

THE NEW INTERNATIONAL

A MONTHLY ORGAN OF REVOLUTIONARY MARXISM

Intellectuals in Retreat

A POLITICAL ANALYSIS OF SOME OF THE
RECENT CRITICS OF BOLSHEVISM:
SIDNEY HOOK • MAX EASTMAN
EUGENE LYONS • BEN STOLBERG
and others

What Are They Doing?

Where Are They Going?

By James Burnham and Max Shachtman

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After the Fall of Hankow

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France and the C. I. O.

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TWENTY CENTS

JANUARY 1939

AT HOME

THE December edition of 4,500 copies of THE NEW INTERNATIONAL, as these notes are written, is virtually exhausted. An especially splendid issue, appears to be the unanimous verdict. There will be yet better issues, the Editorial Board promises. So far, so good. Yet the magazine's situation at this moment is precarious, though needlessly so. Bundle payments this past month fell off sharply and subscription returns, both renewals and new subscriptions, were altogether too low. This condition requires immediate improvement. THE NEW INTERNATIONAL, despite a steadily rising circulation, can easily pass out of existence entirely unless subscription and bundle payment responses are immediately greater. The S.W.P. and the Y.P.S.L. are at present giving full aid to the campaign for the Twelve-A-Week Appeal and to the Christmas Fund campaign of the American Fund for Political Prisoners and Refugees; both these endeavors have the fullest support of THE NEW INTERNATIONAL. We only add that the S.W.P., Y.P.S.L. and their sympathizers should at the same time maintain their obligations to the magazine. Just now there are two easy ways to do that: 1. *Pay bundle orders promptly.* 2. *ORGANIZE GROUPS IMMEDIATELY* to visit subscribers for the purpose of OBTAINING RENEWAL SUBSCRIPTIONS AT ONCE.

Some cities are constantly changing literature agents. This does not contribute to systematic work for the press. Changes should be made only when absolutely necessary. The aim should be to add persons to the literature committees to assist and broaden activities, since sale and distribution of our press and literature remain paramount tasks of our movement. In the past weeks the following places have changed NEW INTERNATIONAL agents: Local New York, Y.P.S.L., Oscar Paskal; St. Paul, Minn., E. Lund (returned to post); San Francisco, A. S.; Houston, Texas, K. H.; Rochester, N.Y., J. V. B.; Columbus, O., C. R.; St. Louis, Mo., E. W.; Louisville, Ky., (revival), C. G.; Syracuse, N.Y., Y.P.S.L.

There were a few new orders and increases in the past month. New orders: Saskatchewan, Canada, 4 copies. Increases: Haifa, Palestine, 3 more; Syracuse, N.Y., Y.P.S.L. from 5 to 20; East Oakland, Cal., E. M. agent, from 10 to 15; Y.P.S.L., New York, 125 to 140. On the whole, a quiet month in this respect.

The activities of the comrades, both party and Y. P. S. L., remain weak in so far as concerns *organized efforts to obtain subscriptions*. Too many comrades seem to be content if they read the magazine themselves or perhaps take a copy or two to sell — and then, all too often, more by chance than intent. We have observed the steady rise in general circulation, and that is all to the good. But subscriptions are all-important.

Columbus, O., Chas. Raven; Youngs—They mean a larger sum of money at once, of course; but even more valuable a subscription means a contact who can be directly reached for other purposes: mass meetings, political assistance, prospective party or youth membership, and so forth. A large subscription list forms not only the *foundation and security* of THE NEW INTERNATIONAL, but can provide a broad base for the Fourth International movement as a whole. Comrades: enlist in the campaign for subscriptions for the duration of the class war.

San Francisco has been reinstated on the bundle order list and, the comrades write, magazine matters are being taken in hand. Local difficulties of a varied nature are being overcome, and the magazine thereby also benefits. That's fine. But with other places, not so good, we now warn. Reading, Pa. has been cut off the list — too far in arrears. The following cities are being kept on the list by the proverbial skin of the teeth — translated: the good will and reasonableness of the management: San Diego, Cal.; Portland, Ore.; Seattle, Wash. and a couple of foreign agents. These will receive the January number, but unless payments are forthcoming before the February number, it will be necessary, in the interests of the maintenance of THE NEW INTERNATIONAL, to eliminate their bundle orders. This is a negative, painful solution. Forewarned is forearmed: send in your payments, comrades, and stop the operation.

Many localities and individual comrades are doing fine work and accomplishing good results with the magazine. In Chicago, Marjorie Graham has been doing an especial-

ly fine job on the Univ. of Chicago Campus, and so likewise has Sara Langar, of the N.W. Side Y.P.S.L. unit. Karl Shier reports others of his special corps of agents also doing well. The new New York Y.P.S.L. agent, comrade Paskal, is carrying out his task diligently; and the C. C. N. Y. circles, reported in the previous number, did even better with the December issue, say the live-wire comrades Milt Miller and Marty Diamond. At Columbia University, too, sales have appreciably increased, the Upper West Side Branch attending to the Columbia Book Shop and the campus. In England, the special literature committee composed of Ed. Fitzroy, A. G.; V. B.; J. G.; J. W. and B. S. is doing an *excellent job* in organizing literature sales throughout England. Local New York continues on too even a pace with the sales of the magazine. Unquestionably, both the party and Y. P. S. L. units in New York could still increase sales considerably by covering systematically all meeting and contacts.

In the country, as a whole, the comrades take the task of circulating THE NEW INTERNATIONAL seriously, though weak on the subscription side. Particularly to be commended, in addition to these mentioned above, are: Oakland, Cal., Carolyn K., agent (hereafter, initials indicate agent); Boston, Mass., John Quinn; Washington, D.C., M. G. and R. S.; Minneapolis, Minn., Chester Johnson and Committee; Hartford, Conn., V. H.; Plentywood, Mont., John Boulds; Fargo, N. D., Wm. Ballou; Los Angeles, Cal., where John Murphy has revitalized the literature work; Allentown, Pa., Ruth Querio; town, O., M. Hess; Cleveland, O., John D.; Salem, O., E. A.; Newark,

N. J., literature committee; Fresno, Cal., C. C.; Ithaca, N.Y., Ed. Speyer; Akron, O., Bob Ferguson; Detroit, Mich., E. P.; Philadelphia, C. H. and S. T.; Berkeley, Cal., J. T.; Pittsburgh, Pa., M. K.; Baltimore, Md., J. B.; New Haven, Conn., M.G.; Hutchinson, Kan., H. S.; Quakertown, Pa., H. S.; and many other places, which space here prohibits mentioning. The Canadians and N. I. agents in Europe, Australia, China, India, South Africa continue to do splendidly, indeed putting the North American comrades to rout, or to shame, as you would have it.

Cities whose agents promise to give assiduous attention to the matter of obtaining subscriptions are: East Oakland, Cal., St. Paul, Minneapolis, Chicago, St. Louis and New York. We're looking forward to the flow. Many cities are now making efforts to place the magazine on newsstands and in book stores. This work has proved fruitful wherever persisted in.

BOUND VOLUMES OF THE NEW INTERNATIONAL: Since only a limited number of sets of the 1938 edition of the magazine are being bound, we suggest that, the agents make an immediate canvas of the prospective purchasers and request them to place orders at once. Price: \$3.00 per volume.

Elderly, as well as youthful comrades are doing their share in circulating THE NEW INTERNATIONAL. In Allentown, Pa., Mother Kimmel, 72 years of age, sells the magazine; from far-off Saskatchewan, Can., J. T. S., writes: "I have been able to sell \$2.00 worth of THE NEW INTERNATIONAL bundle. Count on me in support of the Fourth International. Not much ability, but very fair share of energy and activity for a hayseed of 62 years." Orders bundle regularly. Good work, comrade J. T. S.

Commenting on the special arrangements made on behalf of the Scottish comrades by us, comrade Frank Maitland, of the Revolutionary Socialist Party, Edinburgh, Scotland, says: "Magazine selling satisfactorily. Not only are those workers already interested in socialism buying THE NEW INTERNATIONAL, but at the price you have enabled us to put upon the magazine, we can sell it at our street meetings, etc., and we have sold as many as twenty copies at one meeting . . . You must understand that our Scottish winters cut down the number of our meetings considerably."

But, to help the Scots and others still more, we need YOUR HELP!

J. C. H., Vancouver, B. C., says: "Enclosed a year's subscription. Have been buying THE NEW INTERNATIONAL since its inception. I think your present publication is the best I have read."

OK with us. Now, comrades, ON WITH A SUBSCRIPTION DRIVE!

THE MANAGER.

Two Letters . . .

AN old-timer, Wm. P. K. Gates, Wakefield, Kansas, writes us:

"I have been a subscriber to and enthusiastic reader of THE NEW INTERNATIONAL beginning with its first issue . . . and have enjoyed great benefit and satisfaction from my reading of the incomparably excellent articles in that promoter and defender of genuine and unadulterated revolutionary Marxism. . . . Every member of the working class . . . should for his own enlightenment subscribe to and help support THE NEW INTERNATIONAL . . . You are doing fine; keep it up!"

And, from thousands of miles across the sea:

"For the last few months have been contemplating taking up a

collection on behalf of THE NEW INTERNATIONAL but unfortunately local calls have been heavy on the comrades. The last issue of THE NEW INTERNATIONAL decided me to act at once. It would be a tragedy if THE NEW INTERNATIONAL went out of existence, and it strikes me that the comrades in America are not doing their very best to boost the sales of the magazine in view of the very large population they have to draw on. "You will find enclosed a draft for 15 dollars as a first instalment, and I hope to be able to collect a further donation to forward next year."

B. PALLEY

Sydney, Australia,
Nov. 23, 1938

Intellectuals in Retreat

A POLITICAL ANALYSIS OF THE DRIFT OF THE ANTI-STALINIST INTELLECTUALS FROM MARXISM TOWARDS REFORMISM. — A CRITIQUE OF SIDNEY HOOK, MAX EASTMAN, EUGENE LYONS, BENJAMIN STOLBERG, CHARLES YALE HARRISON AND OTHER CRITICS OF BOLSHEVISM, WHERE THEY STAND AND WHERE THEY ARE GOING.

WE ARE, IN THIS ARTICLE, writing particularly about the following persons:

Group I: Max Eastman, Sidney Hook, Charles Yale Harrison, James Rorty, Edmund Wilson, Philip Rahv, Benjamin Stolberg, James Farrell, Louis Hacker, and others.

Group II: John Chamberlain, Louis Adamic, Eugene Lyons, John Dewey, George S. Counts, Ferdinand Lundberg.

It may reasonably be asked in what sense we list these individuals as *groups*; and how we happen to direct our attention to the two groups in a single article. All of those in Group I have a similar political background. They are all what is known as "radical intellectuals." Most were once, for varying lengths of time, within the orbit of the Communist Party, several of them Party members. With the exception of Eastman and Stolberg, they continued as Communist Party sympathizers well into its Stalinist period. From five years to a year and a half ago, they broke sharply with Stalinism, and for a period were, in political sympathies and general political orientation, close to the revolutionary movement—that is, to the Fourth Internationalist or "Trotskyist" movement. Indeed, they were and still for the most part are known to a considerable public as "the Trotskyist intellectuals." Within the past year or more, they have been steering away from the revolutionary movement.

Group II is of a different character, and will occupy us only incidentally. These intellectuals, also, were at one time closely associated with Stalinism. However, in contrast to Group I, they were—to employ a picturesque phrase which has become current in this country—"Stalinist liberals". Their support was always in terms of bourgeois, not of working class, politics. They have in recent years drawn away from Stalinism, though of them only Lyons and Dewey have broken sharply. For Group II, however, this change does not mean a decisive shift: their basic bourgeois liberal politics dominated their Stalinist associations, and now continues little altered without the Stalinist trimmings. Group II is herein included because its members with those of Group I are known as "radical anti-Stalinist intellectuals"; and more especially because, from a different origin, some of Group I have coalesced politically with Group II, and others of Group I are now heading plainly toward that same outcome.

As we shall show, the ideas and actions of these persons whom we have grouped together are in many symptomatic respects similar, and the current *direction* (though not the speed) of their political evolution is the same. It is in addition worth noting that this group, considered as a political phenomenon, is by no means confined to this country. As prominent European analogues we may mention: Victor Serge, Willi Schlamm, André Gide, Charles Plisnier, Ignazio Silone, Eric Wollenberg, Anton Ciliga. The political background and present course of each of these corre-

sponds closely with that of our Group I, except that Serge and Plisnier were never associated with Stalinism.

There seems, then, ample *prima facie* justification for treating our subjects as a group. It is true, of course, that they do not like to think of themselves as a collectivity, a group. In their own minds and in public they seem to stress that they are "individuals", "independent thinkers"; and this is related to a theoretic stress which they place upon Psychology, attacking revolutionists for "disregarding psychology" and blindly "reducing" everything to political terms. Indeed, this assertion of independent individuality and of the primacy of psychology is another of their *group* characteristics.

It is also true that it would be an over-simplification and indeed a serious error, to suggest that there are no important differences among them, to lump them together in a single mass. Harrison and Rorty, for example, are birds of a different political species, Harrison having now ended up unambiguously in the cage of the class enemy. Nor shall we maintain that each of these individuals, as individuals, will "necessarily" finish up on the same spot. We are writing not psychology nor morality but politics. Our aim is to analyze the nature and direction of a political phenomenon; and politics is concerned with groups, not individuals. Having determined the political nature of a group, we can say of any given individual only that if he thinks and acts consistently as a member of the group such and such an outcome will follow. But individuals are, perhaps fortunately, often inconsistent; and individuals change.

The Frying Pan of the Intellectuals

WE MAY NOTICE AT ONCE about our subjects that as compared with the Stalinist intellectuals and with most of the bourgeois intellectuals they have outstanding abilities, talents and moral virtues. This should not surprise us. The foulness of Stalinism and imperialism can today breed only maggots; in particular is it impossible for *intellectuals* to avoid degeneration not merely of their characters as human beings but also of their

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minds if for any length of time they give their allegiance to these allied monsters of the lie.

The chief talent of the intellectuals in our list is that of writing well. This almost all of them do. How refreshing it is to compare their styles with the dull and dreary pages of *New Masses* or *Science and Society*!

However, we should also observe that those with whom we are dealing are primarily "ideologists": they are critics, philosophers, sociologic-political writers. Only one of them (Farrell) is a creative artist; Harrison, Wilson, and Adamic have written novels in passing, and Rorty a number of poems, but these are a subordinate part of their work. None among all of them is a physical scientist. What pretensions they have to empirical science of any sort are to be found in the dangerous fields of history, sociology and politics, where it is so hard to distinguish an hypothesis from a prejudice; and even in these fields, Hacker and Lundberg only have done any substantial original research.

We may further record that all of these individuals, some of them outstandingly, have many good and progressive deeds to record. In some cases for more than a generation, they have been in the forefront of many of the most important cases in this country and internationally where civil and human rights were at stake. Their names are linked with the fight for Sacco and Vanzetti, for the recognition of the Soviet Union, for Fred Beal, for the Scottsboro boys and Tom Mooney. With the exception of Counts, everyone of them made the vast social and personal sacrifice which was involved in serving on the Committee for the Defense of Leon Trotsky, and three of them were members of the Commission of Inquiry into the charges against Trotsky in the Moscow Trials. The work of the Committee and the Commission remains as an enduring monument; its influence has been felt throughout the world. Nor are their good deeds of the past only. We continue to find their names in the majority of those cases where men have joined efforts toward some genuinely progressive end.

It is hardly to be expected that such activities can be carried on without trouble; and they have, indeed, plenty of trouble. The troubles are of several sorts. One type might be called "craft troubles": they find heavy obstacles placed in the way of the fruitful exercise of their talents. The bourgeoisie and the Stalinists, controlling between them the press, the magazines, the publishing houses, are not eager to give recognition to these persons who proclaim themselves against the *status quo* and against Stalinism. A none-too-subtle sabotage, increasing in recent years, scuttles their work or at the least handicaps it.

To add to these craft hazards are pervasive and equally painful personal troubles. Psychologists and anthropologists teach us that the pressure of public opinion, of social approval and disapproval, praise and blame, is one of the most powerful forces molding the human personality; and the bourgeoisie and the Stalinists have learned the lesson. Our subjects find themselves to be modified pariahs in their community. Old friends cut them dead or throw vicious insults at them. Public and private denunciation becomes commonplace; the lurid prose of the Kremlin apologists holds them up to the world as fascists, counter-revolutionists, German or Japanese spies, even—last bitter indignity—as Trotskyists. When serving in such an enterprise as the Trotsky Committee, to these are added an unremitting plague of telephone calls, letters and telegrams, all designed for the harshest possible effect on the nervous system.

Yet, in this vale of tears, where at least some trouble is the lot of every man, and where therefore judgment of troubles must be relative, it would be possible to exaggerate the ills of our subjects. None of them is forced into the loneliness of the mountain eagle; none is compelled to be altogether silent; and none as yet is exactly starving. In fact, after ten years of economic crisis during which even brokers and bankers have gone bankrupt, some seem to do rather well by themselves. Especially is this true of those who have either remained throughout on the bourgeois

side or who have gone over to it. Each one under Group II may be presumed to use the larger form for his income tax reports. Chamberlain's recognition by the owners of *Fortune* runs, it is said, well into five figures. Columbia University, second richest educational institution in the country, has given its fullest academic honors to Dewey and Counts, and their books are widely published and read. Lyons is able to combine public relations counselling with substantial free lance journalism and lecturing. The recent books of Adamic and Lundberg were not too badly treated by the general press. Though Eastman's earlier defenses of the revolution had to content themselves with modest appearance in little magazines, his recent attacks on the socialist ideal are featured on the covers of *Harper's* and *Liberty*. Hacker's defense of liberal capitalism in his *Graphic History* does not seem to have injured his academic standing (also at Columbia) nor his access to publication. We understand that Harrison's ringing break with Marxism (in the *New Leader*) was followed by negotiations for a well deserved appointment in the Federal Housing Administration. . . .

Dewey has often and brilliantly explained how the conflicts with which human beings unavoidably find themselves confronted give rise to ideas and ideals which are projected as instruments for solving those conflicts. (There is, of course, no *a priori* assurance that the given idea or ideal will actually be capable of solving the given conflict.) Out of the troubled conflicts of our subjects, an ideal, a dream emerges. In a world pressing tumultuously, imperiously against every one of its inhabitants, grinding and battering them from every direction, they seek a little peace, quiet, a chance to cultivate and bring to harvest their talents. They ask for freedom, meaning by freedom what Eastman, who is usually several steps in advance, has written: "Freedom is being in a position to do what comes into *your own* head, to act whether sooner or late on *your own* impulses." Phrased somewhat differently: They ask to be able to do and write what they wish without having to accept the consequences when what they do and write affects others; they ask not to be pushed around by others who are sure of their ideas and intend to fight for them; they ask to be released from responsibility.

When Is a Program a Program?

IT IS A LITERAL and easily verifiable fact that not one of these intellectuals, in all the millions of words they have written and publicly spoken, has presented a new political program. Indeed, so far as *explicit* statement goes, we find in them very little reference to the concrete political issues of the day. It goes without saying that by "political program" we do not mean a list of empty generalities such as those with which Eastman ends his *Harper's* article: "Problems of being and of universal history . . . should be acknowledged to exist. . . . The various components of the [socialist] ideal should be analyzed and considered separately. . . . Those obviously fantastic . . . should be thrown out . . ."; nor the apostrophes to Truth and Freedom by which Hook has lately taken to climaxing his essays. No one need bother to agree or disagree with such abstractions, because agreement or disagreement commits one to nothing. A political program means a set of doctrines, principles, rules or directives which gives the unambiguous answers, or from which the answers may be derived, to the chief *concrete* political problems of the present time: war, insecurity, fascism, unemployment, the struggle for (or against) socialism. . . .

Eastman, as so often, gives the show away. At the end of his polemic against Burnham (*NEW INTERNATIONAL*, August, 1938) he confesses openly that he has no (conscious) program. "If I live," he promises, "I will complete my thesis." But he "would not hurry". To him, "it seems just now in America a period for deliberation."

Let us pause for a moment to consider the meaning of this confession, assuming it to be true. What is Eastman (and almost

any name on our list could be substituted for Eastman's) saying? What is he saying, for example, to the French worker standing today with the whip of fascism descending toward his back? to the American worker plunged into the misery and despair of permanent mass unemployment and swamped by the tidal wave of Roosevelt's armament preparations and his looming war? to his fellow-intellectuals? Eastman is saying: I, who am not a humble clerk in an office nor an obscure cog in an assembly line nor a timid teacher trying to keep a job in a high school, but a writer widely and publicly known, one who presumes to sit publicly in judgment on the great events of history, to publish my decrees on the Russian Revolution, the century-old struggles of the proletarian movement, the rise of fascism, the lot of humanity and its future, I who do not hesitate to attack and expose Lenin and Hitler and Stalin and Trotsky, I tell you: "Sorry, there is nothing to do about it; I regret that at present I have no answer to give you; you will just have to wait patiently until I get around to completing my notes—a page or two seems to be missing from my files." And if meanwhile fascism completes its conquest of Europe, if the war begins with no organization of the forces against it . . . ? "Sorry, that's not *my* responsibility . . ."

But, our subjects uniformly reply, when we remind them that they have overlooked the detail of supplying us with a new program: "That's not our affair. We are not politicians. Politics is not our field. We are—writers."

We have heard this reply so often that we believe it, too, deserves a word of comment. In making this answer, we ask ourselves, whom are they trying most to fool? their general readers, us, or themselves? The truth of the matter is: with one or two partial exceptions, these are all *thoroughly political people*. They intervene *constantly* in political affairs; their interests, feelings, thoughts, conversations, personal relations, speeches, writings and actions are bound up predominantly with politics. Though members of no political parties, it is entirely safe to say that they are far more politically active than, for example, the median Socialist Party member, more active than many members even of such parties as the Communist Party or the Socialist Workers Party.

If they are not writing about politics most of the time, what in hell is it that they are writing about? About what are Hook's books, his articles in the *Modern Monthly*, in the *New Leader*, in the *Southern Review*, most of his reviews in a dozen periodicals, his hundred-and-one speeches in a score of courses and forums? What is Harrison's very novel about, if not politics? Where is politics absent from Stolberg's essay on the New Deal, his book on the C.I.O., his *ex cathedra* review of *The Revolution Betrayed* in the *Nation*? What is Counts writing about when he publishes his thick volume on democracy? or Lundberg on the Sixty Families, with its concluding defense of New Dealism? or Chamberlain when he explains that Washington is "our state" in *Common Sense*? or Adamic, the immigrant boy who made good, when he covers the whole field in *My America*? or Lyons in his book about Russia, his column, his speeches? or the whole bunch in their recent *New Leader* essays? You will have to search through Rahv's and Phillips' and Dupee's *Partisan Review* with a high-power microscope to find an article, whatever the alleged subject, that avoids politics. How about Hacker, now reviving evolutionary

meliorism in his latest interpretations of American history? Or even such a one as Wilson, who is reported to say nowadays that "Writers should not sign anything; they should merely write"—what does he deal with in his book about his Soviet journey, his discussions of proletarian literature, his essays on Marx and Engels and Marxism, his *New Republic* article on the Moscow Trials, his ballyhooing of Willi Schlamm?

Let us finish with this tommyrot about "Not interested in politics; not politicians . . ." once and for all. These are indeed "political animals" in a sense far more complete than Aristotle had in mind when he first applied the characterization to men in general.

They are above all preoccupied with politics, they are in their own not obscure way *politicians*. The trouble is precisely that their politics are *negative, irresponsible and unprincipled*.

These adjectives may seem to be harsh, part of the "insufferable Trotskyist tone" which our subjects are not the last to criticize. As is usual with us, however, we employ them not as mere careless emotive epithets, but as carefully meant description.

Their politics are *negative* in the sense that they are always and constantly criticizing and attacking everybody else's politics, often in the sharpest conceivable manner, on every type of question from the highest branches of theory to the latest move in the trade unions or the labor party, but seldom making concrete and positive proposals of their own. If anyone has any doubts about this generalization, he may remove them through acquaintance with their works.

Their politics are *irresponsible* in the sense that they do not lay their cards on the table, state and make explicit the premises from which they derive their particular conclusions (they do not even to themselves), and thus they can jump from one week to the next in and out of organizations, back and forth from one position to another, one attitude to another, without being checked up and called to account. If anyone has any doubts about this generalization, he may remove them by studying their actions during the past couple of years.

Their politics are *unprincipled* because their specific political actions and positions are not derived from consciously, explicitly recognized principles (whether such principles were right or wrong would be irrelevant to this point). If anyone has any doubts about this generalization, let him try to find such consciously and explicitly recognized principles in their writings.

Now, though our subjects have not presented—and, we may be confident, will not present—any new program, it would be very naive to suppose that they have no program at all. Like all those who intervene more than sporadically in politics, they of course have a program—if not a program openly stated, then a program which may be deduced from their actions and the positions they take on specific questions at issue. In fact, our group may be said to have not one but two programs: a "formal", avowed or alleged program which has been developed at length in the writings of its more prominent spokesmen, to some extent in the writings of all of them; an "actual", politically decisive program which we may piece together from their actions and specific positions on concrete questions. It is to these two programs that we turn.

II: THE FORMAL PROGRAM OF THE ANTI-STALINIST INTELLECTUALS

A CAREFUL SIFTING OF the large mass of evidence constituted by the writings of our subjects enables us to sum up what we have called their "formal" program under three main heads: (1) Against dialectical materialism; (2) Against one-party dictatorship; (3) Leninism is the source of Stalinism. A fourth point crops up so frequently that, though of a different order, it almost deserves a separate heading: Against the harsh tone of revolutionary polemics. Before turning to examine each of these four

separately, we wish to make certain preliminary remarks.

In the first place, we are compelled to notice that, even with the addition of the leading items on the positive side of the formal program—for Freedom, Truth and Science—this is not much of a program; nor do we think that we are being unfair or arbitrary in reducing the formal program to these elements. Even if we should grant that our subjects are 100% correct in everything they have written on all and each of these matters, we do

not find that we would be very far along the road toward solving the issues of war, fascism and insecurity. In fact we can't see that we would even have left the starting post. The mountain of intellectual and nervous energy, to say nothing of the social labor of lumberjacks, paper manufacturers, linotype operators, printers, book salesmen and the rest, seems to have brought forth a pretty mouse-like theoretical offspring.

In the second place, we want to make clear that we regard none of these subjects as taboo: there are no theoretical Sacred Cows in our eyes, and we criticize no one merely for discussing no matter what subject. But there are a variety of ways in which discussion may be carried on. Simply to claim that "we seek the truth" is not enough. Even in the highly developed physical sciences, the concept of truth, the adoption or rejection of the whole method of inquiry, must be in the end related to purposes which the inquiry is designed to serve. How much more dangerously is this the case with such less developed fields as sociology, history and politics! Historical and political inquiries do not occur in a social vacuum; they are immediately and crucially related to the political ends and aims of individuals, parties and classes, and function actively as weapons in the political struggle.

For our part, we state explicitly that we undertake historical and political inquiries for the sake of our socialist aim. This does not in the least mean that therefore we "subordinate" truth, are willing to pervert it as a "means to our end"; on the contrary, our conception of the socialist ideal teaches us that the truth is a decisive means for realizing it, is indeed a part of it. But it does mean that we refuse to argue about truth in the "abstract", that in discussing theoretical questions in history and politics we establish a context which includes reference to the ends and aims and purposes which the given discussion, argument or inquiry serves. Truth, or rather truths, a necessary means and part of the socialist ideal, is yet short of the Godhead; it too can serve reactionary and vicious aims.

This last statement may seem surprising or shocking to those who are hypnotized by abstractions. However, it is verified daily. For example, the Dies Committee, among many lies, has also disclosed a substantial percentage of truths. Are we then to hail its work as progressive, and follow the example of cheap renegades like J. B. Matthews and Sam Baron in aiding it? Naturally not. Its truths, partial of course and intertwined with lies, are the instrument of reaction—and it is the truths, not the lies, which make the instrument effective. We, along with everyone else who is not a traitor, denounce and attack the Dies Committee, expose its reactionary purpose, demand its dissolution. We do not, of course, deny to the masses that its truths are true; that, the function of the Stalinists, would be treachery of another kind. But we insist that those truths must be acquired in another way and made to serve other ends.

On a more grandiose scale, we may make the same observations about fascism. The critique of bourgeois parliamentary democracy given by the leading fascist theoreticians is for the most part true; and this is one of the sources of the strength of fascism as a movement. Is it any the more progressive on that account? What would we say to a fascist who complained: "Why do you keep attacking us? You yourselves agree with most of what we have to say about bourgeois democracy."

We mention these things not to suggest that the "formal program" of our subjects may in fact be true, but because in the present article we are not so much concerned with the isolated question of the factual truth or falsity of their opinions as with their nature as a political phenomenon, with the political ends and aims which their present writings and actions are serving. We could hardly expect to cover adequately the problems of dialectical materialism, party dictatorship and the origins of Stalinism in a single article. But it is not at all necessary to do this in order to complete the task we have set ourselves.

A Question of Tone

OUR SUBJECTS ARE FREQUENT critics of the "bad tone" that they find in the political press of the working-class parties, including conspicuously that of our own party. Indeed, they find in our sharp tone so much to condemn that it can be done only by the sharpest tone on their part. As a rule they explain: "It is not what you say to which we object, but the way in which you say it. You simply drive people from you. You don't understand psychology." Stubbornly, perhaps, we are not able to take this explanation seriously. We believe that where questions of tone are raised in connection with political issues, it is ninety-nine times out of a hundred not the *manner* of saying but *what* is said that is being debated.

The "question of tone"—which we also readily grant to be an important question—is obviously enough not a literary or stylistic problem. There is that problem too, but it is nothing to argue over: it is a matter of talent and technical training so that style will communicate just what is intended. We, certainly, recognize our literary lacks, and strive to overcome them.

But no one is getting embittered or passioned over the literary difficulty. In politics and out, the more basic aspect of the issue of "tone" is subordinated to content. Roughly, in general, one uses a harsh tone to those against whom one feels enmity, a friendly tone to friends, bitterness toward traitors, conciliation toward those whom one regards as misled, and so on. This follows quite automatically for many persons; their attitudes, almost without giving it a thought, govern their tone. We wish to make perfectly clear that, in so far as we are technically able, we are ourselves quite deliberate and conscious in our "tone"; we regard tone also as a *political* instrument.

This does not mean that we are "just like the fascists and Stalinists" in the use of tone. Not in the least. The Stalinists and fascists use "tone" *demagogically*, to *hide* the truth and to *obscure* their aims: as when they call revolutionary militants "fascist spies, counter-revolutionaries, mad dogs," or themselves "socialists". We on the contrary employ tone to *clarify* the truth and our aims. When we write that Norman Thomas is a political colleague and defender of the butchers of the Barcelona workers, the phrase is no doubt harsh; but the harshness is that of literal truth. When we say that Stalin is a murderer, Roosevelt a warmonger, Hillman a reactionary labor bureaucrat, we mean exactly what we say. We do not think that politics is a polite parlor game; we understand it as the struggle for power, and a very rude and brutal struggle, for all that we might wish otherwise.

Now how is it with our subjects on the question of tone? True, they do not seem to be deliberate and conscious in their political use of tone; but their use of it is nonetheless political in spite of their blinders. We discover, for example, that in the history of American radical journalism, no one has written with sharper or harsher tone than they against the Stalinists. Consider Hook, Eastman, Stolberg, Lyons on the Stalinists and Stalinism; you could not match their invective from the pages of the Fourth Internationalist press.

Nor is their tone toward us exactly suitable for the drawing room. With what casualness they assure the world that on Kronstadt we are guilty of amalgams worthy of a Vishinsky (Serge and Macdonald), that in essence and origin we are identical with Stalinism (Hook, Eastman, Lyons, Harrison, Adamic, Counts) and even with fascism (Eastman in *Liberty*, Harrison in the *New Leader*), that, like all of Bolshevism, we are ever ready to lie as a means to our end, that our secret aim is to destroy all democracy and freedom for the sake of a clique dictatorship.

But, equally interesting, we find when we turn to recent writings of our subjects that deal with social-reformists or bourgeois liberals, the harsh, sharp, bitter tone quite disappears, and all is again sweetness and light. And, similarly, we find that we are never criticized by our subjects for "tone" when we attack the Stalinists, but only when we attack social reformists and bour-

geois liberals. And this little asymmetry is just what we object to.

The *New Leader* is "so different" from the *Daily Worker*; it is so bright, informative, lively, readable, to be recommended and written for;—in spite of the fact that in its somewhat politer way it spreads nine-tenths of the identical filthy lies and black reactionary proposals that smell up the sheet of the Stalinists. Norman Thomas, "so different" from Earl Browder, even if a mite confused, must be treated with white gloves—in spite of the fact that he gives political support in Spain to the stranglers of the Revolution, international allegiance to the international organization that began its sell-outs and betrayals before the Third International came into existence and has changed since 1914 only to deepen its degeneration, in spite of the fact that in this country he proved his devotion to democracy by throwing out the revolutionists in his own party by dictatorial ukase, now is selling out what is left of his party to the Social-Democratic Federation, and for a generation has an unparalleled record of sowing disorientation on every major issue that has ever arisen here or anywhere else in the world. As for tone toward the bourgeois liberals, toward even "left" bourgeois liberals like Chamberlain and Adamic—what should a serious person have but contempt and hatred for them who spend their lives trying to persuade the workers of America to accept the blessings of U. S. imperialism?

Very revealing, tone. Over a period, the tone of political journalism reveals not the literary finesse nor psychological insight of writers, but, with surprising accuracy—the *political* attitudes and directions.

Dialectical Materialism as Whipping Boy

EASTMAN, HOOK, WILSON, Lyons, Dewey, at some length, others on our list more sporadically, have set their lances against the "theology" of dialectical materialism. We do not propose here to discuss the general theory of dialectical materialism; that would require a book, not a single section of an article. We are now interested only in certain features of our subjects' *attack* on dialectical materialism.

The two authors of the present article differ thoroughly on their estimate of the general theory of dialectical materialism, one of them accepting it and the other rejecting it. This has not prevented them from working for years within a single political organization toward mutually accepted objectives, nor has this required on the part of either of them any suppression of his theoretical opinions, in private or public. There is nothing anomalous in such a situation. Though theory is doubtless always in one way or another related to practise, the relation is not invariably direct or immediate; and as we have before had occasion to remark, human beings often act inconsistently. From the point of view of each of the authors there is in the other a certain such inconsistency between "philosophical theory" and political practise, which *might* on some occasion lead to decisive concrete political disagreement. But it does not now, nor has anyone yet demonstrated that agreement or disagreement on the more abstract doctrines of dialectical materialism necessarily affects today's and tomorrow's concrete political issues—and political parties, programs and struggles are based on such concrete issues. We all may hope that as we go along or when there is more leisure, agreement may also be reached on the more abstract questions. Meanwhile there is fascism and war and unemployment.

During 1907-08, Lenin was, as is well known, carrying on a philosophical dispute with the Machists and also a sharp political fight against the Mensheviks. Gorky inclined, on the philosophical questions, toward the Machists, and apparently considered that this might prevent him from making common *political* cause with Lenin against the Mensheviks on the concrete questions then at issue. On February 25, 1908, Lenin wrote to Gorky as follows:

I believe I must tell you my view quite openly. A certain scrap among the Bolsheviks in the question of philosophy I now consider quite unavoidable. But to split up on that account would be stupid, in my

opinion. We have formed a bloc for the carrying through of a certain tactic in the Social-Democratic Labor party. This tactic we have been and are continuing to carry through *without differences of opinion* (the only difference of opinion occurred in connection with the boycott of the Third Duma), but firstly it never reached such a sharp point among us even to hint at a split; secondly, it did not correspond to the difference of opinion of the materialists and the Machists, for the Machist Bazarov, for example, was, like myself, against the boycott and wrote about it (a large feuilleton in the *Proletarii* [the journal then under Bolshevik direction]).

To obstruct the cause of the carrying through of the tactic of the revolutionary social democracy in the Labor party because of disputes over materialism or Machism, would be, in my opinion, an inexcusable stupidity. We must be at loggerheads over philosophy in such a way that the *Proletarii* and the Bolsheviks, as a faction of the party, *are not affected by it*. And that is entirely possible.

These wise, responsible and humane words are those, of course, of the real Lenin, not the sanctimonious Pope of the Stalinist fairy tales nor the one-party tyrant who is now being imaginatively constructed by Eastman, Hook and Harrison.

Shortly after the time of the above letter, interestingly enough, one of the Mensheviks declared in the *Neue Zeit* that the philosophical dispute was identical with the political dispute. *Proletarii* made the following editorial statement:

In this connection, the editorial board of *Proletarii*, as the ideological representative of the Bolshevik tendency, deems it necessary to present the following declaration: "In reality this philosophical dispute is not a factional dispute and, in the opinion of the editorial board, it should not be one; any attempt to represent these differences of opinion as factional is thoroughly erroneous. Among the members of both factions there are supporters of both philosophical tendencies."

* * *

We wish to make, in the present circumstances, the following observations:

1. Let us assume that the entire attack of our subjects on dialectical materialism is correct. Dialectical materialism is "contrary to science," an "idealistic metaphysics," a "theology." Then let us ask: So what? What follows, politically? To be even more concrete: From the destructive analysis of dialectical materialism by these critics, what conclusions may be derived as to changes in any section, paragraph, line or word of the Declaration of Principles of the Socialist Workers Party, the programmatic document upon which the Fourth Internationalist movement in this country is based, in its general conceptions identical with the Fourth Internationalist program throughout the world?

Not one of these critics, in spite of the many, many pages they have spent on the subject, has yet proposed any such *specific* changes. Even if they object to parts of our program, they have not pretended that their objection can be *deduced* from their attitude on dialectical materialism; but this is what it is incumbent upon them to show if they are justified in ascribing political importance to their formal theory, and if they excuse their failure to give unequivocal support to the Fourth International by appeal to their theory. Their inability to make any such deductions would go to prove, in fact, that politically their whole formal discussion of "Marxist philosophy" is operationally meaningless, since no political conclusions follow from it. But it is not, in actuality, politically meaningless. The lack of political content in the formal doctrine is precisely the indication that this doctrine—the attitude toward dialectical materialism—is not at all what is at issue; that the whole "philosophic discussion" is in practise a smokescreen for *political* positions which receive no explicit expression in the formal discussion proper, but must be analyzed out from other data.

2. The "theory of the inevitability of socialism" is the chief bugaboo in this critique of dialectical materialism. Eleven years ago, in his book, *Marx and Lenin*, Max Eastman began his attack on this theory chiefly with the contention that it led to passivity on the part of those who believed in it, because they could permit the revolution to take care of itself. The same point was made by Hook in *Toward the Understanding of Karl Marx*, and more

recently by Wilson and others. Once again we discover that our anti-metaphysicians are rationalist and *a priori* in their method of analysis, this time with charmingly ironic results.

Entirely apart from what may be the purely logical relation between a theory of inevitability and passivity, what are the empirical psychological and historical *facts*? Lenin and Trotsky, believing in inevitability, made a revolution. The Fourth Internationalists today and yesterday and tomorrow, a majority of whom doubtless believe in the theory of inevitability (if they are interested in the problem), spend their lives and energies in militant active political struggle. Eastman, who does not believe because it leads to passivity, announces his retirement for "deliberation". Hook has withdrawn from direct party political activity. Wilson is so non-inevitable about politics that he advises writers not even to sign anything any more.

3. Let us assume that the belief in "the inevitability of socialism" is incorrect, that we should substitute the hypothesis that socialism is, to one or another extent, probable. Once more: what, directly and indirectly, is *politically* altered? But let us turn to other doctrines of our group. Having dismissed inevitability with a very airy gesture, they are now preaching, apparently—the *impossibility* of socialism (Eastman in his *Harper's* article), and the *inevitability* of . . . Thermidor (Stolberg in his *Nation* article on *The Revolution Betrayed*, Hook implicitly in his *Southern Review* article, *Reflections on the Russian Revolution*). If "the inevitability of socialism" is theology, then the "impossibility of socialism" and the "inevitability of Thermidor" are certainly no less theological. And, if we had to choose between theologies, we would say that the latter is surely the inferior brand: because the latter counsels the masses to despair and not to fight; and whatever the chances for socialism, we won't get it unless the masses fight.

4. Our subjects put up in opposition to dialectical materialism as their code and method: empirical science or, some of them, scientific empiricism. Let us examine briefly their pretensions to scientific empiricism. (We have already dealt with Eastman's utterly trivial conception and practises of what he naively imagines to be "science"—NEW INTERNATIONAL, June and August, 1938.)

Is it not of some significance that from our entire list, only the politically insignificant Hacker and Lundberg have done any extensive original research to bring to light fresh historical and political data? (Hook's original researches have been almost entirely work of literary scholarship.) The function of the others has been almost solely one of interpretation—a far from unimportant function, but hardly one by itself to justify major claims to status as empirical scientists. Indeed, it becomes even suspicious when we observe it to be a *group* characteristic; when we note that this present attempt to re-interpret early Bolshevism is being accomplished with virtually no new data.

Again: scientific hypotheses are tested by the predictions that are made on their basis. We do not of course expect predictions in history or in politics to be made with the specificity or precision of those in the physical sciences, but we would like to inquire: What predictions of any kind about politics and history have our self-vaunted empiricists made to test for us their theories? We have been unable to discover a single one. In fact, we state quite soberly that so far as we can see, everything concrete and specific they know about modern politics, every reasonably concrete prediction they have made, has been learned from Trotsky and the press of the Fourth Internationalist movement.

Trotsky and the Fourth Internationalists generally, on their side, *test* their theories *daily* by specific analyses and by verifiable predictions—not mere vague predictions about a "defeat" or "victory", but careful predictions of the process and mechanism of what will happen; not merely in connection with large-scale historical crises, but likewise in the constant traffic of unions, parties, factions, Leagues. The predictions are occasionally in error, the time sequences are sometimes mis-stated; but by and large

we can with not the slightest hesitation point to the past fifteen years as a triumphant reservoir of proof for the empirical superiority of our method of political analysis as against any other in the field. Our record, in small matters and great, is not even approximated by that of any other individual or group.

The truth is that in so far as our subjects are empiricists at all in politics and history, they are not scientific but *vulgar* empiricists. That is, they keep their political noses rubbing in the immediate fact and refuse or fear to state generalized hypotheses summing up the accumulated data of historical and political experience. This vulgar empiricism is, moreover, *directly* related to their specific political judgments and their political actions (which will be dealt with in detail in Part III). They "are not sure" how entry of the P.O.U.M. into the Spanish bourgeois government will work out; and therefore they refuse to characterize it politically. The infamous sham Keep America Out of War Committee "might" turn into an effective instrument against war, so they hop into it (and after a burning, very shortly out again). "You can't tell" just what the Social Democratic Federation will do in case of war—after all some members in it say they are against collective security; so they write for the *New Leader*. The revolution "might" lead to Thermidor everywhere; so we will be careful not to commit ourselves too thoroughly to the revolution.

5. Let us, finally, examine some empirical gems from our anti-theologians. And let no one imagine that these are arbitrarily selected. Their attacks on dialectical materialism end up with hymns to Freedom, Truth, Morality, and to empty abstract formulas that make the Platonic Ideas look like models of careful empirical observation.

In articles and speeches, Hook has recently adopted as his motto Lord Acton's well-known aphorism: "Power breeds corruption; absolute power breeds absolute corruption;" and Hook draws many a conclusion from this "hypothesis". At first hearing, this pretty phrase sounds dignifiedly profound, and an audience is usually impressed. Yet let us consider. To begin with, the form of the aphorism is nothing but our old friend "inevitability" once more. And whence comes this "absolute" for an empiricist who by profession recognizes nothing as absolute? But these might be dismissed as quibbling objections? Think, then, of the completely absurd content of the aphorism, however interpreted. Power does, of course, sometimes breed corruption—certain kinds of power directed toward certain types of end. But power also breeds, and is the only breeder, of just the opposite of corruption—other powers directed toward other ends. If we went back over history and eliminated all power in order to get rid of all corruption, we would also have to get rid of all history and put man back where he started from. Hook's implicit advice to slaves, serfs, vileins would be: do not exercise power against your masters, because then you will be corrupted (they heard exactly the same advice at the time—from the priests). His implicit advice to workers today would have to be: do not use your trade union power against the bosses, because that will corrupt you; do not use political power to overthrow the bosses' government and set up your own government, because that will lead only to the triumph of Thermidor. In *concrete* meaning, this "anti-power" preaching, which is now a feature of this whole school (the quotation from Acton is merely a minor symptom), is on the one hand empirically simply ridiculous, on the other politically *reactionary*. In sum, it, like the doctrine of "the inevitability of Thermidor", is just a fancy way of putting the time-honored precept of class collaboration.

"Problems of being and of universal knowledge . . . should be acknowledged to exist, but not solved by the device of pretending to know what is not known." (Eastman in *Harper's*.) A juicy morsel for the semantic analysis of young empiricists.

Or let us listen to Eugene Lyons, at the close of his book, summing up the lessons of his mighty experiences, coming finally to grips with the problems of the day:

The "coming struggle"—and it is not coming, it is already here—is not between communism and fascism. It is the struggle for the moral and ethical ideals [the distinction between "moral ideals" and "ethical ideals" would be a little obscure in our minds if we didn't understand that the whole business were reduplicating bombast] which have been renounced by both these movements. (*Assignment in Utopia*, p. 622.)

I left Russia and Europe convinced that the immediate [*sic*] task for those who have the urge to participate consciously in the historic processes of their lifetime—is to defend the basic concepts of freedom, humaneness, intellectual integrity, respect for life. . . . [And then at last the abstractions get down on the ground:] They must be defended from Bolshevik onslaughts no less than fascist or capitalist onslaughts. (*Ibid.*, p. 623.)

Against "One-Party Dictatorships"

THE BROAD ATTACK on "one-party dictatorship", in which nearly all of our subjects have participated, has reached a new climax in Hook's article, *Reflections on the Russian Revolution*, published in the current (Winter, 1938-39) issue of the *Southern Review*. A full discussion of this presumptuous essay will have to wait for another occasion. Now, as with the other doctrines, we are primarily interested in the *political* motivation of the attack taken as a whole.

It might be expected that these empiricists, who regard the question of "one-party dictatorship" as so crucial that, in Hook's thesis, it is by itself *the* cause of the degeneration of the Russian Revolution, would at least bother to be wholly unambiguous as to what they meant by "one-party dictatorship". This, however, is not the case. Do they mean a régime in which a single party administers the apparatus of government? Sometimes the context shows that this is what they mean—which would make the United States a one-party dictatorship. Or do they mean a régime in which all parties but one are *illegal*? Presumably this should be consistently their meaning, and we will interpret them in this sense.

They maintain: (a) that "one-party dictatorship" is an integral and essential part of Bolshevik theory as held by Lenin, Trotsky and Stalin alike; (b) that one-party dictatorship leads to dictatorship of a clique or individual *over* the party and thereby to brutal totalitarian Thermidor; (c) this is the causal explanation of the Russian Thermidor: "the explanation of the present political régime in Russia is to be found in its natural evolution from party dictatorship to dictatorship of the secretariat."

It is interesting to observe how conclusion (b) is reached. It is not in the least by an empirical examination of the facts of the Russian Revolution or analogies from other historically similar events, but almost exclusively by a purely *rational deduction* from "the nature of dictatorship"—*e.g.*, the nature of the *concept* of dictatorship; a deduction, that is, of a Hegelian, "theological" variety (*cf.*, *Southern Review* article, pp. 452f). ". . . The dictatorship of a political party cannot for long be effective without its own internal organization becoming dictatorial". Why not? "The necessity [*sic*] of *controlling* the mass of the population . . . compels [*sic*] the party to assume a military, sometimes called a monolithic, structure." In passing, what disingenuous sophistry so casually to identify "military" with "monolithic" structure—two altogether different conceptions. "But the dictatorship of the party cannot [*sic*] be effectively wielded . . ." *etc.* "To conceal this division . . . the ruling group in the party must [*sic*] regulate . . ." *etc.* "Now in order to exercise the proper supervision the leading group must [*sic*] itself be unified. Dissidents are isolated, gagged into silence, exiled, deported, and shot." Notice again—unity of the leading group so casually identified with exiling and shooting all dissidents. "The rule of the leading group must [*sic*] be fortified by a mythology . . ." But this process, for our empiricist, is of course only probable? Pause, dear reader: "Historical variations may appear in *some points* [our italics] in this evolution . . ."; but the iron law of

the general pattern, the necessary inevitability of the degeneration rises supreme above all minor variations! This, and all these "musts" and "compels" and "necessities" from our oh-so-empirical anti-inevitabilityists!

* * *

Notes on Morality: It would be farcical to regard Hook's article as a scientific treatise. It is actually a *moral* essay, attempting to fix moral responsibility, moral praise and blame. Taken in its entirety we declare quite bluntly: it is an ideological *deception* serving to direct moral onus against the Bolsheviks and to alibi the crimes of the Mensheviks, S.R.s, Kerensky, and indeed the imperialist interventionists themselves. In a brilliant polemic against Corliss Lamont, Hook once showed how support of a big-scale frameup led to one's commission on one's part of minor frameups. Something dangerously like this occurs in the *Southern Review* article. In citing a few details, we must keep in mind that Hook's article was written for a magazine most of whose readers are not acquainted in detail with revolutionary history and conceptions.

1. As to the scientific pretensions, a single and major example: Hook maintains that the advances in Russian economy during the past 20 years prove nothing about the comparative possibilities of socialized as against capitalist economy, because we can come to different conclusions by shifting our standard of comparison. Historically speaking, he claims, it is equally significant to compare the present Russian economy with Russian economy 20 years ago; or with U. S. economy today. And, says Hook, the U. S. workers are much better off. (Therefore, any unsuspecting reader might naturally conclude, U. S. economy is "better", more worth defending, than Russian.) The point is not dissimilar to that made by the National Chamber of Commerce, which uses the argument to reconcile the U. S. workers to eternal misery and insecurity (*cf.*, news dispatch published December 28 in the general press).

What conceivable historical significance, to any but a purely Platonic or theological theory of history, could there be to a static comparison between the Russian standard of living today and its development during the past 20 years to the U. S. standard of living today (incidentally, Hook of course omits any reference to the *development* of U. S. economy during these 20 years, which has sent it *back* to the early years of the century)? Or to that of any of the advanced capitalist powers which got an early monopoly of the imperialist field? There is a far more suitable comparison which evaluates Russian economy in terms of what was the sole historical alternative in Russia of 1917-18 to workers' power and socialized economy: namely reduction of Russia to a semi-colonial nation. The comparison, of course, is with *China*. Recognizing this, as any conscientious historian of any school must do, Hook's facile generalizations go up at once in smoke. As a matter of fact, what Hook here and throughout the article is interested in is to display the *moral* heinousness of Stalin's totalitarian régime, and his "science" comes in only for decorative effect.

2. Hook's central thesis is that one-party dictatorship is *the* cause of the degeneration because it was "the only *controllable factor*." What in the world does he or can he mean? If he is inquiring into questions of historical causation, how does he exempt himself from discovering what *causal* factors brought about restrictions and finally suppression of democracy, brought about the one-party dictatorship which he is presumably investigating? Surely it was not, like an act of God's, self-caused. But Hook is prohibited from such an analysis, not by any scientific demands (which would lead to just that analysis) but by implicit but unrecognized *political aims*, since that analysis would not turn out so well for the objects of his present apologies, the S.R.s, Mensheviks and Kerensky.

But, apart from this, taking the perspective of 1917, in what specifiable sense was the extent of democracy more "con-

trollable" than a dozen other factors? The seizure of power by the Bolsheviks and their subsequent agitation and actions certainly exercised a causal influence, which might have been a "controlling" influence, on revolutions elsewhere. Unfortunately, the workers' movement in Germany turned out to be under the control of the social democrats and not of the Bolsheviks—a little item that is omitted from Hook's *Reflections*. Hook will hardly tell us that successful revolutions in other nations would have had no important effects on the internal Russian conditions, including the political régime.*

The peace negotiations with Germany, the delay in formulating an industrial plan (so disastrous in its consequences), the Polish campaign, the agricultural policy, the policy of the C.I. in the Balkans or China, the adoption of a perspective of national Bolshevism or of world revolution, were all not less "controllable" in Hook's sense than the alleged position on party dictatorship

What Hook seems really to be holding against the Bolsheviks is that they didn't exercise their "control" over their own actions to abdicate, and abandon the state power to the only possible alternative—restoration or imperialist reduction to semi-colonial status, so that Russia might have become another China. This, of course, they might have done; and had they done so, it is also true that there would have been no Stalinism.

3. Hook "proves" that "the Bolsheviks considered the dictatorship of the proletariat to be the dictatorship of the Communist party" in the sense that this involves also the complete suppression of democracy and the illegalization of both opposition parties and inner-party factions, by a process which is a neat little lesson in the mechanism of deception.

Item 1: His first two categories of evidence (out of five) are—the accusations of the opponents of Bolshevism! Giving important weight to such evidence, we could say that Hook is quite probably a Nazi-Japanese agent, and that Roosevelt is a Communist.

Item 2: The third category of evidence—"their oppressive treatment of other working-class organizations"—has not the slightest bearing on the question until we examine specifically what the basis for and circumstances of this treatment were. All States "oppress" those who seek to overthrow them.

Item 3: The fifth category: "Most important of all, as far as this specific point is concerned, the program of the Communist International, which left no room for doubt that the Communist parties or respective countries would liquidate at the first opportunity other working-class parties." Triumphantly, he quotes, in a footnote, the relevant passage of the program. We hope that all readers take the trouble to glance at the footnote. *The quotation says absolutely nothing about liquidating other working-class parties*, nor could the smartest logician possibly deduce such a conclusion from it. The passage discusses several possible types of government, ending with one which the Communist party exclusively administers. Hook italicizes the following: "Only the workers' government, consisting of Communists, can be the true embodiment of the dictatorship of the proletariat." What in the world has this to do with liquidating anything or anybody? This simply embodies the theory and aim of every political party of any kind which is worth its weight in salt. Every serious political party, including the Republican and Democratic parties of the

U. S., aims at the administration of State power and asserts that it alone can administer it properly in the interests of whomever it claims to represent.

For if Hook considers his perfectly commonplace quotation from the program of the Comintern's 4th Congress in 1922 to be such crushing proof of his argument that totalitarianism is inherent in Bolshevism, what will he say about the following (equally commonplace) quotations?:

In a *real* Labour revolution, which breaks out where the workers as a class have captured political power, the Communist party, which constitutes a mere sect, will no longer play any part. Victory will fall to the Social Democratic party, which is wide enough to include all the class-conscious workers, and it will be its task to employ the political power thus acquired to carry out a socialistic transformation. . . .

. . . no socialist would prefer a coalition Government, if given the choice of a Socialist Government. Only the latter type of Government can pave the way to Socialism, and proceed energetically and systematically to the socialization of the capitalist process of production. (*The Labour Revolution*, pp. 27, 52. Our emphasis.)

Who wrote these terribly totalitarian words, according to which the "real" proletarian revolution, and the transitional period during which the way to socialism is paved, can be directed "only" by a government consisting exclusively of members of a single party? Karl Kautsky, the theoretical Pope of international social democracy! Should not, then, the rights of paternity require the re-naming of at least five contemporaries with his patronymic, *i. e.*, Vladimir I. Kautsky, Leon D. Kautsky, Joseph V. Kautsky, Benito Kautsky, Adolf Kautsky? For according to Hook's argumentation, Kautsky is, as much as anybody, the ideological father of totalitarian Leninism, Trotskyism, Stalinism, Fascism and Nazism.

Item 4 (the payoff): To clinch his point finally, Hook ends with a quotation from—William Z. Foster in 1932! 1932, when the process of Stalinization was complete, is used as *proof* for Hook's thesis that original (Lenin's) Bolshevism held the theory and that therefore Lenin and Stalin are one in their attitude toward democracy! Needless to say, no word of warning is included by Hook for his uninstructed *Southern Review* readers.

Item 5: Perhaps the most decisive test for a scientist is his scrupulous inclusion of all *negative* evidence. In arguing for his thesis, Hook includes not one word of mention of the *negative* evidence well known to him and *not* to the bulk of those who will read the article. Not a word of *State and Revolution*, Lenin's magnificent formulation of workers' democracy, written on the very eve of October in order to explain to the masses not merely of Russia but of the world and for the future (as a guide if the Bolsheviks should that time fail in achieving their aims) the meaning of workers' democracy. Not a word of Lenin's constant struggle, from the first year of the revolution until his death, against the bureaucratization of the party and state apparatus. Not a word on the great discussions over Brest-Litovsk, the Polish campaign, trade union policy. Not a word to indicate to the reader that the Bolsheviks invited the Mensheviks and S.R.s to form the government jointly with them, and that the Mensheviks and right wing S.R.s, standing on the basis of the Constituent Assembly, declined of their own will. Not a word to recall that those of the left S.R.s who had not meanwhile fused with the Bolsheviks voluntarily and deliberately withdrew from the government because of their disagreement with the Brest-Litovsk Treaty, and publicly announced themselves against the Soviet state power. Not a word of the fact that in 1923 Trotsky *began* the struggle of the Opposition on the issue of workers' democracy nor of the continuous struggle of the Opposition against Stalin's anti-democracy from then onward. And of course not a word of the economic and military conditions nor the actions of the opposition parties in the early years which compelled the restrictions of democracy.

Democracy, also, like truth, is not an empty abstraction. Democracy is a part, an essential part, of the socialist ideal, but

* Even Benjamin Stolberg, though less trained in scientific method than Sidney Hook, does not go so far as to tell us that there would have been no effect. By no means. He writes: "It may be true that the pre-revolutionary backwardness of a country determines the degree of its Thermidorian savagery; that is only saying that the past of a culture patterns its future. But that does not mean that if a series of Octobers had rapidly occurred in Berlin and Paris and London, Thermidorean reactions could not have followed. On the contrary, the far more powerful counter-revolutionary forces in the West—so powerful that after all they were able to abort all social revolutions—could have been defeated, if at all, only by a revolutionary terror so strenuous and complex that it might have ended in an international Thermidor, less cruelly Byzantine, but far more hopeless than Stalinism." (*The Nation*, April 10, 1937.) Conclusion? If you're crazy enough to want a revolution at all, the only guarantee against its Thermidorean degeneration—and that a very shaky one—would be to start it in Andorra or Wake Island, and then fight like hell to keep it from spreading beyond the borders.

it alone is not the whole of socialism. And it must always be understood in a context, with its concrete historical content. Democracy for a beleaguered régime in the midst of civil war cannot mean the same thing as democracy for an established régime in peace and prosperous. What the Bolshevik aim and ideal is, on the question of the right of other parties to free functioning, is summed up for the masses and for the Hooks of the future by two resolutions of the Central Committee of the party passed shortly after the conquest of power:

The Central Committee declares that it is excluding nobody from the Second All-Russian Soviet Congress and is entirely ready, also now, to admit those who departed and to recognize a coalition with them inside the Soviets, that, consequently, the assertions that the Bolsheviks do not want to share the power with anybody are absolutely false. (Resolution on the Question of an Agreement with the Socialist Parties, *Pravda*, Nov. 15, 1917.)

In Russia the Soviet power has been conquered and the transfer of the government from the hands of one Soviet party into the hands of another Soviet party is possible without any revolution, by means of a simple decision of the Soviets, by means of simple reelection of the Soviets. (Declaration to All Party Members and to All the Toiling Classes of Russia, *Pravda*, Nov. 20, 1917.)

4. Another little bit of deception: Says Hook, to the Bolsheviks, "all who made the demand for democratically elected Soviets, including the heroic Kronstadt sailors, were regarded as counter-revolutionists." Why is this a "deception"? To most of those who will read Hook's article, having only general acquaintance with history, "heroic Kronstadt sailors" can only mean: those sailors who were the backbone of the revolution in 1917 and the first part of 1918. Now, Trotsky recalled that the Kronstadters of the days of the suppression of Kronstadt were *not* the same sailors as those of 1917-18; no one has contradicted his evidence on this point because everyone with any direct knowledge recognizes it as true. It may be argued that the neo-Kronstadters were also "heroic" and that the suppression was incorrect; but that is not at issue. The deception occurs through Hook's hiding from his readers what he himself knows to be the case, and by sliding an emotive attitude directed toward one set of people in 1917 to an entirely different set in 1921.*

5. And another: "For every act of violence against Bolshevik leaders, there were hundreds committed against their political opponents . . . All others [except those who agreed with them on specific points] were simply classified as bandits and subjected to a ruthless reign of terror." Now notice: "It is quite true that some of the activities of the non-Bolshevik working-class parties exceeded the limits of Soviet legality, but it is even truer to say that the Bolsheviks themselves defined and changed these limits at will." What would the average reader understand by these statements? So far as the *facts* alleged about the Bolsheviks go, Hook is stating merely the most irresponsible lies. But there is more than this. The Bolsheviks are murderers and slanderers. The non-Bolsheviks—"exceeded the limits of Soviet legality . . ." That will call up, doubtless, pictures of an unlicensed speech, a meeting without a permit, agitation against some important military decree. . . . Now what did the non-Bolsheviks actually do? Mensheviks fought in the White Armies and worked directly with the imperialist interventionists; so also with the right S.R.s; the left S.R.s attempted the assassination of the leaders of the government, and publicly boasted about their armed struggle against the Soviet power, giving a political motivation.† Yes, just a touch beyond the limits of Soviet legality. Again the dominating political function of Hook's moral charade comes to the surface: to direct moral indignation against Bol-

* Sidney Hook in June, 1935 (*Modern Monthly*, p. 218): ". . . the Kronstadt rebellion—an uprising of a local soviet representing a comparative handful of sailors against the entire Soviet regime. . . ."

† Sidney Hook in October, 1934 (*Modern Monthly*, p. 539): "It is well to remember that the Bolshevik party led the October Revolution in a coalition with the left Social Revolutionists who were later suppressed only when they took up arms against the Soviet state." And speaking of morality, aren't we moralists usually a little opener about the whys and wherefores of our *changes* in views—and in facts?

shevism, and to turn it away from the centrists and reformists.

* * *

What are the facts about "one-party dictatorship"? So far as the *scientific* problem of understanding the events in Russia goes, that is to be settled by sober investigation into the specific conditions which in Russia did in the end eventuate in the extermination of democracy, an investigation by no means yet completed, but which has been most fully made in the literature of the Fourth International. The "theory of one-party dictatorship" has nothing to do with what happened, because Bolshevism does not and did not hold such a theory;* to the extent that it may be suggested in some of the writings of Bolshevik leaders in the early '20's, these were *ad hoc* generalizations from the specific Russian occurrences.

As, however, to the *practise* of one-party dictatorship, we must observe: (1) a difference of opinion is permissible; (2) no *a priori* conclusion can be reached; (3) in any case there is no necessary connection between one-party dictatorship and the evolution of Thermidor.

Let us consider: At the time of a revolution the line between parties is drawn not by complicated theories but by the barricades. A dual power arises, one power based on the old state apparatus, one on the soviets or some similar class organizations of the workers and peasants. Fighting occurs upon the issue of which depends what power will be sovereign. It is sometimes hard to be sure about logical deductions, but it is simpler to tell one end of the rifle from the other. The parties who line up with their members' rifles pointed at you are the enemy. In war, the enemy is by the fact of being an enemy "illegal." Those who point their rifles in the same way you do are your comrades or at least your allies. If this includes other parties, then according to Bolshevik theory and practise such parties have equal rights with the Bolsheviks to democracy and legality.

Will there be parties other than the Bolsheviks pointing guns in the same direction—*i.e.*, defending the same State? This cannot be settled by deduction, but only by practise. In Russia there were for a while, and then those parties were all legal; but the non-Bolshevik parties turned their guns around.

Consider what might have happened in Spain in connection with the Barcelona events. Let us assume that there had been a strong Bolshevik party also present, and that the workers had been successful in taking power. In Barcelona, the barricades drew the lines of legality. On one side were republicans, socialists and Stalinists; on the other the anarchists, P.O.U.M., and our assumed strong Bolshevik party. Now does Hook want to accord democratic rights to the republicans, socialists and Stalinists? But they have illegalized themselves by shooting in the wrong direction. Then it would seem that three parties—P.O.U.M., anarchists and Bolsheviks—would be legal, all basing themselves on the correct, the workers' side of the barricades.

That *might* have happened, but our assumptions may be too artificial. If there had been a strong Bolshevik party, which had not made the fatal errors of the P.O.U.M. and anarchists, had not entered or given political support to the government, it would perhaps more probably have drawn off during the preceding months all the most progressive and militant of the membership of the P.O.U.M. and the anarchists (as in 1917 and 1918 the Bolsheviks *did* from the Mensheviks and S.R.s); the P.O.U.M. and the anarchists would have had their proletarian ranks excised and would have remained as bureaucratic apparatuses. If that had been the case, then either at the time of the Barcelona events or subsequent to it, they might well have gone to the other side of the barricades—where in fact their truer interests would be. Then there would have been "one-party dictatorship", only

* "While the Workers' State will necessarily reserve to itself the indispensable right to take all requisite measures to deal with violence and armed attacks against the revolutionary regime, it will at the same time assure adequate civil rights to opposition through the allotment of press, radio, and assembly facilities in accordance with the real strength among the people of the opposition groups or parties." From the Declaration of Principles of the Socialist Workers Party.

one legal party. But such a party would be under such circumstances the most democratic possible expression of the interests and will of the broadest strata of the masses, of workers' and peasants' democracy. Nor would there be the least *necessary* reason why their political monopoly would bring about suppression of inner-party democracy. The conditions of such a development as hypothetically outlined, in fact, might well tend toward a richer democracy than in a pre-revolutionary situation, granted a few good breaks. Later on, with the workers régime consolidated, with at all favorable circumstances internally and internationally, the one-party dictatorship might most naturally develop into many parties, the new parties (perhaps beginning as factions) arising on the basis of the *new* problems of the new economy and social structure.

These are not idle speculations, based on fancy. In Russia, immediately following the victory in the Civil War, tendencies at once appeared working toward the breakup of the Bolshevik party. These were expressed as faction struggles. The factions were, however, at least in embryo, *separate political parties*. They had different programs and different tactics. They carried their struggle to one or another extent *outside* of the framework of the party (in 1918, it will be remembered, the Bukharin faction functioned quite independently, with its own public press, officially endorsed by the Moscow region of the party). For a while we might say that the Bolshevik party was somewhat like the Trinity—"one substance and three persons": it was from one point of view a coalition of three parties, the Stalin and Bukharin and Trotsky "parties". In 1929, the S.R. Chernov, who, unlike Hook, was looking at realities and not forms, wrote an essay most significantly entitled: *Russia's Two Parties* (i.e., the Stalin party and the Bukharin party).

How simply might such developments as these—granted other external developments (the success of the Chinese revolution, for example) or different internal circumstances (the advanced productive plant of the United States)—have issued in a number of freely competing parties. But even if this would *not* be the case, it would not prove that "one-party dictatorship" is necessarily incompatible with democracy. If we are interested not in juridical abstraction but in actualities, it is possible that the workers' state will find in some cases that a one-party *form* is the most *democratic* political structure. Such a party would be in effect a *coalition* of many parties, a federated party; and full democratic expression might be given, publicly and freely, through it. (The Democratic party of the U. S. is at this moment close to such a coalition party on a bourgeois foundation.)

But does the revolutionary party, the Bolshevik party, claim that only it can *adequately* represent the interests of the masses, administer the workers' state effectively and through its leadership open the road for socialism? Does it aim to act as the "government party" and the sole such party? Certainly. And there is not the slightest incompatibility between such claims and such a purpose, and the fullest possible democracy short of the liquidation of the state—which is also part of the purpose of the revolutionary party.

* * *

Why all this fuss from our subjects about "one-party dictatorship"? If it were a "purely scientific question", if it were actually only a study in historical causation, or the attempt to study and predict the political forms of the workers' state, we may be sure that it would not be so passionate a point of dispute. There is such a fuss because behind the "purely scientific dispute" lurks as usual the political objective, because the scientific dispute is only the screen for the attack not on "the theory of one-party dictatorship" but on the practical objective of *class dictatorship*, of the workers' state to be achieved by the overthrow of the bourgeois state, on the sole historical means available for carrying through the socialist transformation of society. This is not yet explicit in Hook, though suggested by the trend of his recent argumentation, but it rises plainly to the surface in those of his

confrères who have outstripped him—in Eastman, Lyons, Harrison, and of course all of those included in our "Group II". Let us, however, present it in the words of an old master at the "inevitable deduction": "'Class dictatorship' necessarily means party dictatorship. Dictatorship by a party inevitably becomes dictatorship within the party—the dictatorship of a leader and his clique." (Algernon Lee, *New Leader*, Feb. 6, 1937.)

And there is a second reason, which is betrayed most naively in Hook's article, for the fuss. Near the end he points out, what is unquestionably true, that "*every* working-class party considers itself to be the vanguard not only of the class but of the new society it is striving to achieve" and that all parties are sometimes or at least might be mistaken. The incidence of his argument makes clear that the only sufficient explanation for his dragging in these two flat and obvious truths is to provide a justification for failing to make a firm choice among the political parties actually on the field, to give loyalty and allegiance unambiguously to one camp or the other. The justification is of course absurd. The first point is completely irrelevant: making a claim doesn't prove a claim; Voliva claims his flat-earth theory is correct, but that doesn't entitle us to make no choice between it and the theory of scientific astronomy and geography. Do we balance witch doctors against Johns Hopkins on the basis of their *claims*? The second point is equally unimportant since the problem is not one of infallibility but the general course of one party *as compared with* that of others. What Hook is trying to do is to spin himself a theory which would enable him to be "impartially" and paternally a "friend" equally of the Social Democratic Federation and of the Socialist Workers Party—after all, they both claim* to be the vanguard and both make mistakes. He is trying to give a rational basis to the dream of our group that we mentioned in part I: the dream of peace, freedom, release from responsibility.

Lenin Is the Father of Stalin

THE FINAL MAJOR CONTENTION of our subjects, the remaining plank in their "formal program", is that Leninism is the source of Stalinism. This theory has been put forward in one form or another by Lyons, Eastman, Hook (in the *Southern Review* article), Stolberg, Harrison, and by all in Group II except Lundberg (who hasn't discussed the matter). Eastman, in his recent *Liberty* article carries the theory to its conclusion by stating that Leninism is the source not only of Stalinism but also of fascism.

Since this theory is based exclusively on the related theory about "one-party dictatorship", it will not require extended additional discussion. We wish to make three points:

1. As in other instances but here more grossly, our subjects do not bother at all to define *what* the point is that they are trying to make. At times they seem to be saying no more than that Leninism in Russia preceded in time Stalinism. Granted. Or that a continuous state power underwent the transformation from Leninism to Stalinism. Obviously. Or that Leninist politics is the "cause" (whatever they mean by historical cause, which they do not state) not only in Russia but as a general law of the subsequent transformation to Stalinism. Or that Leninism "must" under any and all circumstances result in Stalinism—which is what, as a matter of fact, they all do say, these anti-inevitabilityists. Or that there were juridical features of the party and state structure under Lenin which Stalin was able to utilize for his own purposes, in consolidating his totalitarian power. Which last, again, is known to everyone.

The ambiguity here is not unimportant. Since many of

* Yes, even the *New Leader* makes its claim, and in such bold and sweeping terms that Hook may be forced to include it in his next attack on one-party dictatorship: "Dangerous as all the economic trends are, they provide rich material for interpreting the new capitalism in terms of the basic aims of democratic socialism. The Social Democratic Federation is the only organization in this country with a program and philosophy that presents a solution of the problems implied by these startling changes." (Issue of Dec. 24, 1938.) But perhaps they are saved by the next sentence: "Due to internal conflicts, its voice in these matters has not been heard."

these interpretations of their vaguely worded thesis are almost self-evidently true, they are able to carry over the favorable emotive attitude which a reader grants to a recognized truth, to their general central thesis that Leninism is simply a stage in a necessary process which must eventuate in Stalinist totalitarianism.

2. As with all the rest of their formal program, the reasoning of our subjects here is entirely formalistic, *a priori*: Leninism means by definition one-party dictatorship—which is besides its "essential" and causally crucial doctrine; one-party dictatorship by a necessary process leads to dictatorship of a clique or Führer and the murder of all opposition; q. e. d. Simple enough.

Let us observe what our empiricists are doing. For the sake of their *a priori* syllogism they are simply throwing all the events of history into the scrap heap. For instance, by making the alleged theory of one-party dictatorship the quintessence of Leninism in the most approved scholastic manner, they are committed to the conclusion that all of Lenin's concrete policies on the hundred and one questions of colonial revolt, trade unions, united front, war, the soviet organization of society, *etc., etc.*, are mere subordinate "accidents" of no decisive importance.

Or, second, how explain that Stalin, in order to consolidate a totalitarian power, had to abandon all the policies of Lenin (*cf.* Eastman, *The End of Socialism in Russia!*), and murder all of Lenin's colleagues.

Or again: In any conceivable sense that Leninism is the source of Stalinism it is at least as true that it is also the source of "Trotskyism". But for fifteen years, on a Soviet and world scale, on every major economic and social and political question, the adherents of Trotskyism have been in diametric opposition to the adherents of Stalinism, an opposition expressed equally in program and in practical human struggle. Nevertheless, the theory of our subjects commits them to the view that Trotskyism and Stalinism are fundamentally *twins*—a view which each of them step by step approaches and which many (Lyons, Harrison, and Hook by implication in the next to last paragraph of the *Southern Review* article) already express openly—that the entire struggle is at bottom nothing but a sham, motivated only by the personal bureaucratic desire for posts—the outs wanting to be in, the ins wanting to stay in. This incredibly vulgar conclusion is the only possible logical consequence of their thesis—as they indeed increasingly recognize. Vulgar as it is, we have met the theory often before, from many other sources.

3. Several of the more prominent of our subjects, including Hook outstandingly, broke with Stalinism about five years ago primarily on the issue of "social-fascism". Memory of this will serve as an ironic, even amusing, comment on the fact that their thesis of today commits them to the *theory of communo-fascism*. In the early stages of their present development, it might have been thought that the new theory was only that of "Stalino-fascism", but today they have gone from Stalino-fascism to communo-fascism. There is no way for them to avoid this without abandoning their present theses.*

The theory of social-fascism was based on the theoretical premise summed up in Stalin's famous aphorism to the effect that social democracy and fascism are not antipodes but twins. The third-period Stalinist tactics toward reformists and reformist organizations followed naturally from this premise. But this premise is exactly that now formulated by our subjects with respect first to Stalinism and now to communism in general. Isolating totalitarian dictatorship as the determinative feature, the "essence" of a social régime, they first identify Stalinism with fascism. (Already in this first step, Stalinism and fascism have been proved to be not antipodes but twins.) They then trace Stalinism back to Leninism as its root, source, or cause, and thus, since Trotskyism

is also the child of Leninism, communism in its Leninist and Trotskyist form as well as in its Stalinist perversion is shown to be the twin of fascism. The implicit logic becomes fully expressed in Eastman's *Liberty* article where he says quite bluntly that Leninism is the source both of Stalinism *and of fascism*:

To some it may seem almost fantastic to say that the communist parties are thus becoming fascist parties. Fascism originated out of communism in exactly this way. Mussolini was a revolutionary socialist. He learned all he knew from the Bolsheviks. . . . Mussolini learned it from Lenin, Hitler learned it from Mussolini. In origin that is what fascism is.

Our empiricists once more reveal themselves to be moralistic Platonists under the skin. Leninism, Stalinism, Trotskyism, fascism, all "participate" in and derive their reality from the Platonic Idea of Dictatorship; and therefore they are all "essentially", in the Realm of Being, "the same thing". A lot of trouble is thereby saved. No more need for careful analysis of modes of economy, class relationships, social origins, concrete conflicting interests. All such matters are only a part of the World of Becoming, with no more than a secondary, shadow reality. All we require is a formal syllogism of two to reach Q.E.D.s.

The practical political consequences, if their theory is taken seriously, will, of course, have to be just the same as those of the theory of social-fascism except that the communist and Stalinist movements will be substituted for reformism. To begin with, for example, they must abandon altogether the defense of the Soviet Union; there is no possible justification in their present theory for the policy of defense of the Soviet Union. We suspect that Hook, Eastman and Lyons have been aware of this consequence for some time. So far as we know, none of them has yet declared himself publicly on the issue—which is so obviously raised by their writings of the last year. Whence this silence? Are not these the moralists who so diligently proclaim their devotion to Truth and so zealously attack the a-moralism of the Bolsheviks? Can it be part of their morality to hide or obscure the practical meaning of their theories from the masses?

We take this occasion, therefore, to demand from Hook, Eastman and Lyons unambiguous declarations on the question of defense of the Soviet Union from attack by Hitler or Japan—or for that matter by England—*declarations motivated by the theories which they are now putting publicly forward.*

But, of course, much more than this follows. It follows that one must be equally against both communism and fascism, against dictatorships whether of the left or of the right; it follows that communism and fascism are the Siamese twin main danger; it follows, in fact, as it did from the theory of social-fascism, that a united front with any communist organization is as impermissible as a united front with a fascist organization. Of course, our subjects do not as yet draw out all of these conclusions, even in their own minds. But that is because they are as we have mentioned before *irresponsible* politicians; if they take their program seriously they will have to draw them in time, or else abandon their program. Toward the end of his *Southern Review* article, Hook writes as follows: "They [political parties] may offer a program and leadership, but just as soon as they reach out for a monopoly of political power, education, and propaganda behind the back of representative political institutions of the producers and consumers [and this is just what Hook in the preceding section of his article claims to have *proved* that all communist parties whether Leninist, Trotskyist or Stalinist, do], *it is time to build barricades against them.*" (Our italics.) Hook will doubtless explain that he means the italicized phrase in a merely metaphorical sense—*i.e.*, barricades of education and propaganda. But the particular metaphor chosen, as so often with metaphors, reveals more than the author consciously intends: for from Hook's present theory, if taken seriously, the statement follows with entire literalness.

* And, by the way, the original inventors of the theory of communo-fascism were who but our old friends the social democrats. When we—and our present subjects—attacked the Stalinists in 1930-33 for the theory of social-fascism and the failure to make a united front with the social democrats, that was not implicit approval of the social democrats. Knowing them well from the past, we were aware in advance that they held the theory of communo-fascism, were against any united front, and could only be forced into it.

In Summary

IT IS TIME TO SUMMARIZE briefly certain general features of what we have called "the formal program". It is, taken at its face value and as a whole: stale, abstract, negative, and preoccupied with the past.

1. Our subjects take great pride in believing that they are contributing something "fresh", that they are "reevaluating in the light of new experiences", that they "are not dogmatists who refuse to reexamine their 'basic assumption'", *etc.* What a pathetic self-deception! None of them has brought to light any new facts, given any new understanding of the present or future. As Freud put it once in a polemic: "They are now disputing things which they, themselves, formerly defended and what is more, this dispute is not based on new observations, which might have taught them something fresh, but rather on a different interpretation which makes them see things in a different light than before". In this case, the "different interpretation" is different political aims which for justification require the violent re-arrangement of the past. New experience and events are "teaching" them and not the dogmatists? All that they say in their formal program can be found long, long ago in the pages of Kautsky and put far more brilliantly, consistently and *openly*.

2. The abstract and formal character of their program has already been demonstrated, and is besides sufficiently obvious. They are occupied with a realm distantly removed from hard, cold events: with "method", with "nature dialectic", the concept of the inevitability of socialism, the essential nature of one-party dictatorship . . . , with Truth and Freedom and Morality in caps.

3. And entirely negative also: *Against* dialectical materialism, *against* one-party dictatorship, *against* Stalinism. . . . But what *for*? For Truth, for Freedom, for Morality. . . .

4. And, where actual events are referred to in a decisive manner, we discover that these are always events of the past: Kronstadt, how Kerensky was overthrown, the outlawing of party factions in 1920, the illegalization of the opposition parties. . . . What of the present, and the future?

These pervasive features of the "formal program" as developed by them all—stale, abstract, negative, concerned with the past—are sufficient indication by themselves that this formal program, taken at its face value, is *not* the actual political program of this group in the sense of that set of ideas and directives, explicit or implicit, which actually indicates the direction and aims of their intervention in the political arena. These features show us that the formal program functions not to *express* clearly and unambiguously the group's political nature, but to *veil and obscure* its political nature. It is a flank movement, to direct attention *away* from the main strategic manœuvre.

However, specific analysis of even the formal program has already disclosed the actual politics to which it is indirectly related: An attack on revolutionary Marxism, on Bolshevism, and a growing *rapprochement* with reformism of both social-democratic and bourgeois varieties. It is politics of a group tendency in motion from revolutionary Marxism toward reformism: that is, of a centrist tendency.

We shall now proceed to establish this same conclusion by reference in some detail to the concrete political *acts* of our subjects.

III: THE ACTUAL PROGRAM

THERE ARE ONLY FIVE significant and clearly-defined programs in present-day society, supported and acted upon with a more or less continuous tradition by organized social groups. Each of these offers a distinctive solution of the devastating crisis that threatens civilization itself. In the ranks of the working class: revolutionary Marxism, or the Fourth International, commonly referred to as the Trotskyist movement; Stalinism, the theory and practise of internationally-projected anti-Soviet totalitarianism; and reformism, or the social democracy of the Second International.* In the ranks of the bourgeoisie: liberalism, whose left wing merges with the labor reformists, and which is concerned with keeping capitalism alive by "making democracy work"; and fascism, which is concerned with keeping capitalism alive by putting an end to bourgeois democracy.

Stalinism has drawn increasingly close to social democracy. As far back as a dozen years ago, the Stalinists functioned as stand-in for the absent social democracy in the Chinese revolution. In the last three years especially, even theoretical and reminisciential distinctions have been abandoned, and no important

differences exist between the two movements in any important practical political question. Their different origins, bases and functions—as well as narrower "job" interests—militate against their complete fusion or even unmarred collaboration; nor do we identify the two. But what is of paramount importance in connection with the point we are discussing is the common position they hold on such vital questions as: the class nature of the state; bourgeois democracy and socialist revolution; democracy and fascism; class struggle and class collaboration; independent political action and People's Frontism or coalition government; class war and "war for democracy"; colonial independence; *etc.*, *etc.* We shall have occasion to refer to this similarity of positions more concretely later on.

As for liberalism, it represents a period of capitalist development which, where it is not already outlived and irretrievable, is in rapid decay. Where it continues to subsist, it is on its last legs. There is no power on earth that can make it endure, which may well be why so many liberals have taken to prayer since Munich. If it is not replaced by workers' rule that can reorganize society socialistically, it will be crushed inexorably by fascism. Not even those liberals who, like Max Lerner, rebaptize themselves "democratic collectivists", can, we fear, redeem it from its fate. Even if it should be restored later in the now totalitarian countries—the post-1931 events in Spain show that it is not absolutely excluded—its resurrection can only be episodic, again as shown by the events in Spain.

So far as the working class movement goes, experience shows that all programs and tendencies that seek or claim to be independent and distinct from the two main streams—revolutionary Marxism and reformism (social-democratic or Stalinist)—merely move back and forth among them, never acquiring either stability or consistency, and coming to rest finally in one or the other. This holds true even of the sterile and miniscular sects which seem to accomplish the biological miracle of existing outside of life itself. Nobody has yet succeeded in holding together a centrist movement for any length of time. Depending on its point of de-

* For a number of reasons, we do not list independently the anarchist or anarcho-syndicalist movement. In Spain, where alone it stepped out of the pages of Kropotkin and Bakunin and into the arena of the real class struggle, it revealed itself as little more than a variety of reformism, with overtones of verbal radicalism. If the anarchists in Spain did not "outstrip" their social-democratic partners in the People's Front, they at least "caught up with" them. As for the first French edition of anarcho-syndicalism, personified by M. Leon Jouhaux, it does not even have the Spanish version's literary devotion to revolution to recommend it. The pitiful bankruptcy of anarchism in action—in the only country where it has assumed the proportions of a mass movement—and the mushroom growth of a bureaucracy at its head which has little to learn from its social-democratic contemporary, have not left its official spokesmen and defenders here unembarrassed. All the louder do they clamor in their press against "Trotsky, the butcher of Kronstadt" and against the unspeakable immorality of all Bolsheviks. Neither this noise, nor the demagogic references to the exemplary heroism of the anarchist workers, can dispel what is so obvious to the naked eye: the political collapse of anarchism in action. It is at the moment when this conclusion has become indisputable that Jean Mendez, who considers that the Trotskyists followed a sectarian line in Spain, abandons her Marxism to assume the post of an editor of a New York anarchist paper. It goes without saying that the editors of the paper who, unlike the Bolsheviks, are upright and forthright, speak of the disconcerting conduct of the F.A.I.-C.N.T. bureaucracy with all the painful delicacy and incoherence of, let us say, a Louis Fischer writing in *The Nation* to explain away the Kremlin's anti-abortion ukase. Malicious tongues might even refer to them in the terms applied by Eugene Lyons to the Bolsheviks: "devotees of the theory of multiple truths." But only malicious tongues.

parture and the direction in which it moves, it ends up sooner or later in the camp of revolution or reformism. It is the classic fate of Hamlet politics—centrism.

To the extent that it has a real program—and it has one—the group of radical intellectuals we have been discussing is *centrist*. Protests at this political characterization on the grounds of our “label-mania” can already be heard. More than anyone else, the centrist, who shows a cavalier lack of discrimination in ticketing everybody else, has a congenital dislike for being properly and bluntly designated by the name of his tendency. Yet there is no other way of describing politically a group made up of individuals who, in virtually every case, have been moving from a revolutionary Marxian position, or one close to it, *towards* reformism, or a little beyond it to bourgeois liberalism (or in some instances, scarcely concealed passivity). Factual evidence that has been accumulating throughout the recent past substantiates this conclusion.

Straws in the Wind

WE WILL NOT dwell here on the apparently trivial and unconnected incidents of the past year, except to point out that running through them all like a thread has been a series of “dissociations from Trotskyism”. They began during the period when the Commission of Inquiry was rendering its verdict on the Moscow Trials and the case of Leon Trotsky—for example, at the public meeting in December 1937 when several of the Commissioners went out of their way to assure the audience that they had nothing to do with Trotskyism. They have continued down to the present day. Oddly enough, the “dissociations” were made public on the most inappropriate and unwarranted occasions; the announcement never seemed to have any germane relationship to the context or the circumstances in which it was delivered. But lest we seem to insist too much on punctilio, we hasten to add that everyone has a right to pronounce himself on a program or a movement and even to choose an inauspicious moment in which to do it. We would go further: one who is not a supporter of “Trotskyism”, or who has convinced himself to cease being one, not only has the right to proclaim his opposition to this movement, but also the duty to do so. We would not be the last to urge him to fulfill it. Thus, we can only be grateful when Mr. Charles Yale Harrison writes in the *New Leader* that “as for myself, I must dissociate myself” from the Trotskyist movement, after he discovered the distilled essence of Truth in the pages of a posthumous brochure by Julius Martov. It is a blow hard to survive, but at least it is delivered in the open. (But then, it had to be delivered openly if the unemployment crisis in the United States was to be solved, at least so far as Mr. Harrison is concerned.)

We have said that if a person is sufficiently known to warrant being listened to, if only for a moment, on political questions, or even if that is not the case and he wants to express himself on such questions, he has both the right and duty to declare what program and movement he repudiates or opposes. But that is not always very interesting; certainly it is not his most important obligation. He must also state in one way or another the program or movement he *advocates*, especially in these times when everybody is looking for guidance to a way out of a situation widely acknowledged to be untenably bad. For it is not so much by what is *opposed*, but by what is *proposed* that a political tendency may be established. From the actions taken and proposals made by the group under consideration, it is not difficult to establish the political tendency of its component parts—more developed in some, less in others, to be sure—as one of *rap-prochement with the social democracy* or even bourgeois liberalism. And a tendency which is in general *away from* revolutionary Marxism and *towards* social democracy, we are justified in designating as *centrist*. A few examples, so that we may follow the scriptural injunction of knowing people by their acts:

Item: Several months ago, the Thomasites and Lovestoneites launched their private imitation and would-be rival of the Stalinist anti-war farces under the name of the “Keep America Out of War” Committee. Such movements were inaugurated about a dozen years ago, and since produced in kaleidoscopic series, by Stalin-Münzenberg, as a petty bourgeois-pacifist substitute for independent working class struggle against imperialist war. Nowadays, whether of the frankly patriotic Stalinist variety or of the more subdued pacifist type established by Norman Thomas, they all proceed from the fatal premise that the fight against war is an independent task, above, outside of and separate from the class struggle and to be conducted with “special” (*i.e.*, petty bourgeois) methods. It goes without saying that the K.A.O.W. included the standard quota of pacifist ladies of uncertain age and sure-fire nostrums (yesterday’s stand-bys for similar set-ups managed by the Stalinists), to say nothing of Hamilton Fish, Maj.-General Rivers (Retired) and Mr. Frederick J. Libby, who has the ingenious idea of warding off another war by dividing more equitably among the imperialist powers the present world’s colonies—without, of course, consulting the goddam niggers who inhabit them. It goes without saying, also, that the founding conference of the K.A.O.W. endorsed the Roosevelt “good neighbor” policy—could it do less?—and adjured the government to show that it was really worthy of the name “democracy” by exerting America’s economic pressure upon the fascist “armament economy” nations (*i.e.*, the policy of government sanctions which, when advocated by the Stalinists in slightly altered terms, arouses the horrified indignation of the *Socialist Call* and *Workers Age*.) In a word, we had here a less lurid variety, but only a variety, of the familiar social-democratic-Stalinist-pacifist trap. Yet, among the signatories to the call for the first K.A.O.W. meeting in New York’s Hippodrome were to be found Sidney Hook, James Rorty, James T. Farrell, Anita Brenner, Dwight Macdonald, Suzanne LaFollette, Ben Stolberg, John Chamberlain, Liston Oak, *etc.* That many of the signatories subsequently withdrew from the K.A.O.W.—naturally without explaining publicly why they had gone in or why they pulled out—is a tribute to the effects of the predictable policies of the K.A.O.W. on their conscience. That they sponsored it in the first place is not so complimentary to their foresight.

Item: Several weeks ago, the country voted in local elections. In New York, the A.L.P., the Stalinists and the Lovestone group, not being sectarians, supported No. 18 of the Sixty Families, Herbert H. Lehman, Democratic party candidate for governor. But there were two labor candidates for the office. The Socialist party nominated Norman Thomas; the Socialist Workers party conducted a write-in campaign for James P. Cannon. Norman Thomas and the S.P. are social-democratic; Sidney Hook, presumably, is not. James P. Cannon and the S.W.P. are revolutionary Marxists; so, presumably, is Sidney Hook. But Sidney Hook endorsed the candidate of the S.P., without even a statement to show that he was not a supporter of Thomas and the S.P. in general. Since this was not a private, confidential matter, but a public political act, may we ask, also publicly, why? Surely Thomas was not supported on the “good man” theory. Surely also, he was not supported because he had a chance of being elected, whereas Cannon didn’t. Surely, again, he was not supported because his party’s program was superior from the revolutionary standpoint to the S.W.P.’s. Surely, finally, the choice was not made by tossing a coin. Wasn’t Hook running the risk of letting the uninitiated conclude that he feels a closer political affinity with the party of social democracy than with the party of revolutionary Marxism?

The New Leader’s Dress Parade

LET US LOOK a bit further into the matter of political affinities.

In the last few months, there has been a veritable parade of new but not unknown contributors across the pages of the

New Leader, the New York weekly edited by James Oneal. About half of the newcomers wrote an article apiece as the private guests, so to speak, of Eugene Lyons, for whom they substituted as "columnist" during his absence on a speaking tour; the other half appeared under more general editorial auspices. The political significance of their appearance cannot be denied. It is not a matter of an article written by one individual or two, which might therefore be dismissed as accidental or incidental. But the *number* of individuals involved, and above all their common characteristics (virtually all of them, regardless of other differences, have been avowed opponents of the Second International and what it stands for), make it possible and necessary to draw certain political conclusions. The writers include Leon Dennen, Charles Yale Harrison, Sidney Hook, Max Nomad, James Rorty, Ben Stolberg, Philip Rahv, James T. Farrell and Stephen Naft.

What is wrong, some will say, with writing for the *New Leader* if an invitation is extended by its editors? We pinch-hit for Lyons, others will say, as a personal favor to him while he was touring. These explanations for the sudden and concerted appearance of this group of radical intellectuals on the pages of the *New Leader* seem to us too simple and, in fact, irrelevant.

The *New Leader* is not an "ordinary" periodical, like, let us say, *The Nation* and the *New Republic*, or even the *Saturday Evening Post* and *Liberty*. It is a distinct *party paper*, the official organ of the Social Democratic Federation, American section of the Second International. As such, it has a distinct political line, and avowed political and organizational objectives. As a consequence, literary collaboration with it is willy-nilly an act of solidarity with the organization for which it speaks, and an aid to it.

What is this organization? The Social Democratic Federation is composed of the self-styled "Old Guard" of the split-up Socialist party. On every important political question of the day, the Federation and its paper take the position of the extreme right wing of the Second International. To them, Norman Thomas is (or rather, was!) the incarnation of Bolshevism. To them, in the words of the late Hillquit, the Russian Revolution has always been "the greatest disaster and calamity that has ever occurred to the socialist movement"; and they have never given up their vicious fight against it. This has not prevented them—quite the contrary!—from taking a position which is substantially indistinguishable from that of the Stalinists, on all the important questions of the day.

The *New Leader* is for the Popular Front because it is for class collaboration, and was for it long before the Stalinists adopted it. It stands for "collective security" and is for the holy crusade of "democracy against fascism". It is for Rooseveltism and the New Deal with at least as much vigor and even more sincerity than the *Daily Worker*. It can give the Stalinists cards and spades in licking the boots of the trade union bureaucracy and still come out ahead of the game. Wherein does it differ on any urgent political question from totalitarian Stalinism—which, by the way, is not an abstract concept but a system of concrete policies and actions on concrete issues? It does not, it is true, entirely cover up or justify the crimes of the Stalinist bureaucracy in Russia, but it does its best to defend or conceal the no less reprehensible crimes of the social-democratic bureaucracy in Europe—including the deals it makes with the same Stalinism. And if it does not use the Stalinist formula of "Drive the Trotskyists and Lovestoneites out of the labor movement", it is only because it believes that the slogan is too restricted: the Stalinists should be driven out too! (The *New Leader* has just heartily endorsed the Red-baiting resolution of the Minnesota Farmer-Labor Party bureaucracy, which calls for the automatic expulsion of all advocates of proletarian revolution.)

The *New Leader* is, however, respectable, ever so respectable. In its pro-war propaganda, it is not quite so blatant and clamorous as, let us say, the *Daily Worker*, but that does not lessen its comparative effectiveness as a recruiting sergeant in the coming

imperialist war "for democracy". Two of its chief editorial writers are Charles Edward Russell and William E. Bohn, a couple of social-patriotic renegades from socialism and the S.P. in 1917, who served their country in the last World War, even if at a safe distance (*i.e.*, 3,500 miles) from the trenches. They are no doubt ready to serve again in the coming war, even if every able-bodied citizen must again be drafted. By pure chance, Messrs. Russell and Bohn are past 60; Mr. Oneal is 63, Mr. Algernon Lee is 65.

In brief, the *New Leader* is a rotten social-democratic sheet from which so overpowering an odor has emanated that even Norman Thomas, not so long ago, found it too much for him. A spray of respectability that will reduce the pungency of the odor has therefore become pretty much a physical necessity for the editors. To get it, they have laid a not unclever trap for incautious people. The paper has not only been given a snappier typographical dress, but the splenetic and hysterical abuse Oneal used to heap on everything radical has been given a somewhat primmer polish. Above all, a systematic, deliberate effort is made to draw into the paper especially those radical writers who were at one time connected with the communist movement and whose personal and even political probity is so high that when the eye focuses on their names, the name and repute of Oneal and Co. are automatically excluded from the field-scope of vision. All this helps to retrieve the political fortunes of the *New Leader*. It is able to point with pious pride to the unselfish hospitality it vouchsafes "all radicals", even those who "disagree with us", provided they aren't "totalitarians". It is enabled to foster the pernicious myth that the "decent" alternative to Stalinism is the right wing social democracy. It is enabled to fortify itself as a rallying ground for all "radicals", and especially for those who are disillusioned with Stalinism, which the *New Leader* would like to equate with a disillusionment with revolutionary Marxism. These are the obvious *political motives* behind the invitations so generously extended by Oneal and Levitas, and not some weak-boned sentimental desire to convert their paper into a broad, all-inclusive "radical forum". In a word, it is a political trap for wandering radicals.

—But in heaven's name! are you so bitterly and narrowly-mindedly sectarian that you cannot conceive of a revolutionary article being written in a social-democratic paper, whose editors, whatever their private motives, invite you to write whatever you please, without censorship?

This rejoinder has, unfortunately, more indignation in it than critical thoughtfulness, as may be seen from an examination of *what* the new crew of contributors has written in the *New Leader*.

Emily Post in the House of the Hanged

TAKE EUGENE LYONS, for example. And a very good example he is, our anti-sectarian objector will retort. Don't the editors allow him full freedom of expression, even when he writes in opposition to the official editorial standpoint of the paper? Hasn't Lyons attacked "collective security", whereas Oneal and Co. defend it? How then dare you call him a social-patriot, as you have?!

Softly, softly, friends. Let us see by taking a typical "column" by Lyons. On October 8, he does indeed assail "collective security" and with vigor. "In effect, the Stalinists and other collective security advocates were saying: 'Trust your government, despite the fact that it is a capitalist government. Declare a moratorium on your larger grievances in this hour of emergency.'" Good. Very good. A telling blow at the Stalinists. But who might the "other collective advocates" be? Why, unlike the Stalinists, are they relegated to anonymity? Lyons couldn't possibly be referring to the Second International, could he? Or to the editor of his paper and the Federation for which it speaks? Yessir, they are exactly the ones to whom he is referring! But not by name. either in this or any other of his columns, so that the "uninitiated"

reader would never know from Lyons (who, however, knows it perfectly well!) that at least so far as the "collective security" doctrine is concerned, the social democracy is just as guilty of the crime as the Stalinists, Oneal as much as Browder.

In his *Assignment in Utopia*, Lyons stoutly inveighs against the "devotees of the theory of multiple truths". Moreover, he has a whole, moving chapter called "To Tell or Not to Tell", in which he describes the psychologically painful process by which he "overcame those inhibitions" against giving a complete picture of Soviet reality; "I decided, for myself, that I must tell the truth as I saw it. The decision in time assumed the magnitude of a pressing moral obligation." Bravo! None too soon, but . . . Bravo! Now, would it be asking too much of an "uncensored" contributor to a *social-democratic* paper to write a polite and restrained footnote to his next column saying, in substance: "I must apologize to my readers for having omitted an important element in my criticism of 'collective security'. In this respect, as in most others, the official international social democracy, including my good friends who edit this paper, are just as despicable a gang of war-mongering flunkies of imperialism as are the Stalinists."

What is there to prevent him from writing this down and thereby clarifying his own position? Can the moral obligation to tell the truth which Lyons writes about so eloquently, refer only to the truth about Stalin? Surely, also, there is no "censorship" for the "independent" writers in the *New Leader*, such as prevented Lyons from telling "the truth as I saw it" while he was correspondent in Moscow (and, shall we add, while he was publicity director for Messrs. Rose and Antonini of the A.L.P.?).

Or can the nasty and uncapitalized truth be, as Germans say: *Im Hause des Gebenkten spricht man nicht vom Strick*—You don't talk of the rope in the house of the hanged!

Or take the case of Stephen Naft, who also substituted for Lyons in one issue of the *New Leader*. A social democrat? Not for a minute. He's far more radical than that. So he writes on a "neutral" subject, that is, he attacks the Stalinists, doing both a good and timely job. Two solid columns of unanswerable evidence are devoted to excoriating the Stalinists for their united Popular Front with the fascists in the recent Chilean election. Conclusion? "The two totalitarian parties, the Stalinist and the Nacistas of Chile, were thus again united against another totalitarian competitor . . ." All right. But Naft mentions *only in passing and without any commentary* the fact that the Chilean *social democrats* were also in this bastard united front. Now, why does he exempt them from his contempt and his denunciations? Why does he flay the Stalinists and not even murmuringly chide the social democrats? One might think that an anti-social democrat, writing in a social-democratic paper untrammelled by censorship, would make a point of clarifying his position in the manner we indicated. Is it possible that, like so many others, he is so absorbed in an effort to identify Bolshevism and fascism that he simply cannot find time or space for a gentle criticism of social democratic abominations? Or is it a point of honor with the Association of Friends of Morality and Truth not to offend a hospitable host? *Im Hause des Gebenkten spricht man nicht vom Strick!*

Or take the case of Sidney Hook, another of Lyon's substitutes. His article on the conduct of the Kremlin and the Stalinists towards the Jewish refugees is not merely a fine polemic; it is as savagely eloquent and moving a political indictment as has been written in a long time. It is hard to imagine even a Stalinist reading it without involuntarily blushing with shame at the shame which Hook so bitterly pillories. Yet there is something missing in his two full newspaper-columned article. Hook proclaimed himself not so long ago an exponent of the principles of communism as set forth by Marx, Engels, Lenin and Trotsky. This would lead one to believe that in spite of the fact that he now calls himself a "democratic socialist" (in distinction from the "totalitarian socialists"!), he nevertheless has little if anything in common with "the" social democracy, that is, the Second International. For

did he not say, only a few years ago, that the objective observer cannot deny "that the historic function of social democracy since 1918 has been to suppress or abort all revolutionary movements throughout the world independently of whether it shared power in a coalition government or not"?

Would it be too much, then, to conclude that once Hook has decided to risk creating confusion about his politics by accepting the invitation-without-strings to write for the *New Leader*, he would improve on the occasion by dissociating himself just the teeniest bit from the social democracy? Just the teeniest bit—so that while "using" a social-democratic paper as a tribune for the presentation of his own views, it would be amply clear to the reader that *his* criticism of Stalinism has nothing in common with the reactionary *social-democratic* criticism of communism. Would it not, therefore, have been in place, after his excoriation of the Stalinist régime for not opening Russia's doors to a single Jewish refugee, to add just a few words—a paragraph, a sentence—not to condemn but, let us say, to . . . deplore the fact that the social-democratic governments of the three Scandinavian countries haven't thrown open their doors either? After all, one cannot expect much from the totalitarian Kremlin. But Oneal's comrades-in-the-government of Norway, Sweden and Denmark, who are so completely immune to the virus of Bolshevism—shouldn't they be called upon to give an account of themselves? Why this gentleness and even silence about the social-democratic criminals? *Im Hause des Gebenkten spricht man nicht vom Strick!*

Not only *don't* you speak of rope in the house of the hanged, but we make bold to assert that you *may not*. The truth of our assertion should not be hard to test. We propose that Hook, Farrell, Stolberg and Dennen each submit a series of articles to the *New Leader*: Hook on the crimes of the German social democracy from 1914 to 1933, along the lines of his theory of the "historic function" of this movement; or the more topical subject of the Second International's preparations for the new war; Farrell on the strangling of the French labor movement by Léon Blum and associates of the People's Front; Stolberg on the shady and reactionary rôle played in the American trade union movement by the "Old Guard" socialists; Dennen on the rôle played by the Russian Mensheviks and Social Revolutionists as agents of Kerensky and foreign imperialism in the early years of the October revolution. Do they have any doubt about the editorial reception of such articles? Do they not know that when Liston Oak was invited by Managing Editor Levitas to contribute to the *New Leader*, and replied that while he was neither a Trotskyist nor a Stalinist he was also not a social democrat, and that in any article he wrote he would condemn the social democracy as strongly or even more strongly than Trotskyism or Stalinism—that was the last he heard of Levitas and his invitation?

The Oneal-Levitas invitations to "write freely" in the *New Leader* are a characteristic fraud, a trap for wandering radicals. But the fact that the latter fell into it so easily, and that when they wrote their articles for the *New Leader* they neglected the little detail of indicating any differences between themselves and their hosts, has, when taken together with what we have written earlier in this article, a strong symptomatic political significance. It is evidence of the fact that while they have all established the irreconcilability between their views and those of Stalinism (which many of them now equate with Bolshevism), *they seem to find no such irreconcilability between their views and those of social democracy*. By their political writings and activities, therefore—and not their artistic or cultural work, which we do not even wish to consider in this connection—they occupy the position of *centrism*, a centrism which brings them continually closer to social democracy, which, unless checked and re-directed, will end by transforming them from revolutionary radicals into ordinary petty bourgeois radicals.

The League of Abandoned Hopes

Lasciate ogni speranza, voi ch'entrate—Dante

THIS PROCESS of transformation is best exemplified in the preparations now being made in this circle to launch the "League Against Totalitarianism", sponsored by Sidney Hook.

The League is opposed, according to its draft manifesto, equally to the totalitarianism of Italy, Germany and the Soviet Union, that is, of Fascists, Nazis and Stalinists. What is it *for*? That detail is omitted; in its place there is a *meaningless* reference to the need of protecting artists and scientists from totalitarianism, and to the desirability of Freedom and Truth. The formula cannot be construed otherwise than as an *evasion*, which automatically opens the doors of the League not only to all sorts of conservatives and reactionaries, but reactionary policies as well.

Why?

On the face of it, so to speak, the projected League aims to be a united front organization. By its very nature, every united front is calculated to *include* different individuals or groups and at the same time to *exclude* those individuals or groups against whom the front is erected or directed. The united proletarian front aims to include all labor organizations in a common struggle against the capitalists. A united front for Tom Mooney aims to include those who stand for his freedom against those who stand for his imprisonment; it would not include Sidney Hook and ex-Governor Merriam. A united front to ferret out the truth about the Moscow Trials would include John Dewey and exclude Stalin-Browder-Lamont. The limits of any united front are established by its objectives.

Now, generally speaking, a united front against fascism could take one or more of three forms. It might be limited to giving material aid to the victims of fascism—political prisoners' relief and defense, aid to refugees, *etc.*—and, by virtue of its specific, concrete and yet "broad" aims, would include people of the most divergent views. The League does not claim to be such a movement. The united front might be a movement of action against fascism in the strictest sense of the word, that is, for the organization of workers' defense guards against fascist assaults. Such a movement, without committing itself to the program of any one "faction" in the working class, would nevertheless scrupulously and impartially defend from attack the newspapers and institutions of the trade unions, the social democrats, the Stalinists, the anarchists, the Trotskyists, *etc., etc.*, and if need be, go over to the offensive against the fascist bands. The League does not claim to be such a movement, either; in all likelihood, it would disclaim such a program in the most vigorous terms. Finally, the joint organization or movement might be an "ideological united front". That is precisely what the League is—an organization for combatting the ideology of totalitarianism.

But an ideology can be combatted only from the standpoint of another ideology, and in the given case, certainly, by a contrary ideology. Totalitarianism, especially if the term is applied both to the Italo-German and the Soviet régimes, represents a complex of political ideas, and not a social system. To capitalism, one can counterpose feudalism or socialism. To totalitarianism, one can counterpose democracy—bourgeois democracy or workers' democracy. This restriction is all the more compelling in the case of the League, for the conflicting *social* views of those who make it up render impossible the presentation of anything more than a common *political* alternative to totalitarianism. The League makes no *social* distinction between Russia and Germany-Italy; it says not a word against the social order of capitalism or for the social order of socialism. That it may claim to concern itself with the supra-class interests of artists, intellectuals and scientists, does not alter the fact that it is confined to the question of alternative political régimes.

The League obviously would exclude avowed supporters of the German-Italian and Soviet régimes, that is, Nazis, fascists and

Stalinists. But it would be interesting to learn on what grounds other than personal taste it would exclude Mr. Martin Dies who has spoken out categorically against totalitarianism of the fascist or communist variety and who champions "Americanism," *i.e.*, American capitalist democracy. On what grounds, further, would it exclude Mr. Matthew Woll, head of the newly-formed League for Human Rights, Freedom and Democracy, whose "faith is expressed in the Constitution of the United States and the Bill of Rights contained therein"? Woll adds: "Specifically included in the threats to this faith we feel it imperative to name those forms of autocracy known as communism, fascism and Nazism. To those we are implacably opposed, to the one as vigorously as to the others. Democracy can make no compromise with autocracy." On what grounds would the League exclude Dorothy Thompson and Walter Lippman, who also oppose all three "totalitarianisms" and favor "democracy", but go further than Hook in arguing that Rooseveltism personifies the encroachment of totalitarianism in America?

It would be enlightening to hear answers to these questions, for, on the basis of the League's program, we can see no logical reason why the above-named reactionaries should be excluded.

Let us look a little closer at the League.

On what grounds would Max Eastman, opponent of Stalinist as well as Hitlerite totalitarianism, be excluded from the League? None, so far as we can see; on the contrary, there is every reason why his membership should be earnestly solicited. But if the League accepted Eastman's conception of the struggle against totalitarianism in the United States—which is the only country in which he writes and acts on his beliefs—it would mean that at least its main efforts would have to be directed against the official Communist party, which, according to Eastman, represents in this country "the real menace of fascism" (the theory of Stalino-fascism at its worst!). But not only against the Stalinist party—according to Eastman, logically, also, against the Trotskyists who have their origin in communism (*i.e.*, Leninism) together with Mussolini and Hitler.

On what reasonable grounds, further, would John Dewey, anti-totalitarian, be excluded from the League and on what grounds could he fail to take the position that the League must combat, not merely Stalinism, but communism (*i.e.*, revolutionary Marxism) which, according to him, helps produce fascism? That Dewey is a man of outstanding intellectual probity, that he is among the last of the classic democrats—we do not even pretend to challenge. But we are concerned with his political position. His opposition to Stalinism is only *derivative*. He bases it upon his more fundamental opposition to what he believes it proceeds from: communism, Leninism, revolutionary Marxism. Thus:

Communism, then [the communism of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Trotsky which you once espoused, comrade Hook, and not merely "Stalinist totalitarianism"!], with its doctrine of the necessity of the forcible overthrow of the State by armed insurrection, with its doctrine of the dictatorship of the proletariat, with its threats to exclude all other classes from civil rights, to smash their political parties, and to deprive them of the rights of freedom of speech, press and assembly—which communists *now* claim for themselves under capitalism—communism is itself, an unwitting, but nonetheless, powerful factor in bringing about fascism. As an unalterable opponent of fascism in every form, I cannot be a communist. (John Dewey, *Modern Monthly*, Apr. 1934, p. 136f.)

Dewey *should* not be excluded from the League. Nor is he. He is one of its sponsors. And that is fitting. It is proper.

On what grounds would Eugene Lyons be excluded from the League? He is already imbued with a "detestation of the soul of Bolshevism—its cruel, morbid, jesuitical soul", and there is little doubt as to what ideological line he would contribute to and support in the organization. A few samples:

We had gone to Russia believing there were good dictatorships and bad. We left convinced that defending one dictatorship is in fact defending the principles of tyranny. (Lyons, *Assignment in Utopia*, p. 621.)

The talk of New Deal regimentation sounded absurd against my experience of totalitarian practises. Though I had given many years to the defense of political prisoners and civil liberties in America, I now found myself angered by glib and off-hand denunciations of American democracy by people who could not even imagine what total annihilation of democratic processes and civil rights meant. (*Ibid.*, p. 624.)

The very basic elements of the Leninist-Trotskyist-Stalinist methods of revolution are in disrepute. The cumulative and gigantic sacrifice may be justified ultimately, when history's record is clearer, chiefly as an object lesson *how not to make revolutions*.* (*Ibid.*, p. 639.)

In light of these views, Lyons' membership in the League should be assured. And so indeed it is. He is already one of its moving spirits.

From all the facts adduced, the unavowed but quite implicit program of the League is the *defense of bourgeois democracy* from fascism, Stalinism and . . . Marxism, which is the theory and practise of the revolutionary proletariat. Whose "traditional" program is this? Who has always stood for the "struggle on two fronts", against the "dictatorships of the left or the right", for the hopeless not-so-golden mean? Hook, at least, is more than sufficiently aware of the fact that this is the classic outlook of the middle classes. The program of the League is nothing but a program of *middle-class radicalism*.

But it may be objected, however, whatever may be the individual views of this or that member of the League, do you not show your own totalitarian inclinations by your contempt for the struggle to preserve democracy from totalitarian extermination? The objection is based on a misunderstanding. The revolutionary Marxists are not only the staunchest partisans of a socialist republic. They are also the only consistent defenders of democracy in a very concrete and meaningful sense. Of "democracy" as an abstraction, or some absolutist conception? Not at all. Of the vicious fraud which is bourgeois democracy, that is, the social dictatorship of the bourgeoisie? Not at all. But we are fierce partisans of those democratic rights which capitalism has been compelled in the course of decades of bitter struggle to grant the masses: democratic popular representation, the right of free speech, assembly and press, the right to organize and strike, *etc.*, *etc.* Circumscribed as all these concrete democratic rights are under capitalism, we are not only for their preservation but for their extension, for converting them into genuine and not crippled rights, for anchoring them in *social democracy*—the socialist society.

We are anything but indifferent to the attempts of fascism to abolish these rights, and are ready to join with any progressive force to defend them, even in their present crippled state, from reactionary assault, as is confirmed concretely by our position in the Spanish civil war. But in our position there is a little "reservation", which distinguishes us from all brands of liberals and social democrats and Stalinists. It is this: not only socialism, but even the defense of the democratic rights of the masses is impos-

* Do not conclude from this pontifical judgment that Lyons has any idea of how a revolution *should* be made. Or for that matter, any idea as to what to do right now, today, to thrust the knife of fascism from our throats. In his *New Leader* column of October 22, 1938, he gives a good example of his complete demoralization and helplessness: "Questions pound at one's conscience these days—as Hitlerism marches roughshod across Europe—but answers there are none [*sic*] . . . In what direction shall we look for hope and for help? Perhaps to Great Britain?" No, he answers, quite accurately. To France? Again, no. To Russia? "The cemetery of our epoch's greatest hope." To Germany? Of course not. To "the socialist and internationalist ideals perhaps?" Alas, again no. Then where in heaven's name are we to look and what are we to do? Look into the distant future. "A reorientation of socialist theory and socialist practice in the light of the last three decades of history is essential—and is taking place under the surface of the various socialist movements. It may be generations, for all we know, before a new and clearer and more effective pattern of thought will emerge." Generations! Excuse our seeming impatience, but we fear that fascism is not obliging enough to wait with its headsman's ax and concentration camp for 40-50-60 years while we produce a "new and clearer and more effective pattern of thought". By virtue of the above declaration of bankruptcy, Lyons seems to us a fitting leader in the struggle of the League against totalitarianism. He may not know "in what direction", to look, or what to do, but he can repeat what Ezra Pound wrote of A. E. Housman's message:

"O Woe, woe,
People are born and die,
We also shall be dead pretty soon
Therefore let us act as if we were
dead already."

sible of attainment without the methods of the proletarian class struggle. Those who have not learned this elementary lesson, have learned nothing from the tragic but instructive experience in Germany, Austria, Spain and Czechoslovakia. Middle-class politics, class collaboration with the "progressive" bourgeoisie (and under its domination!), are perfectly fitted for paralyzing the masses and facilitating the victory of fascist totalitarianism. The attempt to ward off fascism by defending bourgeois democracy—made over and over again in the recent past with calamitous and not unknown results—is in direct conflict with the policy for the struggle against fascism and defense of democratic rights which revolutionary Marxists advocate—a policy confirmed by all recent events, both negatively and positively.

It is for this reason also—and not only because the "orthodox Trotskyists" are regarded by the League founders as totalitarian—that the revolutionary Marxists are neither invited nor desired as members of the new organization. For among the first questions we would raise in its as yet unimpressive ranks, would be included these:

Where does the League stand on the question of "Stalino-fascism"? Are there no differences between Stalinism and fascism, between Germany and the Soviet Union, and if there are, why are they not indicated in the League's program? If a war broke out between Germany and France, we assume that the League would not feel called upon to take a position in favor of one or the other belligerent. But suppose Germany were to launch a war against the Soviet Union in order—as a beginning!—to detach the Ukraine, would the League also refrain from taking a position or would it declare itself neutral? In a word, is it for the defense of the Soviet Union from imperialist attack, regardless and in spite of the Stalinist régime? Whatever the answer, why does not the League say so? What is more, what position does the League take on the question of a war between "democracy" and fascism? (The League draft is simplicity itself on this score: It hasn't a word—not one word—on war or imperialism or their direct relation to totalitarianism, thus leaving the membership doors open to supporters of "democratic" wars or imperialism.) Is it not mandatory, even for artists and intellectuals and scientists, to express themselves on this most vital question?

To be sure, these are concrete and far from remote or unreal questions; nor are they academic and abstract. It is far more important and interesting to have an anti-totalitarian League express itself unambiguously on these urgently real matters than to proclaim ever so sonorously its attachment to Truth, Freedom and Justice. But even if the League or its collective sponsors could ever be prevailed upon to give precise answers to these questions, the result would make it perfectly clear to everybody, we are convinced, that—regardless of their individual protestations—we are dealing with an association of democrats working on a program of middle-class radicalism. Or, to put it differently, these anti-Stalinists are forming a typically Stalinist People's Front—without the Stalinists.

Where the Road Ends

IT IS THEIR evolution (at different speeds, to be sure) towards futile middle-class radicalism that is bringing so many of the members of "Group I" progressively closer to these whom we have classified in "Group II", that is, to those who, we gratefully recall, never pretended to be Marxists, revolutionary or otherwise. Sidney Hook is now in a political alliance with John Dewey. Harrison, out of not such ideological considerations, has become an enthusiastic barker for the A.L.P. and presumably, like it, he is at least as enthusiastic a partisan of the New Deal as, let us say, Ferdinand Lundberg. The difference between Eastman's estimate of the Russian Revolution and Lyons' is rapidly approaching the political vanishing point, and such an estimate involves all the fundamental questions of Marxism.

Dewey's views of communism, Marxism and class collabora-

tion as against class struggle are too well known to require repetition here. John Chamberlain has recently written (in *Common Sense*) an exposition of his view that the degeneration of the Russian Revolution has its original source not so much in Stalinism or even in Leninism but in the pernicious and false doctrine of the class nature of the State which was set forth by Karl Marx. The State is not theirs, it is ours as well, it belongs to all of us, declaims Chamberlain. The point of view is not merely class-collaborationist but, fundamentally, patriotic. Hence he is able to write, more concretely, that "Sweden has a swell civilization, which is enough for me. I want a mixed economy under coalition rule . . ." Adamic is frankly for the preservation of capitalism "for I have become convinced that labor cannot abolish capital if it would . . ."

You would imagine that in our critical times, when the most paralyzing poison in the labor movement is the spirit and practise of class collaboration, of bourgeois or social-patriotism, the main fire of even the "dissident Marxists" would be directed at the ruinous doctrines disseminated by the Lundbergs and

IV: WHAT TO DO?

AN ANALYSIS OF THE POSITION of the radical intellectuals would be incomplete without tracing the social causes of the movement we have been discussing. In turn, an understanding of the causes is a prerequisite to a correction of the tendency to which they have yielded and a *return* to the position which will enable them to make their authentic and positive contribution to the revolutionary class struggle.

The main sociological cause of this movement is to be found in the long list of defeats suffered by the revolution in Europe and Asia, and the failure of the revolutionary movement here to grow rapidly enough to cope adequately with its great problems. It is obvious, also, that the Russian Revolution, which had such a powerful effect in restoring revolutionary Marxism to its rightful place in the ranks of the working class movement as well as among the radical intellectuals, had the contrary effect in the period of its degeneration under Stalinism.

The revolutionary socialists, however, could not and cannot see in any of these developments a reason for abandoning Marxism. Quite the contrary. Marxism was verified not only on the triumph of the October Revolution but also negatively in the defeats and decay that followed. Who other than those who applied the methods of Marxism to the realities of the class struggle were able to predict the setbacks suffered by the world proletariat, to explain the phenomena of the revolutionary ebb and the rise of fascism, to outline the only policy that would enable the proletariat to turn the tide of defeat into an irresistible wave of victory? The Marxists did not require the *post hoc* elucubrations now dished up on "one-party dictatorship" in order to explain the causes of the revolution's degeneration. As early as 1906, in a fundamental way, the Marxist Trotsky already analyzed the danger of reaction inherent in a revolution confined to a single country. From 1917 onward, Lenin, Trotsky and all the other Bolsheviks repeated "a thousand times" that without the world revolution the Soviet republic would succumb to counter-revolutionary forces. Beginning with 1923, the Trotskyist Opposition, basing itself upon a political analysis which has never been excelled or even matched, launched the struggle against the Thermidorean degeneration of the Soviet power and the Communist International. Every important event in the last twenty years has only emphasized the irreplaceability of revolutionary Marxism as an instrument of analysis and a weapon of struggle for social emancipation.

Every period of reaction that follows a revolutionary defeat produces a variety of superficial and transient "new" and "stylish" doctrines, which eschew Marxism as "outlived." It would be instructive to compare the history of the "factional struggles" fol-

Adamics and Chamberlains and Deweys and Oneals and Lees, as well as against the Stalins and Browders who, in abandoning revolutionary socialism, have really taken over these doctrines from the former. We dare say that if any one of the members of "Group I" could now be persuaded to write a political criticism of the partisans of bourgeois democracy who compose "Group II", it would be couched in the most conciliatory manner imaginable and would not generate one-fiftieth as much heat as is contained in their sharp polemics against Marxism. But the first group has simply forgotten to criticize the second. Virtually all the fire of our backsliding "Marxists" is aimed in the other direction, and they are so active in abandoning the revolutionary position that they have retreated, many without noticing it, towards the camp of the apostles of bourgeois democracy.

The centrism which develops in the course of a departure from Marxism moves, if not deliberately checked, gradually but inexorably to the program of social reformism, of middle-class radicalism. To the extent that they act politically, that is the actual program of the group we have been discussing.

lowing the defeat of the Russian revolution of 1905 with their analogues of the last decade or more. It is the present reactionary moods of depression, discouragement, loss of confidence in the recuperative powers of the proletariat and its revolutionary movement, which are rationalized into the widespread attacks against revolutionary Marxism. The radical intellectuals, by the very nature of their social position, are generally the first to yield to these moods, to capitulate to them instead of resisting them deliberately. In an entirely different degree, to be sure, they are as much the victims of our prolonged period of reaction as the Stalinist degeneration of the Russian Revolution and the temporary rise of fascism are its products.

The main intellectual disease from which these intellectuals suffer may be called Stalinophobia, or vulgar anti-Stalinism. The malady was superinduced by the universal revulsion against Stalin's macabre system of frameups and purges. And the result has been that most of the writing done on the subject since then has been less a product of cold social analysis than of mental shock, and where there is analysis, it is moral rather than scientific or political.

It is interesting to note in this connection that virtually all our subjects have for years taken us to task for what they considered our exclusive preoccupation with the fight against Stalinism. "Why don't you ever attack anybody or anything besides Stalinism?" they used to complain. If we were not deeply stirred by their criticisms then, it was because they were based on a misapprehension of our fundamental position. Now times have changed to the point where the rôles seem to be shifted; but in a very peculiar way. There is hardly an article written by our critics, or a speech delivered, without the fiercest attacks on Stalinism which they increasingly and indiscriminately identify with revolutionary Marxism. Their vulgar anti-Stalinism consists in this: they condemn Stalinism in reality for precisely those policies which—and this is what the critics of Bolshevism do not realize!—have brought it steadily closer to the fundamental policies of social reformism and bourgeois democracy; and at the same time they have adopted a conciliatory attitude towards reformism and democracy. They abstract Stalinism out of its concrete historical context, its relation to declining world imperialism. Thus their opposition is opportunistic, since it is divorced from the basic struggle against imperialism itself. This leads them into the most peculiar combination with people who profess some sort of "anti-Stalinism" even when they represent views no less reactionary than Stalin's.

The "Trotskyist" movement was insured against such a conciliatory attitude by the objective political position it adopted

from the very beginning. It began the struggle against the Soviet Thermidoreans fifteen years ago not on the grounds that they were the legitimate heirs of Leninism, but because they were a bastard product; and it always related this struggle to the general fight against imperialism and for world socialism. The struggle against Stalinism was launched, Trotsky insisted, because it represented a capitulation to social democracy, because it was the channel through which flowed the forces of capitalist restoration. The policy of the Second International is the policy of surrender to the bourgeoisie. Stalinism differs from that policy in no important particular. The methods by which Stalinism rules were not invented by it: it copied them from the bourgeoisie and the social democracy—frameups, massacres of revolutionists and all the rest of it, merely giving to these methods a more totalitarian character. If the political genealogy of Stalinism were to be honestly established, it would be found that while it is neither the son of Leninism nor the brother of fascism, it is the totalitarian offspring of the bourgeois and social democracies.

Once this is understood, the struggle against Stalinism assumes a solid and objective political character. It can be conducted progressively only from the standpoint of revolutionary Marxism. It is in this way that anti-Stalinism acquires a positive significance, and is prevented from being vulgarized to the point of reconciliation with reformism and bourgeois democracy. (We dismiss entirely that brand of "anti-Stalinism" which leads to, or is only a cloak for, complete retirement from the struggle.)

For a Reorientation

OUR AIM IN WRITING this article is not to abuse or disparage our critics among the radical intellectuals, but to address ourselves seriously (even if sharply!) to the problems they themselves have raised. As Max Eastman has observed, this is indeed "a time for deliberation". But would it not be well for these intellectuals and those who incline towards their ideas to ask themselves: In what direction are we traveling? Eastman has already announced that his deliberations will take place in retirement. Harrison has already proclaimed his conversion to social democracy. Others have already taken steps in their direction. The deliberate purpose of our article is, by presenting sufficiently convincing arguments, to stop their further drift towards an anti-Marxist position and to bring about a change of direction.

We are intransigently hostile to the attitude of the Stalinists towards the intellectual fellow-travelers of the working class; it is repugnant to a revolutionist. The combination of flattery, bribery and intimidation with which they keep "their" intellectuals "in line", that is not our method. We do not demand of the writer that his creative work—under penalty of being denounced as worthless—be imbued with the philosophy of dialectic materialism, for we believe with Lenin that a work of art can be great and of value to the working class even if it is "imbued" with an idealistic philosophy, or for that matter without any systematic philosophy whatever. We do not demand of the singer that his poems be written in line with the latest or the last-but-latest turn in party policy. Towards the intellectual we have neither the contemptuous attitude expressed in "Stick to your last and keep your nose out of politics", nor the desire to buy his praise of our party and its policies (or its Leaders!) in return for "official" party praise of his creative products.

The intellectual genuinely concerned with advancing the socialist movement has a multitude of opportunities to put his energy and talents at its service. There is the work of making possible continued life and activity of the revolutionary refugees from persecution; there is the work of defending the class war prisoners. There is above all the work of popularizing the ideas of revolutionary Marxism, if not among the proletariat, then at least among the now conservative or reformist-minded members of their own circles. And for those who are prepared to participate more actively and directly in the movement, who understand

that without a consciously organized vanguard party the working class cannot win its war and consolidate its victory, there is membership in the world party of the social revolution—the Fourth International, which needs and welcomes serious intellectuals in its ranks. Such action is not proposed as a substitute for critical articles on no matter what fundamental question, for free and candid exchange of opinions, for the right to join in the discussion of every revolutionary problem. Not at all and just the contrary. It is only by such action that criticism and discussion acquire richness and reality and fruitfulness and purpose. Without it, they become common intellectual perambulations in midair, a spurious *substitute* for positive activity.

The intellectuals have also an autonomous and far from unimportant rôle to play in the cultural field. Entirely justified and necessary is a union of intellectuals—writers, scientists, philosophers, teachers—regardless of their divergent "factional" views, but only on the basis of specific and concrete action against specific abuses, of which there are a growing number under "democracy" to say nothing of the totalitarian régimes (Teacher's Oaths, censorship, sabotage of publication, reactionary intolerance in schools and universities, *etc., etc.*). Such alliances or united fronts have a positive and progressive significance, in contrast to the anti-Marxist "ideological" political unions typified by the League Against Totalitarianism.

What a contrast is presented to the latter by the international movement which André Breton and Diego Rivera have in their manifesto proposed to launch! They, too, call for an association of artists and intellectuals. While they do not propose that it be tied to a political party, they take just as firm and infinitely clearer a position against both fascist and Stalinist totalitarianism, but they also make the indispensable distinction between the two. They do not take a mouthful of hot potatoes when they are called upon to express themselves flatly on the question of bourgeois and social democracy, on the question of imperialist war, on the question of capitalism and socialism.

Why have not the radical intellectuals responded to their call which was prominently displayed in the *Partisan Review*? Is it perhaps because they object to the references to Freudianism? Or to some minor formulation? Or to the style? But those are scarcely of real importance. Rivera-Breton have explained that they consider the manifesto to be simply a draft. Obviously, what is important and decisive is the main line of thought and action which it proposes. That line, while boldly describing the sphere of freedom and independence which the artist and intellectual must take for themselves, is unambiguously revolutionary—not Stalinist, not social-democratic, not middle-class radicalism.

Is it possible that the reply to our question will be the one we have heard so often in the past? "The line is none too radical for me, you understand, but it will repulse 'the others' whom we want to win." It is the answer of the psychologists and not of the revolutionists—and not of such good psychologists. The only way we, or anyone else, have learned to win people to a revolutionary position is by standing on that position. To start out by adopting or adapting yourself to the present (*i.e.*, conservative) position of those you seek to win over—which is the alternative—means that you will win nobody over for the simple reason that *you* have already been won over yourself. The not at all imaginary quotation we have cited was the basis of the argument in the editorial board of the late *Marxist Quarterly*, which is one of the reasons why the adjective must now be affixed to it; it is heard often enough in the *Partisan Review*; it was not absent in the days of the American Committee for the Defense of Leon Trotsky; it was the argument used to trap so many into going along (for a time) with the muddle known as the Keep America Out of War Committee.

But its shallowness is revealed by a single glance at the totality of those who employ it. *Each* of them uses it, with a vague toss of the head in the direction of those who "have to be won over", so that all of them, taken together, finally end up by being

less "radical" than each of them taken individually! Yet, united, and shedding their conservative rationalizations, they already represent a sufficiently imposing force which, together with those who would be immediately attracted to them, would bring to life in the United States such a movement as is outlined by Breton and Rivera.

* * *

IF THE "SUBJECTS" OF this article have been a group of radical intellectuals, the matters we have dealt with far exceed them in political importance, and only thereby make possible a justification of this essay's length. The devastating crisis of capitalism is accompanied by a no less devastating crisis in the labor movement. Reflecting it is a turbulent discussion of proletarian principles, tactics, strategy, theory, ideology, history. Our article is a summary of the most important points in this discussion and a contribution to it in the form of a criticism of critics.

For us political criticism is worth the time spent on it only if it lays the basis for action. Action has positive significance for the socialist movement only if it is directed towards its historic goal. Not merely by doctrines handed down to us by those great

minds which founded our movement, but by the endless variety of events which we have experienced in our own lifetime, the conviction has deepened in us that if the socialist revolution is not triumphant, society will end in self-destruction. And if the socialist revolution is to be realized by the working class, an indispensable prerequisite of this victory is the building up and consolidation of that party which stands on the program of revolutionary Marxism. The wisdom of man has supplied no effective substitute for it in the great struggle for freedom; the less effective, we see no reason for accepting. The confirmation which history has given this program gives us the right to call upon the revolutionary intellectuals as well as the class-conscious workers for support to the party which is its champion.

James BURNHAM
Max SHACHTMAN

[Copies of the issue of THE NEW INTERNATIONAL containing the above article will be sent to all the individuals against whom it polemizes, with an invitation to make any comments desired in coming issues of the magazine.—ED.]

After the Fall of Wuhan

"CHINA NEEDS GENERALISSIMO Chiang Kai-shek's leadership more urgently than ever today when the national crisis has reached a life and death stage. His remaining in office and his valuable services to the Chinese nation are essential and imperative in the struggle leading to final victory. The Chinese Communist party has placed unquestioning confidence in Chiang Kai-shek's fixed policy of conducting a war of resistance. No one else can lead this war except Generalissimo Chiang."

The above statement, made November 8 to a staff correspondent of United Press in Chungking, provisional capital of the Kuomintang régime, by Chin Po-ku, Communist party representative on the so-called People's Political Council, appears in print less than two weeks after Wuhan fell unresistingly before the invading armies of Japanese imperialism. One military débacle has succeeded another since the commencement of the Sino-Japanese war. Peiping, Shanghai, Nanking, Canton and now Wuhan have been captured by the invaders in little more than a year. China's important seaports, with the solitary exception of Foochow (which can be taken at any time) are in the hands of Japan. The entire railway system of the country, but for segments of the Canton-Hankow and Peiping-Hankow lines and the narrow-gauge line running into Yunnan from French Indo-China, together with most of the key cities through which or to which they run, are controlled by the Nipponese imperialists. Chiang Kai-shek's régime has been effectively ousted from a good fifth of all Chinese territory south of the Great Wall. It is estimated that approximately 175,000,000 Chinese are already living behind the Japanese lines. East of the north-south line described by the Canton-Hankow and Peiping-Hankow Railways there remain only scattered detachments of the regular Chinese forces. As Japan succeeds in closing the gaps on these two trunk lines, some of these troops will doubtless retreat westward. Organized Chinese resistance to Japan under the leadership of Chiang Kai-shek will virtually have ended, unless Japan decides to push the campaign farther west. Considered from the military point of view, a Chinese counter-attack on any sizeable scale, under Chiang's leadership, is inconceivable. Political considerations make it all the more improbable.

One cannot help wondering what kind of enthusiasm for Chiang Kai-shek's leadership Mr. Chin Po-ku would have been able to exhibit had the doughty Generalissimo been able to place to his credit a few victories instead of a series of humiliating defeats. Mr. Chin's enthusiasm for Chiang's leadership, needless to

Victory in the war of the Chinese people against the Japanese invaders requires the broadest united national front of military struggle, and the international aid of the workers and oppressed races and nationalities throughout the world. But here, as always, as revolutionists have firmly and constantly insisted, "unity" alone is not enough. United action can, in the end, serve the cause of the defeat of the imperialist enemy only if the working class preserves its own independence, above all its own independent class program. Fighting as the best and most courageous soldiers alongside of Chiang Kai-shek, the Chinese workers and peasants and their organizations subordinate themselves *politically* to Chiang only at the cost of assuring their own ultimate defeat by the Japanese armies—in all probability aided as in 1927 by Chiang himself. Comrade Li Fu-jen's article graphically answers the question: who weakens, yes, sabotages the war against Japan? who are the Chinese defeatists? Once more it demonstrates that military victory in the interests of the toiling masses will be possible only if the united struggle is accompanied by unremitting and uncompromising political struggle *against* the treacherous policies of Chiang and his Stalinist colleagues.—ED.

say, does not reflect the spirit and temper of the Chinese masses, who at present are voiceless. He speaks with the voice of Stalin, who hopes that Chiang, with the aid of a little flattery, will keep on "defending China" against Japan, so that Japan will be too busy to attack the Soviet Union.

Right after the fall of Wuhan the People's Political Council, which Mr. Chin adorns, met in Chungking. This assembly of "representatives of the people", created shortly after the commencement of hostilities last year, was, according to the Stalinists, a "step" toward the establishment of "democracy" in China. Moreover, it was going to help China win a victory over Japan. The Stalinists had demanded the creation of a democratic régime as part price of their political capitulation to Chiang Kai-shek. The People's Political Council, and nothing more, was what Chiang gave them.

The "Democratic" People's Political Council

Fragmentary official reports of the recent deliberations of this "democratic" body—from which, incidentally, the press was excluded—are now filtering into the press. One seeks in vain for evidence that it did anything else but sing hosannas of praise to the Generalissimo. Its sessions were exactly similar in most respects to a meeting of Stalin's Congresses of the "Soviets". From a truly democratic assembly one would have expected to hear some criticism, not to say condemnation, of government policies which

have produced nothing but military disaster. If any such criticism was voiced—and it is strongly to be doubted—the fact has not been disclosed. The Council apparently said all it had to say on the subject of war policy when it “unanimously” (as in Moscow) passed a resolution “supporting the Government’s policy of continuing armed resistance against Japan”. One wonders whether the assembled “representatives” were aware that Japanese guns, after reducing Wuhan’s outer defenses so that the invading army could enjoy a 10-day unresisted march to Hankow, had pounded Chiang Kai-shek’s régime to the dimensions of a regional government. If they were they gave no evidence of it.

In view of Stalinist claims that the People’s Political Council is a “democratic” institution, it is worth while, in passing, to consider briefly its actual character. According to its secretary-general, Wang Shih-chieh, who has declared it “doubtful whether any electoral system could produce a more representative body”, the Council is composed of “delegates sent by local authorities and endorsed by the Central Executive Committee of the Kuomintang”. Regarding social composition, the same authoritative source informs that “about half of the members served in provincial governments and other organizations, while the other half possess professional qualifications”. The Council includes three “Communists” and three “National Socialists”, while the remaining members, numbering upwards of 150, are all members or supporters of the Kuomintang. Thus we find that this “step” in the direction of “democracy” is nothing but an assembly hand-picked by the Kuomintang, a democratic fraud, a decorative trapping for Chiang Kai-shek’s dictatorship. It is easy to see why Chiang Kai-shek and his government came in for no criticism.

What are the “powers” enjoyed by this cheap parody on Stalin’s “most democratic” parliament? They consist (1) of the right to “consider” new policies before decisions thereon are taken by the government, emergency military measures, which could include most anything, being excepted; (2) the right to submit proposals to the government; (3) the right to question the government and call for reports. That is all. In other words, this august Council has no powers at all. Could any clearer proof be asked that democratic institutions and rights can never be obtained as the result of an unprincipled political bargain, as a gift from a reactionary régime?

The just-concluded sessions of this democratic fraud have nevertheless been useful for their oblique revelation of what has been happening in China since the war started. For example, a resolution was passed “calling for an improvement in the conscription law, notably the abolition of the exemption tax . . . whereby a man could purchase exemption from military service” (Reuter from Chungking, Nov. 8). The exemption of rich men’s sons from military service has been a crying scandal. Kuomintang conscription officers have amassed fortunes by selling these exemptions. The poor of town and country, on the other hand, have been forced into the army by the most brutal press-gang methods. Uniformed bullies descend on towns and villages and conscript by main force all men capable of any kind of active service. The younger ones go into the army, the older ones are forced into the auxiliary services or compelled to labor behind the lines. There have been numerous reports of men shot for resisting conscription in a war which they cannot see will bring them any benefit.

The Council also passed a resolution “asking for better treatment for the families of soldiers”—an admission that the treatment hitherto has been in full consistency with the general attitude of the bourgeoisie and its government towards the masses. For the poor the war has been an endless chain of untold miseries. Families of conscripts have been left to shift for themselves. Unnumbered thousands have died in the war zones. Hunger and disease and cold have carried off many who escaped the merciless juggernaut of war. Those who succeeded in fleeing before the invaders in most cases lost their meager possessions and their means of livelihood. Millions left behind, if they survived the Japanese military terror, have been plunged into the direst destitution by the de-

struction of war and the rapacity of the conquering armies. Knowing these facts, the best that the People’s Political Council could do was to humbly beg the government for “better treatment” of the masses. The three “Communist” members, judging by the published reports, were as silent as the grave. The cynical Stalinist yes-men, hostages in this assembly of Chiang Kai-shek’s political satellites, are pledged by their party to refrain from stirring up the masses by criticizing the government and its policies. This was the price they paid for the “Anti-Japanese United Front”. As we have stated before, they are concerned, not with the interests of the downtrodden masses, including the soldiers, whose cause they have shown no compunction in betraying, but with maintaining their alleged united front, with keeping Chiang Kai-shek at the job of “resisting” Japan, so that Japan will be unable to attack the Soviet Union and Stalin will be able to continue constructing “socialism”—in other words, their policy is calculated to serve the interests of the Soviet bureaucracy alone.

A Forgotten “Detail”

But these gentlemen of the Stalinist party overlook one little “detail”: To the extent that the Chinese masses are made to carry the burdens of the war, to the extent that they are kept unorganized and immobilized, deprived of leadership, held back from struggle for their own independent social and economic aims *even while the war goes on*—to that extent is it made easier for the Kuomintang government, with or without Chiang Kai-shek’s acquiescence, to call off the struggle and make peace with Japan. The succession of military defeats has strengthened the capitulationist moods in the ranks of the government and the ruling classes. Mass pressure alone can prevent the translation of these moods into surrender. But the masses can be mobilized to exert this pressure only if given a bold social program which will identify victory against Japan with the satisfaction of their own most pressing needs.

In petty-bourgeois circles one hears repeated criticism of “traitorous workers” who have entered Japanese employ in the occupied areas. Three thousand Chinese workers, for example, are employed now at the Kiangnan Dockyard in Shanghai, repairing Japanese warships. What are these workers to do? Starve? Crushed for more than a decade under the iron heel of Chiang Kai-shek’s dictatorship, their trade unions destroyed, deserted and betrayed by the renegade Communist party, the workers have seen no perspective of social gain opened up for them by the war. With the exception of the small band of Fourth Internationalists, whose voice has been all but drowned out by streams of Stalinist villification, no one has endeavored to link the war with a movement to relieve the masses of their horrible poverty and servitude. The Stalinists enjoin the masses to obey the government, refrain from efforts to improve their lot, and to sacrifice their lives when called upon. The government, for its part, has outlawed strikes and instituted the death penalty for strikers with the full approval of the Stalinists. Weighed down by the sufferings which the war has brought them, the majority of workers are now indifferent as to its immediate outcome. They want the fighting to cease, the factories to be rebuilt or reopened, their jobs restored to them. They hate the Japanese invaders with a deep and abiding hatred, but they see no prospect of victory and therefore no alternative but to work for the invaders whenever jobs are offered. Either that or starvation. Had they been organized and given leadership in the struggle against the Japanese imperialists on a program which would have identified victory with their own liberation from grinding slavery, China’s toilers might now be on the way to repeating the glorious victory of the Russian workers against the imperialist interventionists.

Traitors? This slanderous accusation against China’s toilers, so typical of the petty bourgeois, does not square even superficially with the facts. Who if not the workers and peasants have borne the brunt of the war? Is it not precisely these classes who have been hurled to destruction and death against Japan’s military machine? That all their heroism and self-sacrifice, to which countless

observers have testified, have produced not victory but defeat—is this *their* fault or the fault of the “patriotic” bourgeoisie and its government, not to mention their Stalinist lackeys, who have been “leading” the war?

Traitors? This same patriotic bourgeoisie crowds the night-clubs and cabarets of Shanghai, Hongkong and cities behind the Chinese lines, lives in its accustomed luxury, fattens on graft and war contracts, while the soldiers, drawn from the most poverty-stricken layers of the population, are laying down their lives on the battlefields. Soldiers’ wages have gone unpaid for months. Army paymasters, all good patriots in the camp of the Kuomintang, are known to have held up payment of soldiers’ wages in the expectation or hope that the intended recipients would shortly be killed. This blood-money finally finds its way into cabarets and brothels behind the lines.

Traitors? Eminent representatives of the patriotic bourgeoisie and hordes of their petty bourgeois underlings are tripping over themselves in their haste to conclude business deals with, or enter the employ of, the imperialist invaders in the occupied areas. They hope to receive a share, even if only a small one, in the coming exploitation of those same workers and peasants who in the columns of the “patriotic” press are called traitors. This bourgeois scum is certainly under no illusion as to the prospects for a Chinese victory under Chiang Kai-shek’s leadership.

Ineptitude, corruption, cowardice and treachery, reaching down from the hierarchy of the Kuomintang into the ranks of the commanding personnel of the army, have spelt out the military débacle which has all but ended China’s fight against Japan under Chiang Kai-shek’s leadership. The detailed chronicling of even a fraction of the crimes and misdeeds falling under these general headings would fill a large volume. Throughout the war the patriotism of the Kuomintang and its class backers has consisted in a readiness to “defend” China—to the last drop of blood of the Chinese masses. Living forces have been sacrificed with a recklessness almost without parallel in history. The heroism of the fighting soldiers has been invariably cancelled out by the crimes and blunders of their leaders, the magnitude of which constitutes a national scandal.

Treachery at the Top

Not a war contract has been let but what a handsome percentage has clung to the sticky fingers of Finance Minister H. H. Kung. A similar charge of corruption lies against the Generalissimo’s own wife in the purchase of war planes. Of outright treachery there is more than abundant evidence. The most outrageous example was the sell-out which led to the military collapse at Shanghai in the early stages of the war. At Chapoo, on Hangchow Bay, a Japanese force landed to execute a flanking move against the Shanghai defenses. Not a single shot was fired at the invaders by the troops assigned to defend that area. On the contrary, the invaders found waiting for them an ample supply of gasoline and lubricants to enable their mechanized forces to drive forward rapidly to the rear of Shanghai’s defenses. General Iwane Matsui later boasted to a *New York Times* correspondent that he had bought the free landing at Chapoo for \$80,000 Chinese currency, together with the gasoline supply. Government circles freely admit the sell-out.

There has been similar talk of “silver bullets” being employed by the Japanese to effect their uncontested landing at Bias Bay, in Kwangtung province, last month. From the point of landing they were able to march overland to Canton in ten days, their progress entirely unresisted. There is reason to suspect that the British connived at this piece of treachery in order to spare South China, their most important trade sphere, from devastation.

No charge of cowardice can lie at the door of China’s brave soldiers, but records of the most abysmal cowardice in the ranks of the higher command are endless. Chiang Kai-shek fled inland from Nanking last December when the Japanese army was still well over 100 miles from the city. Tang Sheg-chih, one of his

subordinates, famed for his slaughter of unarmed workers and peasants in Hunan in 1927, was left in charge, but fled soon after with the entire commanding staff of the Nanking war area. Soldiers left in the front lines without orders found their ranks pierced. They fell back into the city, seeking headquarters. But headquarters had disappeared. For this cowardly desertion by the commanding staff several thousand Chinese soldiers suffered horrible massacre when the Japanese entered the city. Examples such as these could be multiplied indefinitely.

The abandonment of the Matang forts, 30 miles above Kiu-kiang on the Yangtze River and Wuhan’s first strong defense to the east, is another shameful episode. When the Japanese warships approached the boom the defenders found themselves leaderless and without orders. They fled precipitately. Their commander, instead of being at his post, was spending his time in a brothel in a town several miles away. Abandonment of the Matang Forts, estimated by military observers to have been powerful enough to hold up the Japanese river advance for at least several weeks, helped clear the most important route to Hankow.

Behind the Chinese lines, according to military observers and foreign correspondents, are to be found endless confusion, inefficiency, ineptitude. One report after another of faulty communications, poor transport service, lack of coordination, utter absence of initiative by commanders. Jack Belden, United Press correspondent, who has observed every sector of the war at close quarters, testifies that the Chinese “always make plans for an active defense, but invariably content themselves with the passive form. That is why the Japanese throughout the war have been able to take chances that would be fatal in the face of an alert and resourceful enemy”. The treatment, or lack of treatment, for the wounded is another of the great scandals. In the retreat from Hankow, thousands of wounded Chinese soldiers were left behind to crawl as best they could along the highways and across the fields. The advancing Japanese columns incontinently slaughtered all they found. No prisoners are taken.

From the very beginning the Marxists have said that the Chinese bourgeoisie and its government are incapable of conducting any consistent struggle to secure China’s independence from imperialism. More than a year of war has proved that they cannot conduct with any success even a purely military-defensive war against a *single* imperialist power. Chiang Kai-shek has proved, not his ability to defend China, but the boundless rottenness of his régime. His satellites, including the Stalinists, whistle in the dark like small boys, to still their own doubts and conceal from others the utter bankruptcy of the policies hitherto pursued. They refer to the great “hinterland” as yet not overrun by the invading armies. Before Wuhan was captured they emphasized the vital importance of its defense. It was to be a second Verdun. Now that it has fallen, they deny with equal emphasis that Wuhan possesses any importance at all. And how fond they are of repeating, *ad nauseum*, the hackneyed statement: “Japan’s control does not extend beyond her lines of communications”, exaggerating this fact and hiding its real significance. The sum of the wisdom of these people is: Don’t question Chiang Kai-shek’s leadership and policies (if you do you are an “agent of Japan”!). Just sit tight. Japanese imperialism is bound to collapse under the strain of the military campaigns.

The Marxists harbor no illusions about the “invincibility” of the Japanese imperialists. We are firmly convinced that they will never succeed in converting China into a second India. At the same time it is impermissible to blink the facts of the present situation. Japan has put an end to any pretense of Kuomintang authority in most of eastern China which contains most of the vital nerve centers of the country. In this vast area—despite the activities of irregulars and guerillas, which are certain to continue—the Japanese imperialists will be able to duplicate, at least in part, the economic activity which they undertook in Manchuria. The hope for renewed resistance on a large and organized scale lies henceforth with social forces which, thus far in the war, have been noth-

ing but passive victims or spectators of events—the toilers whom the new economic impulses, plus the rapacity of the new exploiters, will set in motion.

Japan Seeks a Breathing Spell

The war has all but left the front pages of the press. One Japanese column is driving south through Hunan and the fall of the provincial capital, Changsha, is not far distant. Another column is moving north from Canton. Little resistance is being encountered and the junction of these two forces will see the completion of the Japanese occupation of the Canton-Hankow Railway. A Japanese force is also driving hard in Shansi, in the northwest, to clear the still unoccupied portion of the Peiping-Hankow Railway. The former Red Army is bearing the brunt of this assault. When these two trunk lines are fully held by the invaders, will the Japanese imperialists call a halt and confine their activities to "mopping up" operations, or will they extend their campaigning farther west and southwest? This remains to be seen. Signs are not wanting that Japan would like to pause at least for a breathing space, consolidate control of the occupied areas, gain some form of recognition of her conquests from rival powers, and begin extracting some returns on her gigantic military investment.

The Kuomintang government, while proclaiming its intention to "resist to the end", at the same time makes known through Wang Ching-wei its readiness to come to terms with Japan, provided a peace can be arranged which "will not hamper China's national existence", which means concretely—on condition that Japan will permit the Kuomintang to remain "in power". Japan has already set up puppet governments in north and central China. Another is being erected in the south. From these, it is announced, a federal Chinese government is to be created. Into this federal government, says Tokyo, the Kuomintang government will be invited as a constituent, provided it abandons its "anti-Japanese" and "pro-communist" policies. Hoping to improve the final terms, the Kuomintang government, using Sun Fo as a megaphone, declaims its love for the Soviet Union—"China's one true friend". Perhaps, too, this will result in some increase in the niggardly "assistance" (cash paid in advance) Stalin has been rendering in the way of airplanes, guns (1916 vintage) and munitions.

Meanwhile the British ambassador has gone to Chungking and Prime Minister Chamberlain has told the world that Britain is ready to act as mediator between China and Japan. British im-

perialism, sorely harrassed by its Oriental rival, is not yet ready for war. London's temporary strategy is to engineer a peace between China and Japan, which, while salvaging what can still be salvaged of tangible British interests in China, will at the same time admit Britain to some share in Japan's conquest. The deal, if it comes off, cannot be satisfactory from Britain's point of view, but the British imperialists know full well that all arrangements now entered into will be subject to a drastic reviewing in the coming world war. Japan meanwhile prods the British lion in his most sensitive spots. Tokyo is aware that the chances of a Japanese-dictated peace will be all the greater if Britain can be made to see the wisdom of "persuading" China to come to terms.

Secretary Hull's October 6 note to Japan has injected another element—a contradictory one—into this situation. Released for publication at the time of the fall of Wuhan, it was calculated, first of all, to stiffen the Kuomintang's resistance to pressure for a precipitate "peace" on terms demanded by Japan and backed by Britain. Additionally, by making the record against Japan, it is a deliberate Roosevelt act in preparation for war. The note has already given some encouragement to the Chiang Kai-shek régime. The Chinese bourgeois press, with the Stalinists piping up from the region of the floor, is screeching for "forceful implementation" of the Hull note. It is touching to observe how the "patriotic" bourgeoisie and their Stalinist flunkies have grown concerned for the preservation of America's imperialist positions in China.

Dollar imperialism, however, is not yet ready for a showdown with its Japanese rival, since this must needs be largely a war on the sea. The navy has yet to be built up to real challenging strength and bases are needed nearer to the scene of action. America's armed might, moreover, has to be equal to engaging not only Japan, but if need be—*Japan and Britain combined*. For it is by no means excluded that Britain may combine with Japan in an agreement to loot China to the exclusion of the United States.

But since America in any case is not ready for war, the likelihood seems to be that Japan will be able to force a "peace" on the Kuomintang government with British assistance. Unless—and this represents the third possibility—Britain and America combine to restrain the Oriental robber power. The new Anglo-American trade agreement may conceivably be followed by some sort of agreement for joint or "parallel" action by Britain and America in the Pacific.

SHANGHAI, Nov. 11, 1938

Li FU-JEN

France and the C.I.O.

THE CLASS STRUGGLE disturbs John L. Lewis like a perennial nightmare. He kept all mention of it from appearing at the recent C.I.O. convention. The French general strike, however, posed the question of the life-and-death struggle between the workers and bosses in unmistakable fashion. The class struggle can not be concealed. It can not be wished out of existence. American workers felt the repercussions of the set-back in France. Léon Jouhaux and Maurice Thorez were no more worried about the prospect of revolution than Lewis in the United States. The C.I.O. top leaders are in the same dilemma as the French trade union bureaucrats. For American industrial workers, the path of militant struggle offers the sole hope of breaking the Gordian knot that paralyzes and binds them to this decaying society called "American Democracy". In a more acute form, this is the question facing the French workers.

Two stubborn facts kept appearing over and over again at the C.I.O. convention. The grave problem of mass unemployment with its attendant miseries symbolized all the troubles of the C.I.O. If American industry returns to the highest level of production in history, 7,000,000 men would still walk the streets

in the army of the permanently unemployed. John L. Lewis' economists told him this fact. The monopoly investigation committee repeated it publicly a few weeks ago. The "American standard of living" is a ghastly illusion. Cold figures on wages which were contained in Lewis' convention report pointed this out. Technological unemployment threatens 200,000 members of the S.W.O.C. The C.I.O. political policy is bankrupt. Petty-bourgeois reaction set back the political plans of Labor's Non-Partisan League. C.I.O.-endorsed candidates fared badly in the fall elections. "I am the Law" Hagues grow stronger. Reactionary forces everywhere intensify their attacks on the labor movement. In a word, the C.I.O. faces the problems created by the social crisis in America. It is recognized by most of the C.I.O. leaders, including Lewis. That is Fact Number One which stood out at the convention.

To defend the gains of the C.I.O., to combat the growing reaction which daily assumes a greater fascist character, and to answer the burning questions of the day, the C.I.O. adopted the stock "progressive" program based purely on immediate and mild demands. The program differs not in a single important iota

from that which the social democrats hoped would save Germany from Hitler, and which the Popular Front tried in France and likewise found wanting. John L. Lewis fervently hopes to "reform" America, as the Popular Front tried it in France. This program collapsed in France. Lewis hopes America is "different". Yet each day brings a fresh experience which says otherwise. The bankruptcy of the "New Deal" speaks for itself. Six years of American-style Popular Frontism under Roosevelt, and America plunges deeper into a basic crisis. What will the C.I.O. leaders do when an American general strike movement arises? The workers and bosses can't live amicably within the framework of capitalism. The workers must struggle. France today; America tomorrow. What is to be done? Fact Number Two is that the C.I.O. leaders are afraid, or rather unwilling, to draw the conclusions of their own experience.

Leon Trotsky is quoted in the press as speaking about the "terrible revolution" facing America. It shocks John L. Lewis in Washington as well as President Roosevelt. Trotsky has the habit of being right. His profound analysis of world conditions is hated, to be sure, but never refuted. In the face of this historical prospect, Lewis reacts in a very simple fashion. He is bewildered. He growls his anger. He cannot answer the crisis with an effective program. Stung by the election defeats, Lewis threatens to back a Farmer-Labor party. This was before the C.I.O. convention. A few days ago, he came out for reforming the Democratic party, a policy that already failed under more favorable conditions. The vacillations of the C.I.O. leaders reflect their bewilderment. The C.I.O. is like an invincible giant stumbling along because it has no clear vision of the road ahead. Since the C.I.O. convention voted Lewis greater power of policy determination than ever held by a labor leader in American history, he merits this extensive analysis. The official C.I.O. policy will tend to be primarily the attitude of Lewis, reacting to pressure from his own ranks, and the general political situation.

The C.I.O. convention faced, in one form or another, all the problems confronting the working class. Its answer was contained mainly in the legislative program adopted. Insecurity, unemployment, wages, hours, working conditions, suppression of civil liberties, strike-breaking by the governmental agencies, a housing program, and a thousand and one other serious questions were taken up and legislation aimed to solve them endorsed. How was this program to be carried out? Pressure on Congress. However, the fact that the swing to the right in fall elections will make Congress even more reactionary was conveniently ignored.

Actually, if the C.I.O. can prevent the present Wagner Labor Disputes Act—with its limitations—from being further emasculated, this would be a victory. Between the lobbying of the reactionary A.F. of L. leaders and the National Manufacturers Association, there will be terrific pressure exercised against the Wagner Act. Congress as a whole will be definitely and intensely "anti-C.I.O." John L. Lewis and the C.I.O. leaders know this from daily contact with the legislators. It is little short of blindness, therefore, for the C.I.O. convention to adopt a policy of still depending on President Roosevelt and the Democratic party to solve the workers' problems instead of depending on militant and independent class action. American sit-downs built the C.I.O. The French sit-down strike wave put the Popular Front in power and "legalized" what the workers had already won.

The hope of the C.I.O. does not rest in its present leaders or in its political program. Industrial unionism was built permanently in America mainly by the splendid work of the countless rank-and-file workers whose direct action through sit-downs swept aside opposition. The temporary increase in industrial activity already has returned thousands of militant C.I.O. members into the shop and unions. In auto and steel, reports of strikes manifest the fresh and unexhausted courage of the industrial workers. A reliable Washington survey predicts a sharp and bitterly-fought series of strikes for 1939, accompanying the temporary upswing in business. The prospect offers a respite for the C.I.O. It can re-

cuperate and gain strength. More time to solve the contradictions in the C.I.O. policy is probable, unless war intervenes. The strikes in auto today can again serve as the prelude to larger battles in a similar fashion to 1936.

In the darkest days of the present crisis, the banner of the C.I.O. was kept aloft by the unflinching struggle of the shop stewards and shop committees. Braving the undying wrath of the bosses, this union-conscious body of men patiently held the unions together. Is it a wonder that General Motors, for example, seeks daily to fire shop stewards, and discriminates against union militants? Among these people will come the next progressive group of leaders in the C.I.O. Local C.I.O. and A.F. of L. unions are putting labor unity into effect, despite the opposition from above. Stockton, Calif., workers create a joint A.F. of L., C.I.O. and Railroad Brotherhoods council. Under influence of the overwhelming sentiment of the C.I.O. rank and file, the convention formally accepts labor unity as its goal.

The nature of the deal between John L. Lewis and the Stalinists was brought into the spotlight at the C.I.O. convention. The political interests of the C.I.O. leaders are with President Roosevelt in his campaign for imperialist war to save "American democracy" *i.e.*, Wall Street profit in the world markets. Browder seeks to bind the labor movement to Stalin and the Soviet bureaucracy. Lewis represents Roosevelt. Browder speaks for Stalin. Both are interested today in a huge armaments program and the support of American workers for the coming world war. Yet the rule-or-ruin policy of the Stalinists has ended some of their usefulness to Lewis. He has and will continue to remove a few from key posts. But he can't get rid of them so easily, because their political programs coincide. Lewis rejected every Stalinist-written resolution at the convention only to have his resolutions committee present reports which were Stalinist in ideology.

Again, on the war question, as with all others, the final word rests with the ranks of the American labor movement. Their day in court has yet to come. It depends entirely on the progress and activity of the progressive, militant, advanced and revolutionary workers. Coming events in France are destined to have a world-shaking effect to which the United States in particular will be subject. The future of the American working class will be influenced strongly by the fate of the French workers. By aiding the French workers today, the C.I.O. will be helping itself tomorrow.

B. J. WIDICK

A Note to Our Readers

WE OWE an explanation to our readers for at least two things, and we hope that we will be forgiven. In the first place, as many will have noticed, this issue of the magazine appears somewhat later than the scheduled date. Our tardiness is due to the fact that we have changed from the printing shop where the magazine used to be printed, and in the course of transferring to the new shop a measure of disorganization, purely temporary, was introduced into the work. The new typographical dress, however, will, we feel, compensate at least in part for the delay, for the type face we now use is somewhat more easy on the eye than before.

In addition, we must apologize for our failure to print in this issue a number of articles which were announced for publication, and others besides, which we found ourselves compelled to hold over to the February issue. Here too, we feel, there is some compensation in the fact that the lengthy article by Burnham and Shachtman which takes up so much of this issue, treats of matters of the greatest topical interest and importance. In the next issue we will publish an article on Austria by Charles Crompton, an article on the situation in Australia by Stan. Bollard, an examination of the reasons behind the farmers' vote in the last election by David Cowles, a commemoration article on the recently deceased Karl Kautsky by Max Shachtman, and numerous other features. Meanwhile, we ask again for the readers' indulgence.

READING FROM THE LEFT TO RIGHT

By Dwight Macdonald

"THE EMPLOYMENT given by armament programs is false employment. It builds no permanent structure and creates no consumers' goods for the maintenance of a lasting prosperity. We know that nations guilty of these follies inevitably face the day either when their weapons of destruction must be used against their neighbors or when an unsound economy, like a house of cards, will fall apart." From a speech delivered by Franklin D. Roosevelt in Buenos Ayres. Date: 1936.

The Strange Case of Dr. Coster, or the Mystery of the e Drug Department, has now been presented in rich detail—h it certainly deserves—in the press. The story of how a convicted swindler and stool pigeon changed his name and became one of the big men of Wall Street, president of the respectable old \$80,000,000 McKesson & Robbins drug house—this could hardly be improved on outside a novel. Indeed, it suggests, in its wild mixture of larceny, big business, and bourgeois respectability Bert Brecht's satirical novel, *A Penny for the Poor*, which has just been published in this country. The press, of course, pretended that the Coster was something almost without precedent: the *N. Y. Times* struck just the right note in its editorial attributing actual "genius" to Coster and implying that only such a superman could have gotten away with it on such a scale. But the Coster case was remarkable only in its details; capitalism, especially in its decline, breeds grand larcenies like maggots. Coster was smeared over the front page, but any one who had taken the trouble to follow last month's financial pages—where the Coster affair, too, made its first modest appearances—could have compiled a dossier of business corruption:

Item: The S. E. C. took action against Transamerica Corp., key holding company of the huge Bank of America system in California. The charges ranged from "creation of fictitious reserves" to a claim that the salary of President A. P. Giannini is not \$1, as stated by the company, but \$7,000,000 a year. The seriousness of this action is increased by the fact that Giannini is the only big banker who has been friendly to the New Deal from the first.

Item: A rising young investment banker named Wallace Groves was indicted for mail fraud. Mr. Groves had put together half a dozen investment trusts, bought control of United Cigar Stores and Celotex Corp., and acquired a yacht, an island in the Bahamas, and a movie actress for wife. Mr. Groves and his associates face possible prison terms of 72 years apiece.

Item: The S. E. C. sought a Federal injunction against the Fidelity Investment Company, charging its officers were scheming to defraud 60,000 investors who hold \$276,200,000 of its certificates. The Association's president is a former Treasurer of the U. S., its chairman a former assistant attorney general of the U. S., and its directors include ex-Senators, ex-Governors, and directors of well-known corporations.

Item: The \$1,000,000,000 Associated Gas & Electric Co., whose financial structure, for good reasons, is so complex that it is said only one man, the devious H. C. Hopson, can understand it, was up in two courts at the same time. In one of these, the bar of justice was presided over by Justice Edgar J. Lauer of the N. Y. State Supreme Court, whose wife was at the time under indictment in still another court as a member of a smuggling ring.

Item: The well-known investment house of G. L. Ohrstrom & Co., of New York and Chicago, was charged with fraud and market manipulations by the S. E. C.

Item: The Whitney case bobbed up again to plague the N. Y. Stock Exchange. President Hutchins of the University of

Chicago, recently elected amid great fanfare as a "public representative" to sit on the board of the "reformed" Exchange, suggested that some action be taken about certain Exchange members who had known of Whitney's thefts but had failed to notify the authorities. Knowing quite well that these accessories-after-the-fact included several Morgan partners, the Exchange board voted, 27 to 1, that the Whitney case was closed. President Hutchins thereupon resigned.

"Publication of this book was purposely withheld during the September international crisis although Mr. Briffault had been working on it for two years and it had reached the publishers in August. Reason: it did not seem wise to weaken, however slightly, a democratic country's already critical position." (From an advertisement for Briffault's *The Decline & Fall of the British Empire*.)

That's awfully decent of you chaps, really.

Football is the opium of the bourgeoisie: "Analyzing the pages and departments of a newspaper, Dr. Phelps found on page 1 a record of the world's failures. 'Since August 1, especially, the front page has been devoted almost exclusively to failure and disaster,' he said . . . For a sense of victory instead of failure and defeat, readers might turn to the sports pages, he suggested." (*N. Y. Times*, Nov. 20.)

"BUSINESS GROWTH OF NATION IN PAUSE, HENDERSON ASSERTS" (Headline in the *N. Y. Times*.)

In capitalism, as in other organisms, it seems that the approach of old age is indicated by what is delicately termed "a change of life."

Last month I pointed out that any talk of "prosperity" was mere demagoguery so long as new capital investment continued at the low level of the last eight years. Some further evidence now comes to hand as to the current stagnation in the two key sectors: bank loans and new security issues. A few weeks ago, the Federal Reserve System of New York announced the lowest weekly total of commercial loans reported by its members in several years. *Time* recently stated: "for the first time in history, banks are holding more cash than their outstanding loans." And on November 30, the S. E. C. reported on new security issues in October. At first glance, this looked more hopeful: the month's total was \$405,100,000, highest in almost two years, and far above the September total of \$106,800,000. But on closer acquaintance, this total was less impressive. Most of it—68%—represented public utility issues, of which less than 3% was new capital, the remaining 97% being merely the exchange of one bond issue for another. Of the \$130,000,000 in non-utility issues, \$100,000,000 was split 50/50 between General Electric and Firestone Tire & Rubber. G. E.'s issue was "in part" to refund an earlier issue. Firestone planned to use \$33,000,000 to pay off bank loans, \$13,000,000 to retire funded debt, leaving just \$4,000,000 for possible new investment.

As new fields for profitable investment fail to open up, finance capital, the heart of the whole system, must inevitably draw more and more of its lifeblood from the State. A strange thing has happened to American banking under the New Deal: the economic base once supplied by private industry has crumbled and has been largely replaced by new foundations provided by the Federal government. Thus the same Federal report showed that the New York banks that week had \$3,000,000,000 invested in U. S. Government securities as against only \$1,000,000,000 in "other securities." "The few big banks doing well today," *Time* notes, "are those like Chicago's Continental Illinois National and New York's Manufacturers Trust, which have gone whole hog into buying Government bonds." This swing towards the State was symbolized at the recent convention of the American Bankers Association, when the anti-New Deal clique which three

years ago seized control of the A. B. A. was defeated in a bitter fight by a pro-New Deal group. The successful candidate heads a bank which derives more than its capital from the Reconstruction Finance Corporation. It is also interesting that the anti-New Deal group is also anti-big city and anti-branch banking and is led by a pious Mormon banker from Utah. The big city banks are drawing even closer to the New Deal, their chief source of revenue.

A mysterious correspondent who signs himself "Janus," sends in a page of smart remarks. His more outrageous flights—such as his reference to "the dark Broun taste" in the Stalinists' mouths after Munich and his query whether the liberals are scared of being "browderbeaten" by the C. P.—I must categorically refuse to circulate. But I pass along, with thanks, a few of his more reasonable maxims: Earl Browder claims that new members are rushing into his party. Scientific explanation: nature abhors a vacuum. . . . All is not Mike Gold that glitters with generalities. . . . Doubts are said to be assailing the editors of the *Nation* and the *New Republic* as to the Moscow Trials. They are also reported to be suspecting that Sacco and Vanzetti got a raw deal, too. . . . Fascism means war, says the C. P. True enough, but it forgets that the converse is also true: war means fascism. . . . So far the revolution that Simon Gerson was to have fomented in the Manhattan Borough President's office has not materialized. Probably because there was no objective revolutionary situation there. . . . Stalinism is twentieth century vigilantism.

Two ladies of doubtful virtue are quarrelling. "You're a whore!" cries one. "So are you!" retorts the other. This came to mind when I read, in a recent issue of *Workers' Age*, a little editorial headed: "Why Such Hypocrisy?" It seems that Frank N. Trager, writing in the *Socialist Review*, had sharply criticised the Lovestoneites for their opportunistic support of Murphy in the Michigan elections, and had claimed that the Socialists in the U. A. W. had honorably refused such support. The *Age* pointed out that Walter Reuther, the most eminent socialist in the U. A. W., had not only come out for Murphy but also for the entire Democratic slate. "Doesn't the whole thing smack somewhat of hypocrisy and double-dealing?" triumphantly concluded the *Age*. A bit *too* triumphantly, in fact, since obviously if it is scandalous that Reuther supported Murphy, it is also scandalous that Lovestoneites supported Murphy. Some time ago, Euclid pointed out that quantities equal to the same quantity are equal to each other.

Of late there have been indications that the Stalino-liberals are beginning to unhyphenate themselves and revert to their former status of liberals, pure and extremely simple. The moral degeneration of Stalinism, as unmistakably revealed in the Moscow Trials, was not enough to alienate these gentry. Disregarding the stench of mass murder, the *Nation* and the *New Republic* dutifully swallowed the trials. But since the Munich Pact, it has become clear that Stalinism is not only corrupt but also impotent. The mighty Red Army is no longer seriously considered by military experts, Soviet foreign policy has succeeded only in completely isolating the U. S. S. R., the map of Europe is being redrawn without even a formal consultation with the Kremlin. Russia, in short, has sunk to the rank of second-rate power. This is a much more serious matter. The Stalino-liberals are beginning to look around for a safer perch. In his new book, Max Lerner ventures a few cautious, but clearly heterodox, remarks about the dictatorship of the proletariat, 1938 model. (*His* refuge he has long been preparing: the U. S. Supreme Court, whose liberal members he has been assiduously flattering in the *Nation* for years. His new berth—a professorship of constitutional law at Williams College—is much snuggier than 35 East 12 Street, which has become rather drafty of late.) Malcolm Cowley is also said to be

increasingly uneasy about the firmness of the C. P. as a base for a literary man who wants to get ahead. Even John Strachey has been quarrelling in print with the *New Masses*. I can't help remarking on one curious aspect of all this: that the liberals, those specialists in ethics who are constantly protesting against Marxism as "amoral," "unprincipled," and even "cynical," should fail to recognize the *moral* failure of Stalinism until its *material* failure had become patent.

The Walsh-Healey Act provides that all manufacturers holding government contracts must pay minimum wages, to be determined for each industry by a Public Contracts Board. This fall the Board, after lengthy hearings, set minimum rates for the steel industry. On the surface, it looks like a great victory for labor. The Board's 45-cents-an-hour minimum in the South and its 62.5 cents elsewhere are well above the minimum rates now being paid by most steel companies. Some 75,000 steel workers are expected to benefit. Furthermore, as the *C. I. O. News* points out: "Little Steel's basis for anti-union activities—its fear of losing its competitive position—has been cut out from under it." But there is another angle, not mentioned by the *News*: why should the Little Steel workers pay dues to the S. W. O. C. when (1) they get the same wages as S. W. O. C. members anyway, and (2) they owe this not the S. W. O. C. but to the New Deal. Something seems to have been cut out from under the S. W. O. C. as well.

The real victor here is not the S. W. O. C. but the U. S. Steel Corporation, which harvests one more fruit of its shrewd alliance with the S. W. O. C. and the New Deal. The Steel Corporation backed up the S. W. O. C. in the hearings, and the new rates set by the Board are those already paid in the Corporation's plants. Now the Corporation, for a number of reasons, can make steel more cheaply than most of the independents, especially the smaller ones. These companies can compete only by paying lower wages. (Bethlehem, for example, which is drastically affected by the new rates since it does more government work than any other steel company, has been paying from 56.5 to 59 cents an hour minimum, as against the new rate of 62.5 cents.) The small companies have been especially vociferous against the proposed new rates. Presenting a petition for reconsideration, their lawyer said: "Circumstances strongly support the suspicion that political considerations have played a part in the whole matter." He was right. For two years the Steel Corporation, in the face of the indignation of its competitors, has been playing the New Deal's game. This is one aspect of the present "appeasement" policy of the House of Morgan, whose relations with the White House have been ever more friendly. (The *N. Y. Times* of Dec. 3 reports that T. A. S. S. the Soviet news agency, has uncovered a "Fascist clique" in this country which is "preparing an offensive against the progressive measures of President Roosevelt." T. A. S. S. gave first place in this clique to "Financial King Morgan." This is not the first time the Kremlin has been two years behind the march of history.)

The whole episode is a dramatic example of the illusory nature of working-class gains when they are won not by action of the workers themselves but by a three-cornered deal between labor bureaucrats, reformist politicians, and business men. The wage increases tie the workers more closely not to their own organizations but to the New Deal. And the Steel Corporation walks off with the main prize. Of all the big C. I. O. unions, the S. W. O. C. is much the most rigidly bureaucratic, the least open to democratic rank-and-file influence. So long as this is the case, further "victories" of the S. W. O. C., like this one, will simply mean that one group of capitalists has successfully used the S. W. O. C. against its competitors. And even if Little Steel signs up with the S. W. O. C., it will mean only that its workers will be organized under one capitalist flag rather than another. For this the bloody and tragic 1937 strike was fought!

A New Marxist Review in Mexico

THE FIRST two issues of *Clave** signal the rebirth of the Marxist movement in Mexico, so badly scattered and disorganized during the last 15 years of Stalinist decay. With an improved format in its second number, the magazine has won praise from the intellectuals and workers of the revolutionary left.

Its first issue contains two articles by Leon Trotsky, one a short piece on the Czech crisis, and the other a long analysis of the Spanish civil war in which is set out the powerful "Twelve Conditions for Victory." The editors—Adolfo Zamora, Jose Ferrel, and Diego Rivera—in their editorial statement repudiate Mexican participation in the coming imperialist war and call for a struggle to the death against imperialism, both "fascist" and "democratic." Zamora contributes a piece on the "Prostitution of the Dialectic"; Rivera and André Breton publish for the first time their "Manifesto for an Independent Revolutionary Art"; and the Congress Against War and Fascism held under the auspices of Lombardo Toledano and the Stalinists is submitted to critical analysis.

It was at this congress, it will be remembered, that the Spanish Stalinist, Margarita Nelken, acting as chairman, and her clique, howled down the Porto Rican delegate's attempt to discuss the tyranny of the United States over his people. General disgust with communist party politics, as shown up at this Congress, helped to prepare among the intellectuals and artists a favorable reception for the Rivera-Breton Manifesto—calling for a sharp break with Stalinism and "an anarchist régime of individual liberty" for artists and intellectuals.

Of especial interest, is the Rivera article, "The Development of Latin America", one of two theses presented by him to the Pre-Conference of the Pacific-Latin-American Bureau of the Fourth International.

In the first Rivera traces briefly Latin-American history, emphasizing the contrast between the emigrants to the United States—artisans, independent farmers, tradesmen, representatives of those classes which in Europe were in revolt against the bonds of feudalism and planning to build their own society in the New World on a bourgeois economy—and the Spanish *Conquistadores*, agents of Old World feudalism whose aim was not to settle, but to enslave and exploit. In the former colonies the native tribes were driven inland or exterminated; in the latter the exploitation of the labor of the newly-conquered serfs was a main source of revenue.

The colonial revolts inspired by the American and French revolutions were mostly defeated. The "independence" of the colonies was thereupon accomplished by the colonial feudalists, forced to this step by the approaching triumph of the Reform movement in Spain itself. In this fashion the feudal set-up survived and has been a determining factor in the retarded develop-

ment of Latin America ever since.

The local governments continue today as in the past to teeter in unsteady equilibrium between the demands of their exploited peoples and the pressure of foreign imperialism. Because of the subordinate character of the class development of the former Spanish and Portuguese colonies, Rivera denies them the dignity of independent labels and describes them throughout as "sub-feudal", and "sub-bourgeoisie", and so on.

Today foreign capital, seeking raw materials, fields for investment, and ever larger markets for its goods has brought industrial development to Latin America and with it the existence of a rebellious, class-conscious working class. Today these men and women, more unified and politically more advanced than their fellows of the fields, mountains, and forests begin to struggle to their feet—to demand an accounting with all exploiters, native or foreign, "democratic" or not.

When the national bourgeoisie, deformed and stunted from birth, in reprisal attempts fascism, it is unable to evolve its own, but as "sub-fascism" is driven to shelter itself under the tutelage of Nazi or Italian imperialism. In the same manner, the remaining "democratic" governments, never more than "sub-democracies", are but the "means of penetration" of their countries used by the finance capital of the United States and Great Britain.

It would be naive, of course, to believe that there is any fixed principle at work in these arrangements—imperialism, "fascist" or "democratic", is perfectly willing to enter into relationship with any form of government amenable to its demands. The establishment of the bloody Vargas tyranny in Brazil has only made more efficient the sympathetic understanding between Rio de Janeiro and the White House; Dictator Vargas entertains "democrat" Roosevelt and severs relations with Dictator Hitler. In the final analysis, economics talks louder than ideology.

The gradual degeneration of the Comintern has left the leadership of these revolutions to the Fourth International. The First International did not live long enough to penetrate into these 20 countries; the Second is notorious for smug indifference to colonial problems; the Third, after 15 years of violent shifts and turns, alternating vituperation of liberal and progressive elements with pacts and combines with the military and clergy, now presents its hapless members with an order to herd the South American workers and peasants into alliance in war with their longest and most hated exploiters, the "democratic" imperialisms of England and the United States.

Rivera sees no necessity for the Latin-American proletariat to wait for the leadership of the working class of the United States; indeed, he advances the possibility of Socialist United States below the Rio Grande before their appearance above.

The November issue has Trotsky's "A

Most Recent Lesson"—a long article analyzing the consequences of the Munich capitulation and the prospects of the coming war. Also it contains the interview between Trotsky and Fossa, militant Argentine trade unionist, who announces his entry into the ranks of the Fourth International. The editors call for the forming of Workers' Defense Guards—an answer to Stalinist thugs in the Teachers' Union. Other material is the Manifesto of the Founding Congress of the Fourth International, Rivera's second thesis, and short articles of topical interest.

In the second Rivera thesis, "The Class Struggle and the Indian Problem", he attacks the demagogic attempts to avoid the class character of the problem by shallow appeals to the Indian's racial prejudices. Demonstrating that the correct answer is to be found in the Indian's economic status, he sketches the four centuries of exploitation of the peasantry, trapped under feudal conditions of land tenure.

Beginning in 1911 the Mexican Revolution lasted for a decade of bloody struggle, carried by the peasant armies to success by 1920, in spite of the treachery of leaders and intervention by the United States. Nevertheless, the peasants were unable to organize their victory. By 1934, of 14,000,000 hectares of cultivable land in Mexico, only 2,000,000 had been redistributed.

Today the farmers have been replaced in revolutionary importance by a new power. Between 1929 and 1937, 4,000 new factories were built in Mexico. The industrial proletariat appeared, completely changing the political scene, and taking upon its shoulders the tasks of the revolution the peasantry could not lead to conclusion.

Under pressure from the masses, the Cárdenas government has redistributed in its first 2½ years as many hectares as all its predecessors. But it lacks the financial resources to supply the communal villages with the machinery and electrical power required for a socialist level of production, and the *ejiditarios* remain in debt to the government banks, forced to eke out supplementary incomes by outside labor.

Rivera associates the increase in land distribution to the increase of labor militancy, showing that such grants occur in those regions where a large class-conscious proletariat exists—the conditions of the peasantry being at their worst where such labor strength does not appear.

Large grants of the best land were appropriated by "generals" and politicians during the revolution. This group now allies itself with native capitalism and foreign imperialism, savagely resisting the peasant demands. Rivera calls for unceasing pressure by the workers to continue the expropriations. Thus they will prove their right to leadership and win the alliance of the peasants in the struggle for the socialist revolution.

The problem of the Mexican peasant supplies the picture of the whole Latin-American land problem. All other countries lag behind. Rivera cites appalling figures to

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show the misery and poverty of the indigenous peoples, their low level of culture and existence.

The terrible class exploitation in these countries where bourgeois capitalism has never established—as in the United States and Great Britain—a “historical” and “democratic” camouflage of classless, common interest, keeps revolution on the order of the day. How the Latin-American workers and peasants will react to the coming clash between their various imperialist exploiters in the Second World War—in which their continent, their livelihood, and their liberty will be part of the booty at stake—whether they will cast off the stupid and treacherous policies of Stalinism—all this remains to be seen. It will be the job of that Marxist leadership now awakening here to move these masses to a sweeping revolt. Upon the basis of its first two issues, *Clave* deserves a large public, not only in Mexico and Latin America, but also among the Spanish speaking population of the United States.

Chris ANDREWS

MEXICO CITY, December 7, 1938

CORRESPONDENCE

Socialized Medicine

I WOULD like to call your attention that the article “What is Socialized Medicine?” by Dr. William Harvey is not good enough for your excellent magazine. Marxism, translated in my professional language, is applied science.

The propagandistic motive of the article is too conspicuous, the facts are not quite accurate and sometimes inaccurately interpreted. (a) The danger of medical care under the control of governmental agencies is exaggerated; however, nobody would like to miss constructive criticism of social legislation in the field of medical care by a forceful democratically-controlled organization of medical and allied workers. The same language of danger is used by the Bourbons of the profession, using only different terms to prevent progress in social legislation and health. (See *N. Y. Times*, Dec. 14, under “Physicians Oppose Compulsory Aid”.) (b) Group medicine is not the only feature of modern medicine. Putting special stress upon group medicine and making a fetish out of it means to help the increasingly degenerative influence of capitalism on medicine, it means to reduce the surgeon with his thorough knowledge in surgical pathology and with his good surgical judgment into a surgical technician—to divide the fine diagnostician of general internal medicine into an X-ray photographer of the lungs, a photographer of the heart (electrocardiographer), a photographer of the upper parts of the intestinal tracts or the lower part of the intestinal tract, etc. Over-specialization and half specialization, products of decay, are as much wasteful as an expensive medical outfit of the individualistic physician. Who would like to miss the Gellespies in the practise of medicine? (Dr. Kildare.)

(c) In general the rank and file of the medical profession is socio-politically today still immature, not even approaching puberty of political consciousness. The League of Socialized Medicine came to life in time of the depression when the physician became panicky on account of losses in Wall St. and decrease of practise in his office. The moment the depression became stabilized the membership of the League dispersed and the League exists today as an organization on paper. In spite of the good program of the League, the leadership with few exceptions, was interested only in playing county politics.

The revolt of the famous “Committee of 430” can be reduced to the interests of some gentlemen to exchange the financial insecurity of their hospitals—kept up by insecure voluntary donations of individual capitalists—with the solid financial support by the government whereby they wouldn't mind fulfilling certain limited social obligations if the government should demand them.

NEW YORK

MIA.

WILLIAM HARVEY'S article “What is Socialized Medicine?” in the December issue seems to me on the whole to be the most intelligent handling of the subject, from the labor point of view, that I've seen. The following paragraphs are designed to supplement and interpret Mr. Harvey's necessarily compressed treatment.

1) Such socialization of medicine as we have had thus far has been along the line of “socializing losses.” Medical schools and hospital became unprofitable, so they were subsidized, first by philanthropy, and then when philanthropy faded, by government. Present government support is quite inadequate. Both group hospitalization and the wider plan soon to be announced which combines ward service and medical care while in the hospital, and is designed to tap the next-lower stratum of workers, represent an application of the insurance principle to the payment of costs. But the object is to throw the financial load back on the lower middle class and white-collar workers. These developments do, however, represent an administrative advance and give workers somewhat more for their money. It is, of course, of the greatest importance, that workers be educated to demand appropriate representation on the control boards of all such voluntary developments.

2) Since the national health conference, medical societies all over the country are trying to anticipate and abort any real program of compulsory health insurance and/or state medicine by offering something “just as good.” Workers should clearly understand the motivation and purpose of these medical society schemes. The medical hierarchy is determined first to segregate the sector of paying fee-for-service practice and keep control of it for themselves. Worse than anything else they fear the type of group practise, group pre-payment, medical cooperative of which the Group Health Association of Washington, D. C. is the most publicized example. They fear this

development first because it represents an equitable and necessary control by the patients of the medical service which they receive; second, because the numerous economies of group practice including the elimination of the vicious system of fee-splitting, now so prevalent, enable the well-managed medical cooperative to compete the average fee-for-service rugged individual practitioner out of business.

Instead of these technically and socially advanced forms of medical service, the medical societies are now shouting for medical indemnity insurance which is neither new nor in the least useful; also for vastly voluntary pre-payment schemes, wholly controlled by organized medicine, such as that recently projected in California. In general workers will be well advised if they carefully avoid anything that organized medicine is for.

3) The dark horse of this whole controversy is, of course, the drug interests. Only a little more than a year ago the president of a prominent manufacturer of “ethical proprietaries” circularized the medical profession with a proposal to raise \$400,000 a year from his group with which to help organized medicine fight health insurance. Recently Dr. Fishbein addressed the Drug and Chemical section of the N. Y. Board of Trade. Because of the huge advertising income of the *Journal, A. M. A.* (nearly a million dollars) the community of interest between the “medicine men” and organized medicine is well established. Health insurance, both voluntary and compulsory, would tend to deflate both of them. Any genuine social advance on the health sector will have to fight the same lobby that defeated the Tugwell bill.

James RORTY

I AM GRATEFUL to Mr. Rorty both for his kind remarks and for his helpful supplementary information. (a) The significance of “socializing losses” is highly important. The lack of adequate workers' (or other consumers') representation on control boards is one of the most conspicuous shortcomings of nearly all the hospitalization schemes now in operation in this country. (b) Since my article was written, several State and County medical societies have proposed “insurance plans” of their own in an attempt to forestall truly cooperative medical care plans. These are, as Mr. Rorty points out, without exception entirely devoid of any real benefit to the subscribers. In general, “cash indemnity” plans are wasteful and serve only as smoke-screens to hide their bad features. Similar plans are about to be proposed in New York, West Virginia, and Ohio, among other places. They all have high initial payments, marked restrictions on service, and numerous exceptions which make them prohibitively expensive and virtually useless. We should make every effort to educate workers to avoid participation in any such plans. (c) I am particularly glad that the position of the drug houses was mentioned. It should be clearly understood that these companies are working hand in glove with the hierarchy of the A.M.A. to prevent any real

progress in reducing the swollen profits that the organized medical profession has been making at the expense of the workers.

In reply to Dr. Mia, I should like to point out at once that although he speaks of the facts as "not quite accurate" he does not mention a single specific example of inaccuracy. (a) It is quite true that the medical "Bourbons" fear government control. Their fear of it, however, is that it would tend to reduce their opportunities to charge large fees with no supervision. This is of course a reactionary opposition. My position with regard to government control, on the other hand, is based on the Marxian analysis of the class nature of the State. There are two closely allied reasons why working-class leaders should oppose government control of medical care: in the first place, it would mean that the owning class through their State would be directing the medical services for which, in the final analysis, the workers are themselves paying. No real advance for the workers in standards of care or in wider distribution of benefits can be effected under such auspices. Furthermore, in any clash between the working class and the bourgeoisie, the State-controlled medical services would without question take sides against the workers. This has been illustrated again and again both in Europe and this country.

In the second place, as I pointed out in my article, government control will serve to increase the workers' dependence upon bourgeois State paternalism. Leaders who wish to aid in the development of true class-consciousness among workers will therefore do better to stimulate independent working class health organizations as one means of promoting class-consciousness. Such organizations should, of course, as I originally pointed out, obtain all possible funds from governmental sources, but at the same time retain essential control for themselves. This attitude constitutes a progressive opposition to government control. (b) Dr. Mia has mistaken the purpose of my emphasis on group medicine. I have no more desire than he to see over-specialization in medical work. A certain degree of specialization is necessary in modern medicine, however, and the object of group medical practice is to make intelligent, integrated, economically sensible use of the various specialties without losing sight of the importance of general knowledge. I would even go so far as to suggest that ideally every specialist in a group clinic would spend a certain proportion of his time working as a general diagnostician. (c) I am glad that Dr Mia also emphasizes the significance of "socializing losses"—a point mentioned in my article but not fully developed there, as both he and Mr. Rorty have kindly pointed out.

NEW YORK William HARVEY

The Palestine Question

THERE is a matter I want to write to you about, the article on Palestine by L. Rock in the October N.I. I see that further articles from Rock are to be printed. I hope that they are much better than this one because

that was a *very bad article*. To talk of "Arab chauvinism" and not of Jewish Zionist Chauvinism is *very bad*. The Jews are playing a dirty part in Palestine. It is not the time to speak of British Imperialism but of those who are the agents of British Imperialism, and in this case it is the Jews in Palestine and particularly the leadership of the Jewish workers, the various Zionist "socialists" of all kinds. The analogy between Palestine and Ireland is almost perfect. In Ireland the garrison for Britain is a Protestant minority: in Palestine a Jewish minority. In both cases the bulk of the population is putting up a national struggle (which was betrayed by the bourgeois nationalists in Ireland and will be betrayed by the Arab nationalists in Palestine) which is fought by the garrison. We have every right to expect that the leaders of the Jewish workers, leaders with a wide background, knowledge, experience, etc., should work for the union of the workers and peasants and not hang on to the Jewish capitalists who work for Britain. If it comes to a question of who is a "chauvinist" then the Arab peasant can be forgiven a hell of a lot more chauvinism than the Jewish worker. Why not? Whose country is it? The Jewish workers must prove themselves in the eyes of the Arab masses, not *vice versa*.

Paul KOSTON

CAPE TOWN, SOUTH AFRICA, Nov. 10, 1938

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Corner, 13th and Market Sts., N. W., Detroit, Mich.

Labor Book Shop, 919 Marquette Ave., Minneapolis, Minn.

S.W.P., 147 West 5th St., St. Paul, Minn.
Shinder's, Sixth and Hennepin, Minneapolis, Minn.

Kroman's, Fourth and Nicollet, Minneapolis, Minn.
Foster Book Co., 410 Washington Blvd., St. Louis, Mo.

The Book Nook, 24A Meremac, Clayton, Mo.
A. Guabello's Stationery Store, Paterson, N. J.

Reitman's, cor. Broad and William St., Newark, N. J.
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Littman's, Newark, N. J.
317 Straight St., Newark, N. J.

433 No. Clinton St., Rochester, N. Y.
257 No. Clinton St., Rochester, N. Y.

Cor. Cumberland and Clinton Sts., Rochester, N. Y.
Cor. East Ave. and Chestnut St., Rochester, N. Y.

S.E. cor. Main and Clinton Sts., Rochester, N. Y.
S.W. cor. Main and South Ave., Rochester, N. Y.

R. Zettlemeier, 637 Hamilton St., Allentown, Pa.
S.W.P., 1806 No. Franklin St., Philadelphia, Pa.

Cor. 13th and Market Sts. (N.W.), Philadelphia, Pa.
Cor. 11th and Market Sts. (N.W.), Philadelphia, Pa.

40th St. and Girard Ave., Philadelphia, Pa.
8th St. and Arch Ave., Philadelphia, Pa.

Esser's Newsstand, Front and West Broad Sts., Quakertown, Pa.

Nick's, Wick St. and Commerce, Youngstown, Ohio.
News Exchange, 51 So. Main St., Akron, Ohio.

Cigar Store, next corner Barges and So. Main St., Akron, Ohio.

Schroeder's Book Shop, Public Square, Cleveland, Ohio
Rubin's Drug Store, 1072 E. 105th St., Cleveland, Ohio.

S.W.P., Rm. 214, Meriam Bldg., 5716 Euclid Ave., Cleveland, Ohio.

Eckhart News Agency, 102 Wash'ton St., Seattle, Wash.
Roth Cigar Store, 1407—1st Ave., Seattle, Wash.

Raymer's Old Book Store, 905—3rd Ave., Seattle, Wash.
Sunday Forum Newsstand, In'dence Hall, Seattle, Wash.

ABROAD

Modern Books, 12 Church St., Cape Town, So. Africa.
Advance Book Shop, 10 Campbell St., Sydney, N.S.W., Australia.

Mrs. M. Brodney, Bookstall, Trades Hall, Melbourne, Australia.

Com. League of Australia, 108 William St., 1st Fl., Sydney, Australia.

Clapham Soc. Book, 79 Bedford, S.W. 4, London, Eng.
W.I.N., 14A Chichester Rd., Paddington, W. 2, London, England.

M. Johns, 7 Southwark St., London, S.E. 1, England.
E. Fitzroy, 45 Afghan Rd., Battersea, S.W. 11, London, England.

H. Cund, Book Shop, 1, St. Hilda St., Liverpool, Eng.
T. Mercer, Book Shop, 52 Auldhouse Rd., Glasgow, C. 3 Scotland.

P.O. Box 2639, Johannesburg, South Africa.
A. Sinclair, P.O. Box 38, So. Brisbane, Australia.

N. Gibson, 286 Drummond St., Carlton, Melbourne, Australia.

Pales, Press Co., 119 Allenby St., Tel-Aviv, Palestine.
Pales, P.O. Box 476, Haifa, Palestine.

Pales, P.O. Box 619, Jerusalem, Palestine.
R.S.L., 18 Thistle St., Edinburgh, 2, Scotland.

Leon Sapire, 33 Strathearn Mansions, Cr. Bree and L. Sapire, Box 7428, Johannesburg, South Africa.

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