. That was seen in the Germany of 1914 and of 1933, when Hitler's ascent to power met with the folded arms of the Social-Democratic Party and the trade unions, and also, naturally, of the communists. The whole thing was rotten with reformism. When workers' parties lead the trade unions to defeat and slavery, what is their value as directing agents?

For Marx the trade unions are, in the contemporary industrial epoch, like a permanent biological creation, revolutionary by nature, although circumstances of time and place may turn them temporarily from their historic function, while political parties are casual and changeable phenomena which rarely fulfill the destiny for which they are born. There is no other meaning in what Marx said to the metal worker Hamann in an interview which the latter published in 1869:

"The trade unions must never be chained to a political association or made dependent upon it, if they are to fulfill their function; to do so is to give them a fatal blow. Trade unions are the schools for socialism. It is in the trade unions that the workers are educated and become socialists, because every day under their own eyes the struggle with capital takes place. All political parties, of whatever nature they may be, only inspire the masses for a certain period, momentarily; the trade unions, on the contrary, capture the masses more permanently; they alone are capable of constituting a real workers' party and to oppose a bulwark to the power of capital."

Losovski believes that Hamann "retouched" this in-

terview, thinking that the words attributed to Marx do not correspond to his trade union and political doctrine. We find no such contradiction in the light of the texts of Marx on the historic function of trade unions and in view of his opinion of *the parties of his day*, including the most advanced ones, especially after his bitter experience in the First International.

## The Example of Russia

Trade unions are lasting institutions in any social regime, because they are bound to the existence of the workers and the latter to production; but not so with political parties. Lenin himself, in spite of the great historical role of his party in the Russian Revolution, did not believe in its eternity, as is indicated by the following words of a resolution approved by the Second Congress of the Communist International and touched up and completed, according to Losovski, by Lenin himself: "In the march of communism toward final victory, it is possible that there be a modification in the specific relationship which exists between the three essential forms in Russia of the contemporary proletarian organization (parties, soviets, industrial unions), and that a single synthetic type of workers' organization be gradually crystallized."

In the meantime, in Russia, the trade unions form an integral part of the Soviet State, much more so than the soviets themselves. Losovski speaks of their "positive participation in the building of socialism (*participation in the management of the national economy*, socialist competition, shock brigades, work discipline, amelioration of the material conditions and of the cultural level of the masses," etc.) But what is *participation in the management of the national economy*, but participation in the government of the nation? And how, after these opinions and these examples can any socialist or communist claim that the political direction of a state in revolution must be entrusted exclusively to the political parties, and that the unions have no other function than to work and obey silently? Here in Spain there have been people who, in emulation of the Jesuits, have sought even the obedience of a corpse. Astonishing!

The theory is too absurd to be taken seriously, no matter how one looks at it. A lawyer, a chemist, a journalist, a doctor, as members of trade unions, are not capable of governing; but these same poor trade unionists, insofar as they belong to political parties, can become political geniuses and the great hierarchs and arbiters of the destinies of a nation. If it were not so serious an affair, it would be something to laugh at.



## The Case of Spain

In this tragic Spain of 1937 the injustice of excluding the unions from all management and direction of the government is infinitely greater. The thesis is false that the unions are already represented in the Government. Certainly the great majority are not. The C. N. T. is not represented at all (At the present time, the C. N. T. is represented by the Minister of Education, Segundo Blanco. Translator) because in the past it has been opposed to the representation of political parties and to government by the State. Does that mean that, because of a past attitude, it has no right to exercise what it has heretofore refused? The thesis could not be sustained, because if elections should be called tomorrow and the C. N. T. should present its own candidates, is there any doubt that it would have a very numerous parliamentary group and that it should have to be taken into account in a government of national coalition with the same rights claimed by the other parties? But the electoral procedure is unnecessary. Its manifest political will, which is the will of millions of workers, is sufficient, because that right cannot be taken from them by tricks. Oh, but what will people think abroad? Well, it has already been seen that abroad the treatment is the same for a Spain governed with the participation of the anarcho-syndicalists as without them. The argument does not stand up.

While the European proletariat in general was becoming bourgeois, after the revolutionary struggles of the 19th century and as a consequence of the great capitalist development in the second half of that century, there were two countries in which the working class retained its aspirations for social transformation: Russia and Spain. A late and relatively poor capitalism and oppressive political regimes, corresponding to the economic backwardness of these two countries, had created the historical social conditions for the formation of a revolutionary proletariat which would not stop being so until final victory. It is now twenty years since the triumph of the revolution in Russia. In Spain we are now struggling for it, because our civil war and the war of invasion which we are suffering — and Russia also suffered both, although less intense than ours — is, whether one will or no, a class war; a war of the proletariat and the lower middle class of Spain against national and foreign capital. There is a variant in the two revolutions: The Russian, through the weakness of the trade unions, based itself on a typically Russian institution, the soviets, which is not a strictly class organization; the Spanish is based solely on the trade union organizations.

In Russia the Bolshevik Party directed the soviets, in Spain the Socialist Party directs the related trade unions, the U. G. T. When it directs them for the revolution, the understanding between the party and the Spanish trade unions is perfect. It was so in the revolu-

tionary general strike of 1917 and in that of 1930, although the reformist element of the trade unions tried to sabotage both, and partially succeeded in the second.

### *The Revolutionary Spirit of the General Workers Union*

This process of radicalization of the trade unions, this revolutionary or Marxist impetus, gave them an independent political personality which was crystallized and reflected in the statutes of the U. G. T. In them the U. G. T. speaks of the "final liberation" of the proletariat, "protests against the usurpation of its natural rights by capitalism and affirms its intention to liberate and make all natural and social sources of production freely accessible to the activity of organized workers."

In the Declaration of Principles it is exacted of all members "that they accept the revolutionary orientation of the class struggle and seek to create the forces for complete emancipation of the working class, to assume some day the direction of production, transport, and distribution in the interchange of social wealth." To that end the U. G. T. proposes "to unify the action of the proletariat with the purpose of creating the forces for the complete emancipation of the working class," etc. As is seen, the unity of the proletariat is not a recent invention. But this is a program of revolutionary socialism, a rigorously Marxist program. How Marx would have recognized in it his revolutionary conception of trade unions and how he would have marveled at our political maturity, at the political maturity and independence of the U. G. T.! Harmony with the party was at that time perfect; but if one day it stopped being so — and there was no alliance in perpetuity — there were the trade unions of the U. G. T. already constituted as organs of a socialist revolution.

After the program which corresponded doctrinally to the revolutionary movements of 1917 and 1930 came the great revolution of October 1934. In that revolution the U. G. T. and the party still were together. But already there were men who looked with ill favor on the character of social revolution which the rising acquired in some regions, such as the Asturias. It was all right to defend the Republic, but without overstepping its limits of capitalist democracy. At that time there began the new and profound differences, in no sense personal, which at bottom are the old differences between revolutionary socialism and reformist socialism.

And there came the military rebellion of July 1936, and thanks to the revolutionary preparation of the trade unions and of the youth, the rebel rising at first failed and later the advance of foreign armies on the various fronts was stopped. Without that revolutionary spirit of the trade unions, there would have been no people's army and neither it nor the civil population, nor the state would have been able to resist economically. This indispensable contribution of the trade unions to the



salvation of the Republic was finally recognized by the political parties, and at the moment of greatest danger, in November 1936, the C. N. T. was admitted into the Government. (The U. G. T. already considered itself represented in the person of Largo Caballero and by the two socialist ministers proposed by him). The crisis of May 1937 separated the unions from the government; but of what occurred then and since then, this is not the moment to speak. It must suffice for the present to sketch the Marxist doctrine of trade unions and the form in which it has been practiced in Spain.

The doctrine is as clear as day. The trade unions are essentially revolutionary and as such have an historic function to perform, similar to that of the Communes in the Middle Ages on behalf of the growing bourgeoisie. As long as they do not acquire consciousness of that function, they serve as appendages, in so far as they are a political force, to the middle class parties and to the workers' parties which, like the majority of socialist parties, collaborate with capitalism. In this case, from the revolutionary point of view, that political dependence is equivalent to their having their own representation in the organs of capitalist power.

When the unions of Spain, more conscious of the character of the native and external military rebellion against the Spanish proletariat and lower middle class, seek to fulfill that historic function which Marx and Engels attribute to them, they will allow themselves to be inspired and directed by the political parties if it is for the joint conduct of the military revolution and the revolutionary war. But if their submission to the political parties retards and discourages the revolution, then the trade unions have the right to refuse to mortgage their independence and even the right to direct the political parties, if it suits them and that is their desire.

It will be said, as always—another oft-repeated point, and almost always with a misleading intention—, that the first thing is to win the war; but the best way of winning a revolutionary war is not a counter-revolutionary morale. Those who do not believe that, should ask the majority of the fighters.

*(This concludes the article. The first part may be found in Socialist Review, Vol. 6, No. 8.)*

## OTTO BAUER'S LAST ARTICLE

### "The Essence of Fascism"

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## CABALLERO

*(Continued from Page 3)*

If you should reflect a minute over this, you will see what is not evident to the enthusiastic and spiteful—a spirit of justice and even pity worthy of imitation. You will recognize that Besteiro and I are old and tired—physically and intellectually exhausted—and therefore it is necessary to recognize that we are not in a position to exercise a very active role! As far as I am concerned, I have already been killed several times, and even the obituary article has been written. What a pity that it has not been published! How instructive it might have been! Do not be surprised then, that, as with primitive tribes, they keep us around, because we are old and "experienced", to act as counsellors. It is necessary to give free play to the new people with new and ingenious ideas. *They* will save the party and Spain!

But on this rose-strewn path, as always, the "unpromising", the "rancorous", the killjoy Largo Caballero gets in the way.

I have drafted the following answer:

To the Executive of the Socialist Party of Spain:

With some surprise I have read your letter informing me that the National Committee has appointed me an ex-officio member of the Executive Committee. It is not so long since you waged a campaign—oral and written—in collaboration with the Communist Party, in which you showed me to the Spanish proletariat as a man without discipline, ambitious, a splitter, vain, haughty, practically a traitor. At that time you did not permit me to defend myself, and yet now you invite me without prior rectification to form part of the Executive Committee. You will understand that under such conditions it is not possible for me to accept. Perhaps you call my action a display of pride and anger. Call it what you will, I consider that I am behaving according to the elementary right of every man, particularly if he is a Socialist and has a true conception of dignity.

Moreover, in our whole movement there are no such offices, nor is the National Committee empowered to create them. And if they existed, they would always have to be filled by a convention or by the party membership—never by you. For that reason I believe I am fulfilling my duty as a Socialist and that I am helping to maintain the spirit of the Constitution by not being a party to its unlawful change. I refuse, therefore, to accept the office of ex-officio member which you tender me.

Always for Socialism,

Francisco Largo Caballero."

This letter is growing long. You will tire of reading it. I shall postpone other questions for another letter.

Yours for the Socialist cause,

FRANCISCO LARGO CABALLERO.

Barcelona, 8/14/38.



## FRENCH SOCIALISM

(Continued from Page 11)

Pact, no unilateral disarmament, organization of anti-Fascist alliances, effective aid to Spain. It goes without saying that the *Bataille Socialiste* was the strongest of all groups in opposing the Munich pact. Pierre Block, the one Socialist who voted against Daladier's foreign policy, is a member of this group.

Zyromski's most effective work has been on behalf of Spain. During the summer of 1936, he was one of the few French Socialists to oppose the Blum non-intervention policy. At that time his opposition was almost single-handed. However, he soon formed, with a few other comrades, an inner-party committee called the Caspe (*Comité d'Action Socialiste pour l'Espagne*) and was eventually able to reverse the Party's policy on the key issue of non-intervention in Spain. Having achieved that goal, the Caspe was dissolved.

A significant aspect of the *Bataille Socialiste* program has to do with the organization of the Party. The group contends that no party organized solely for electoral or parliamentary purposes can be an effective revolutionary instrument. It therefore demands that the C.A.P. immediately formulate a plan for the complete reorganization of the Socialist Party, having in mind the building of a disciplined organization willing and able to conduct mass action among the workers of France: "to mobilize the working masses in order to bring them to the understanding of the necessity of Socialist solutions."

This article has been written while a special congress of the Socialist Party was taking place in Paris. It appears that Blum's resolution, demanding a strong coalition against Germany and Italy, backed up by increased armaments, was passed by 4,322 votes to 2,837, with 1,004 abstentions, as against a counter-proposal by Faure for acceptance of the Munich settlement and "for peace at all costs."

While no conclusive analysis can be made until more detailed information is received from France, it would seem that, as a result of the aftermath of Munich, the influence of the Zyromski group has rapidly increased and that Leon Blum has renounced his pacifism, once and for all, to become the leader of the anti-Munich bloc within the Party. Clearly the 4,322 votes supporting his resolution represent the *Bataille Socialiste* influence together with Blum's personal following. Paul Faure is reported to have promised his resignation as general secretary of the Party, but he has made similar promises before. In any case, Faure's influence in the Party has definitely been undermined and it remains to be seen whether he will stay in the Party or throw his weight

## 1938 ELECTIONS

(Continued from Page 6)

doing. The New Deal, except for the social services and relief, will pass from the picture.

And labor will be confronted with the task with which it has already been confronted all along. A task it has been too blind to see. Labor, disillusioned at last, will have to take up the task of organizing its own political party, unhampered by corrupt alliances. If labor has learned that necessity, its New Deal adventure will not have been in vain.

On the whole the elections register a marked swing to the right. There is nothing unusual in this tendency. It was to be expected that the middle class groups, conditioned by education and a life-time of habit, would sooner or later tire of "radical" laws and of "wild-cat" financing. It is strange that they did not rebel sooner. The New Deal stands exposed now as a well-meaning effort to ameliorate conditions. It has no philosophy. It has muddled along, trusting to the recuperative powers of the capitalist system to justify its acts. The capitalist system failed to recuperate, leaving of the New Deal nothing but hopeless debts and endless spending. What the elections chiefly record is capitalist fear of this continued spending and determination that it shall end.

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strongly behind Daladier.

That is not the only question that is still to be answered. How many of Faure's followers will stay in the Socialist Party? To what extent does Blum's policy of anti-Fascist national defense imply opposition to the Daladier-Reynaud strong Government? Is there any truth in the almost inconceivable rumor (which has been weakly denied) that Blum and Delbos, his former foreign minister, have suggested the return of André Tardieu to head a strong government? (Tardieu has long been considered one of the potential dictators of France.) To what extent will an openly pro-war Socialist Party be able to enlist the sympathies of masses of French workers? How will the Socialist Party be able to fight for a program of increased national defense and at the same time defend the claims of the workers to a 40-hour week, paid vacations and collective bargaining? Will Pivert's PSOP be able to attract masses of workers to a revolutionary socialist program in the face of the Hitler-Mussolini menace? Of one thing only can we be certain. 1939 will answer most of these questions.



# NOTES ON CURRENT EVENTS

## ROOSEVELT'S NEW FOREIGN POLICY

**R**OOSEVELT'S MESSAGE to Congress was notable mainly because it marked the official inauguration of a new foreign policy, which had already been forecast for many months. The *New York Times* was entirely correct in its comment that the message marked the end of a policy of "isolation" for the United States. It might also have added that the message could be hailed as a complete victory for the *New York Times*, whose own foreign policy, as embodied in a series of editorials several weeks before the message, was completely taken over by Roosevelt. (Need we add, that the Communists may also claim a victory, since they have been among the most militant opponents of a policy of "isolation"?)

The new Roosevelt policy obviously is based upon a working arrangement with England, if not upon a formal alliance. It therefore follows that the United States now becomes a partner in the various imperialist alliances and adventures in Europe, Asia and Africa. It is no accident that at this late date, the administration has finally decided to levy an embargo upon planes to Japan and has granted a loan to China, upon assurances of "similar" action by England. Having assured itself of support from the United States, England will undoubtedly stiffen its front against Japan in Asia, and Germany and Italy in Europe and Africa. Perhaps Chamberlain's conciliatory policy in the past can be understood better now. The astute British ruling class was apparently unwilling to precipitate a struggle against three enemies at once if it could count only upon the questionable support of France and the Soviet Union. In such a struggle, England would have to bear the main brunt—and England has always tried to avoid bearing the brunt. The United States, however, is a different type of ally. The material resources and man-power of the United States are first in the world, and an important "catch" for England in any war. Why not, therefore, sacrifice Czechoslovakia in order to gain Uncle Sam?

Undoubtedly, England has made concessions to the United States in order to gain its adherence to British policy. Probably Yankee imperialism will be given a free hand in Latin America, as the Lima Conference indicates. Perhaps England will even begin making some payments on the war debts (remember?).

Whatever the specific deal, the new Roosevelt foreign policy represents a greater danger to American labor than ever before. The danger of war has become more serious and the danger of American involvement in that war more certain. Only a more determined and extensive anti-war movement can combat these new dangers.

\* \* \*

## COMMUNISTS AND THE AMERICAN LABOR PARTY

**T**HE COMMUNISTS have announced, through the Daily Worker, that they oppose admitting Socialist Party members into the American Labor Party in New York. Reason? The Socialists are joining the A.L.P. in order to fight the New Deal. And they might have added, in order to fight against supporting the capitalist parties and politicians, against deals with the old parties, against participating in the Democratic primaries and for independent political action, on all of which questions the Communists stand on the other side. Nobody denies the Communists the right to be the main champions of the left wing of the Democratic Party. But when the Communists become red-baiters, and try to conduct a campaign

for the elimination of revolutionary Socialists from the labor movement, they must be brought up short. In this connection it is interesting to note that revolutionary Socialists, no matter how thoroughly they differed from the Communists in the past, always opposed a policy of excluding Communists from the various sections of the labor movement, both economic and political. The Communists evidently believe that only those who share their views have a place in the labor movement. Their campaign against all revolutionists, under the slogans "Drive the Lovestonites out of the labor movement" and "Drive the Trotskyites out of the labor movement", which is directed against all progressive workers who are to the left of the Communists, who are opposed to their policy of alliances with the corrupt right wing and racketeers in the labor movement, who are opposed to their war-mongering, is the worst form of red-baiting that has yet appeared. When the Communists are attacked, or even called Communists, they immediately raise the cry "red-baiting", and this is their main protection because it immediately frightens weak-kneed liberals into rushing to the defense of the Communists. The Communists, however, have no scruples about red-baiting campaigns against other left groups.

The Communist decision to attempt to bar Socialists from the A.L.P. in New York should once and for all open the eyes of the labor movement, and particularly, of the liberals who like to side with the underdog, that far from being a persecuted group, the Communist Party has become a vicious, anti-progressive, undemocratic, red-baiting group, the extension of whose influence in the labor movement will have a pernicious effect. Trading on their tradition as a left group, and on the attacks by the open reactionaries who are finding Communist competition in patriotism somewhat irksome, the Communists are still obtaining extensive support from liberal and progressive elements both inside and outside the labor movement. Too many sincere people still are sympathetic to the Communists in the belief that "the enemy of my enemy is my friend". If the reactionary Dies attacks the war-monger Browder, it does not make the latter a progressive. A persecuted group which in turn persecutes other groups, cannot lay claim to protection against persecution. The labor movement cannot support any organization which carries on campaigns for the destruction of other sections of the labor movement. Unless and until the Communists change their methods, there cannot exist the fraternal relations with them which should exist among labor organizations even though rivals in many respects.

\* \* \*

## A PURGER PURGED

**H**AROLD DENNY, New York Times Russian correspondent, recently reported the case of a local head of the G.P.U. in the Ukraine, who utilized his position to do away with his personal and political enemies. He accused them of being "spies" for a foreign government; of membership in a fascist organization; of plotting with representatives of foreign governments for military intervention and the partition of the Soviet Union. The accused "confessed" all these charges, and were sentenced to various punishments by "trials" at which they were held up as the enemies of the people, and a warning to all transgressors. The local Yezhov was, of course, enthusiastically praised as the local "flaming sword of Stalin" in defense of the revolution.

Now it turns out that the accused were framed up. That

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the fascist organization in which they "confessed" membership never existed except in the facile imagination of the G.P.U. agent; that the foreign "agents" they had relations with were their wives, relatives and neighbors; that their crime was not being liked by the G.P.U. agent or his wife. Fortunately, this agent had a falling-out with his superiors, who decided to investigate the complaints against him and uncovered the entire filthy mess.

Substitute Yezhov for the local Ukranian G.P.U. hero, the names of Zinoviev, Kameneff, Bukharin, etc., for the local accused, and you have a fair idea of the Moscow trials. The "confessions", which to the gullible liberals were the Q.E.D. of the guilt of the Moscow defendants, cease to have any weight in the light of the discovery of similar "confessions" by the Ukranian accused. In his dispatch, Mr. Denny very significantly notes that the Moscow newspapers have carried no reports on this incident, and also that there is no indication of how the "confessions" were obtained. But the inference is clear. If the "comrade" in the Ukraine found means of obtaining confessions, why would the more talented Yezhov, as Yagoda before him, have difficulties?

Yagoda is dead. Yezhov is removed. But Stalin still sits in the seat of power in the Kremlin.

\* \* \*

### WANTED: A PROGRESSIVE STUDENT MOVEMENT

THE LAST CONVENTION of the American Student Union in New York marked the final step in the process of the transformation of a progressive, anti-war movement on the campus into a reactionary, pro-war organization. To many, this transformation is inexplicable. But those who understand how the Communists operate should not be at all surprised. First, the Communist apparatus is thoroughly enlightened about the new line, with a few impressive examples of what happens to "renegades" who do not toe the mark. The fellow travellers are then lined up by a combination of mass pressure, cajolery and intimidation. Those non-partisans who are not readily "convinced" find themselves engaged in a constant battle against a well-organized and united group entirely without scruples and apparently with inexhaustible resources. Their battle is from the beginning a losing one, and in the process, if there are any real neutrals, they are completely squeezed out. In the meanwhile, the Communists are very actively recruiting, this time on the basis of the new line, from among the very elements who may have been their enemies in the past but who have become faithful adherents or new "fellow-travellers". The cycle is complete.

Many liberals and "innocents" are constantly demanding "proof" of the charges of Communist control of the various cover organizations, such as the American Student Union, League for Peace and Democracy, Workers Alliance, etc., as if the red cards of all the Communists in them are open to examination. Is not the fact that all of these organizations change their policies as the Communist Party changes its policy the best proof of Communist control? And is it the Communists as individuals who are objectionable, or the Communist policy which is reprehensible? An organization is Communist-controlled if its policy is determined by the Communists to such an extent that it reflects the "line" of the Communist Party, whatever it may happen to be at any given moment.

To remain in the A.S.U. under these circumstances, in the name of "unity" is merely to give sanction to the Communist claim of representation of the entire student body without the perspective of ever being able to influence the course of the

organization. It means weakening the opposition of the youth on the campus to the war-mongering New Deal, which is already using the C.C.C. and N.Y.A. for war purposes. The Youth Committee Against War is now the sole group carrying on an active anti-war struggle. What is needed in addition is a student movement which will continue the progressive, anti-war traditions of the Intercollegiate Socialist Society, the Student League for Industrial Democracy and the National Student League and will stand for unity of the student movement with labor against war, dictatorship and reaction and for social progress.

\* \* \*

### THE C.I.O. CONVENTION AND LABOR UNITY

THE C.I.O. CONVENTION at Pittsburgh did not create the furore which ordinarily would accompany the launching of a new labor movement. This furore had accompanied the C.I.O. before it became the Congress of Industrial Organizations. The convention, therefore, was largely a formality, largely a rubber-stamping of decisions which had already been reached in private sessions of the powers-that-be in the C.I.O. There were no surprises in the convention, unless the stage-managed "fight" between Lewis and the Communists, or the "replacement" of Brophy by Carey can be so characterized. In actuality, little was changed by the convention. The relations between the C.I.O. and the A.F. of L. remain the same. The inner situation remains the same. The adoption of a constitution and the election of officers does not mark the establishment of adequate democracy inside the C.I.O. since they are formal steps. The substance of democracy and rank-and-file control are still absent in the functioning of the C.I.O. Democracy is real only if the moral propriety of opposition to established leadership is recognized. This is not yet so in the C.I.O.

Those who saw a decline in Communist influence as a result of the C.I.O. convention are making the wish father to the thought. It is true that Communist influence is confined largely to a few relatively small internationals, and that the number of such internationals is not increasing. But it is also true that the Communists have a disproportionate influence in the apparatus of the C.I.O., which is particularly evident in the C.I.O. press and publicity activities and in its legislative functions. There has been no change in this condition as a result of the convention. Nor has there been any evidence of any disposition on the part of the top leadership of the C.I.O. to throw its weight to the side of non-Communist progressives in unions where a struggle between the latter and Communists was in progress (Auto, Seamen, Office Workers) and where appropriate action might have been very beneficial.

On the issue of unity, the convention very definitely showed that it was not much concerned with the re-establishment of labor unity at this time. Had it been so disposed, it could have taken some demonstrative step toward unity. Instead, it contented itself with oft repeated platitudes. It is evident, that powerful forces inside the C.I.O. are opposed to labor unity. They undoubtedly believe that the C.I.O. can continue to develop and grow indefinitely and eventually so far outstrip the A.F. of L. that unity will be merely a matter of absorbing it. That this is a dangerous illusion will be definitely shown in the next organized attack of the monopoly industries against unionism. Unfortunately, this blind optimism may result in leaving the labor movement with an inadequate defense against these attacks. The absence of the I. L. G. W. U. from the convention undoubtedly strengthened the anti-unity forces.



Whether the I. L. G. W. U. could have had any influence on the course of developments at the convention is problematical. At any rate, the existence of a powerful union outside both the A.F. of L. and the C.I.O., and constantly exerting a pressure upon both for unity, certainly cannot harm the labor movement.

\* \* \*

## ON SOCIALIST UNITY

NUMEROUS letters have been received by the editor of the SOCIALIST REVIEW dealing with the pending negotiations on unity between a committee representing the Socialist Party and one representing the Social Democratic Federation (Old Guard). In fairness to the readers of the REVIEW, it is important to make clear that the SOCIALIST REVIEW does not set policy for the Party; it carries out the policies as adopted by the convention and other authoritative organs of the Party. While we welcome letters from readers on all matters, Socialists who desire to change or influence Party policy must act through their respective branches, locals, state organizations, and eventually through the NEC. The Socialist Party is a democratically organized and conducted body, in which the sentiment of the rank and file has adequate means of making itself known.

In the meanwhile, those comrades who have been disturbed by rumors, spread particularly by the Trotskyist group, of an unprincipled, inevitable unification with the Old Guard, may compose themselves. This matter can be decided only by the Party membership, either in a convention, or through a referendum. Neither the negotiations committee nor the N.E.C. has the power, or for that matter, the desire, to commit the Party to unification, regardless of the will of the membership. Nor will this matter be settled in Mexico. Investigations and negotiations, to determine whether possibilities for unity exist, are surely not wasted in the present state of a badly, needlessly divided labor movement.

Of course, unity, no matter how desirable, is not everything. Would unity with the Communists on the basis of their present program help the labor movement? Can we unite with pro-war elements, no matter what their label may be? Or even if there is agreement on the war issue (as there is in the Keep America Out of War Congress) can we unite with elements who are against war but not for Socialism? Therefore, unity, in order to bring lasting benefit to the Socialist movement, must include:

1. Agreement on Socialist fundamentals, as embodied in the Detroit Declaration of Principles, the Bound Brook Draft for a Socialist Program, or similar statement embodying the ideas of revolutionary socialism.
2. Agreement on a Socialist war position along traditional Socialist lines: opposition to militarism and armaments, opposition to capitalist alliances and "collective security", no support of any capitalist government in a war or of wars conducted by capitalist-imperialist countries.
3. For independent working class political action, opposition to alliances with capitalist parties or politicians, no support to capitalist candidates.
4. Defense of democracy through independent working class action along the lines "labor versus capital" assuming the form "socialism versus capitalism" as the

crisis in capitalism continues; rejection of "people's frontism" and the slogan "democracy versus fascism" as merely a defense of the status quo which ultimately promotes fascism.

5. No support to the "New Deal" or any other plan for salvaging or reforming the capitalist system. Constant and unremitting education of the workers to the need for Socialism as the only salvation from the evils of capitalism.

6. A Socialist Party which is disciplined in action, and whose members operate in mass organizations in a disciplined fashion.

This is the program which the left wing in the Socialist Party advocated before the split; this is the only program which can constitute a basis for Socialist unity. Is it not worth while to determine whether agreement on this or similar program exists? If there is agreement, it is criminal to remain divided. If there is no agreement, no harm will be done by finding it out.

\* \* \*

## TOLERATION OF TREASON

THE DEATH of Emile Vandervelde, the dean of the world Socialist movement, will be a severe loss, particularly as at the time of his death he was carrying on the most important struggle of his life—a struggle to maintain the Belgian Socialist movement true to Socialism. In this struggle his opponent was Minister Spaak, a former left winger turned extreme nationalist to such an extent that it is at times difficult to see where Spaak the Socialist ends and Spaak the fascist begins. The development of Spaak is typical of those who believe that they can step into office in an imperialist regime and use that regime to promote Socialism. The revolutionary Socialists in this country, as well as in Belgium, opposed Spaak's assumption of office, and have looked upon him as a turncoat ever since.

The worst of Spaak's crimes has been his recent support of Belgian's recognition of Franco and the break with the Spanish Loyalist government. This step was taken under the pressure of the Belgian Catholic Party, who made it a condition for their further continuance in the government. In order to preserve "unity" and prevent the victory of "reaction" Spaak agreed. This is a novel method of fighting fascism—do what the fascists would do if they were in power, so they'll never get into power!

But the condemnation of Spaak's act is a betrayal, not only of the Spanish anti-fascist movement, but of the workers everywhere, does not settle the question. Spaak remains a member of the Belgian Socialist Party. In fact, the Congress of the Party voted to support him after having first repudiated him. The change was brought about by Spaak's threat to resign from the government! The fetishism of office must indeed be strong in Belgium. The Belgian Party is part of the Labor and Socialist International which is doing everything possible to bring about a defeat for Franco and a victory for the Loyalist government. Spaak now stands on the other side. Is it possible that this can be tolerated in an international organization of the workers? Can we allow pro-Franco elements to parade as Socialists? Either the Belgian Socialists repudiate Spaak and expel him from the Party or the L.S.I. should disaffiliate the Belgian party. Toleration of treason makes us a party to treason.

H. Z.

SOCIALIST REVIEW



# BOOKS

## NEW LIGHT ON LATIN AMERICA

"The Coming Struggle For Latin America", by Carleton Beals. 801 pp. Philadelphia. J. B. Lippincott. \$3.

"Utopia in Uruguay", by S. G. Hanson. 262 pp. New York. Oxford University Press. \$3.50.

If the South and Central American countries are to become the "democracies" President Roosevelt has credited them with being, there is going to have to be "widespread revolt throughout most of South America", according to Beals, who has written more about politics and economic backgrounds South of the Rio Grande than any other three men in the United States, and more interestingly than anyone else. His newest book deals with the widely publicized threat to Latin America from the Fascist imperialisms, but unlike others, he does not neglect to mention the imperialism of the British Empire and the United States, as well as imperialist rivalries in the southern continent.

Recent overtures from this country are well pilloried in the chapters, "Our New Role: Salesman or Revivalist?", "Don Quixote Rides the Pampas", and "We Fight Fascism". Beals points out that:

"Our naval missions and our arms promotions are creating or helping maintain the type of dictatorial government that will gladly plunge its country into any mad adventure or alliance in a reckless gamble to retain unjust power".

A list of popular misconceptions on which most popular thinking about Latin American affairs are based, and suggestions about what should be done, make the book practical for those who want to help stem the tide of Communist and New Deal whitewashing of our imperialism. Beals gives four points on which we can all work:

1. Our government should at once get out of the propaganda business in foreign lands.
2. Our government should quit helping out in the dirty armament business.
3. We should at once recall our naval and army missions from Brazil, Peru and Guatamala; our air missions from Argentina." (The next edition will have to add Colombia!)
4. We should get rid of our official language of patronizing condescension and superiority."

As a background for any discussion of Latin American affairs, and particularly for an understanding of what happened at the Lima Conference, the book is indispensable.

For students of economic theory and especially public corporations, the "analysis of the first New Deal in the Americas", as the publishers describe the book on Uruguay, will be interesting.

From 1911 to 1933, when Dictator Terra destroyed it, the two million people of Uruguay lived under a progressive regime with many elements of state socialism. How the banks, insurance, light and power, telephone, railroad and packing house companies functioned, what they contributed to the progress of the country, and their relation to other elements in the national economy of a semi-colonial country makes an interesting if somewhat detailed study.

The "New Deal" seems to have failed partly because of Uruguay's colonial status, but even more important is the fact that most of the legislation was the result of the ideals of President Jose Battle. At least so far as this book shows,

he did not see the need for unions and other organizations of the producers through which they could help build a real economic democracy. The author has failed to make a well-rounded study justifying his title just because he sticks so exclusively to the bare economic facts and seems, either because of an academic training in economics or a fear of getting in bad with the dictator, to be incapable of painting the whole picture.

—CLARENCE SENIOR

## JACK LONDON UNAPPRECIATED

"Sailor On Horseback"; the Biography of Jack London", by Irving Stone. 338 pages. Boston, Houghton Mifflin Co. \$3.00.

Despite the antics of the party-line playboys and girls from the old Proletcult days down to the most recent manifestations of "social consciousness", the growing preoccupation of American intellectuals with the hard facts of life is no laughing matter. As George Soule pointed out some years ago in *The Coming American Revolution*, the disillusionment of the intellectuals with the economic political status quo and their shift of allegiance to a new and rising class is all a part—and a very significant part—of the revolutionary process.

Of course this process in America did not begin in 1929, though the hullabaloo set up in the vicinity of Union Square by the *Culture and the Crisis* boys has tended to obscure its earlier manifestations. As a result, it has been left to a writer who shows no signs of understanding the class struggle to give us the biography of Jack London.

Perhaps the fact that London—as was true of so many promising young writers of his day—ended up in the Hearst stable with a modest version of San Simeon in the Valley of the Moon has had something to do with his neglect in proletarian circles. But the fact remains that here was a man of extraordinary gifts, a worker by origin and experience, who made no secret of his Socialism, whose interest and activity in the working-class movement carried no trace of dilettantism, and whose books were really read by the masses—something rare in the annals of our "proletarian literature."

Irving Stone shows little realization of London's real place in our literary scene and fails miserably to relate him to his time. He plays up the Nietzschean super-man, the saloon brawler, the wild adventurer in the early part of his book. In later chapters he presents the debt-ridden overlord of the Valley of the Moon, the blond beast with a paunch, surrounded by his blue-blooded livestock, the chatter of his womenfolk, and the flattery of as choice a coterie of panhandlers and hobohemians as have ever assembled under the California sun. I don't wish to be unfair. Stone does not mean to present London merely in these terms. But in his rather brilliant surface job, written apparently with one eye on the *Saturday Evening Post* and the other on Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, this is the picture which comes through. It makes his continued hero-worshipping of London seem silly. Heroes, particularly of the adventure story type, must somehow go out in a blaze of glory and not with flabby muscles, kidney complaints, and worries about how to meet the mortgage payments.

John Chamberlain, who has the reputation of being a discerning critic in left-wing literary matters, has referred to this book as a "truly definitive biography." If *Sailor on Horseback* is "truly definitive" then the Rover Boy Series is a masterly portrayal of American youth. The mere fact that Stone had access to material which up to now has been withheld from the public does not give him the last word.



The main flaw in the book is that in portraying London more or less in the terms of an adventurer—an attempt which goes stale in the end as I have indicated—Stone tries to make an adventure story out of his biography. London himself was much better at this job. I'll take *Martin Eden*, *John Barleycorn*, etc., in preference to *Sailor on Horseback* any time.

It is to be hoped now that some one has started the job on Jack London, some good left-winger who can really relate him to his background and to the social and literary ferment of his time will come along and finish it.

—TRAVERS CLEMENT.

## EARLY BEGINNINGS OF THE CLASS STRUGGLE

"The Origin of the Inequality of the Social Classes", by Gunnar Landtman, Ph.D. XV-444 pp. Chicago. University of Chicago Press. \$5.

The title of Professor Landtman's work (Professor of Sociology, University of Helsingfors, Finland)—not by accident—brings to mind immediately the long tradition surrounding the subject-matter. For essentially from the days of Hesiod, through Lucretius and Rousseau, down to our own time, men have tried to find an answer to this baffling problem: when and under what conditions did primitive society first initiate and then pass on those concepts and practices of differentiation which make for *meum et teum*, master and slave, holy and profane? History and anthropology confirm either the absence of or the minimal part played by such concepts and practices in ancient societies as well as in contemporary primitive societies.

In 1754 when J. J. Rousseau published his second, epochal *Discours* (Discourse on the Origin and Basis of Inequality Among Men) he was then consciously agreeing with Lucretius. Inequalities came into society when metallurgy and agriculture brought into being private profit and private property relations. However, so crude a view of economic causation in history was held neither by Rousseau nor, for that matter, by Marx. Every writer exploring this problem would agree with Professor Landtman when he indicates that the inequality reflected in social classes generates from a combination of circumstances in addition to the acquisition of wealth and division of work and trade.

Communal societies gave way before these factors working in conjunction. They were replaced—except in isolated instances—as Landtman clearly indicates, by a Priesthood, Kingship, Nobility, Slavery and Government, as the instrument thereof. Professor Landtman dispassionately presents his material, unlike Rousseau, who plaintively sighs for an epoch midway between primitivist and civilized, i.e. property-related, society. Nor is the author of this interesting book a Marxist or moralist. This book is well-worth having as a general anthropological summary of the problem and of the bibliography in the field.

—FRANK N. TRAGER

## THOMAS LOOKS AT WORLD SOCIALISM

"Socialism on the Defensive", by Norman Thomas. 304 pp. New York, Harper & Bros. \$3.00.

Norman Thomas wrote this book in September, 1938, after a return from an extensive trip in Europe. His observations of the labor and Socialist movement led him to give the above

title to his book. How apt that title was! In fact, after what has happened in France, and the failure of the labor and Socialist movements of Europe to do anything to counter-act the imperialist war-makers at Munich, it would not be an exaggeration to speak about the labor movement "in full retreat". Certainly the dangers Thomas saw in the labor movement in Europe, the constant giving in before non-Socialist pressure, the alliances with non-Socialist groups, the absence of militancy and aggressiveness, are matters for broad discussion. The attitude that we must only report the electoral victories of European Socialism, never criticize its serious shortcomings, has no place in a movement which in order to be successful must be constantly alert for danger signals and constantly critical of its own inadequacies.

Socialists as well as non-Socialists who wish to understand present developments in Europe and the perspectives for the future must read this book. The critical sections devoted to Popular Fronts, the Soviet Union, Socialist problems here and abroad are particularly recommended. Even when one does not agree with Thomas' analysis or conclusions, the fact that he strikes at the heart of a problem, instead of skirting around the edge always makes his works not only readable, but indispensable.

—HERBERT ZAM.

## JAPANESE IMPERIALISM vs. CHINESE NATIONALISM

"Japan in China", by T. A. Bisson. 417 pages, maps. New York, Macmillan, 1938. \$3.00.

The title of the book does not do justice to its contents. It is not merely a recital of the story of Japan's invasion of China and the status of that invasion. Almost as much space is devoted to a study of internal condition in Japan, the growing economic crisis, the political crisis, the struggle between civil authority and military dictatorship and Japan's drive toward fascism. Indeed, in this respect, the sections on Japan are far superior to those on China. For when the author discusses events in China, he is merely a narrator. True, one who wants the story of the invasion and the continuity, will find it here. But a more fundamental analysis of classes and social and political forces in China is almost entirely absent.

A particularly interesting section of the book is the one dealing with the "kidnapping" of Chiang Kai Shek by Chang Hseueh-liang and the subsequent conversion of Chiang to a nationalist anti-Japanese war. At this time, December, 1936, quotations from Chiang's diary reveal that he was still sabotaging the fight against Japan. Speaking of the differences between the Tungpei group (Chiang's "kidnappers") and Chiang, the author tersely summarizes: "They wanted orders to fight Japan; General Chiang Kai Shek insisted that their duty was to suppress the Communists." It is this same Chiang with whom the Communists eventually made peace and who is now the great national "hero" in the fight against Japan. How long will he resist his treacherous inclinations?

—V. SHARP.

## BOOKS RECEIVED

*It Is Later Than You Think: The Need for a Militant Democracy*, by Max Lerner. 260 pp. New York: The Viking Press. \$2.50.

*Life Insurance: Investing in Disaster*, by Mort and E. A. Gilbert. Paper covers. New York: Modern Age Books. 75c. A critical study of the insurance business.

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