

# **THE NEW INTERNATIONAL**

**A MONTHLY ORGAN OF REVOLUTIONARY MARXISM**

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## **The Second World War**

**What Is It About?**

**Who Is Responsible For It?**

**Why MUST the United States Enter the Conflict?**

**Is This A War For Democracy?**

**How Will the War End?**

*By the Editors*

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*An Answer to Marceau Pivert*

**"Trotskyism" and the P. S. O. P.**

*By Leon Trotsky*

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Articles on the War Referendum, Negro Slavery, Palestine, Bolivia, India, Etc.

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**Twenty Cents**

**October 1939**

## At Home

SINCE our last issue came THE WAR. What the outbreak of the European war means to the toiling peoples of the world is indicated in our press.

Specifically, too, we have made clear what the war means to our magazine, THE NEW INTERNATIONAL. Through a circular to all units of the Socialist Workers Party and the YPSL (Fourth Internationalists) and a statement in the *Socialist Appeal* we have indicated that the existence of THE NEW INTERNATIONAL is now immediately involved.

Briefly one-third of the magazine's circulation and income, derived from Fourth Internationalist organizations and agents circulating and selling the magazine in England, Scotland, Ireland, Canada, Australia, South Africa, New Zealand, France, Belgium and other countries, has been cut off. Censorship has been clamped down on virtually every one of the above-mentioned countries and is spreading and being intensified. Mails are being stopped, letters and packages opened, etc. Despite all this THE NEW INTERNATIONAL will get through somehow to all these countries; but obviously not the bulk of our one thousand circulation abroad for the duration of the war.

It is now up to the American Party and Youth comrades to make up the difference in circulation and income in order to maintain THE NEW INTERNATIONAL. These problems are dealt with in the Editorial columns this time, and therefore we leave the matter in the hands of our agents and readers.

We have confidence that our movement will rally to the support of the magazine and therefore the remainder of our column proceeds upon the slogan, "Business as usual."

The September number of THE NEW INTERNATIONAL, issued before the outbreak of war in Europe and just at the moment of the signing of the Stalin-Hitler Pact, featured the story of the WPA. This article aroused considerable interest among WPA and unemployed workers. Comments from two agents indicate to what extent:

The Akron agent, Comrade Martell, writes: "The N. I. bundle came in last night. . . . This morning I took six for the newsstand and brought them down to the WPA project where I work. Suddenly I realized how well Macdonald's article ought to go with my fellow WPA workers. I got up, walked around, talked to a few of the boys and in a few minutes had sold all six. I intend to mobilize a few of the comrades to stand outside the projects and sell the magazine at

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quitting time. Don't be surprised if Akron sends in for more N.I.'s. This article gives us an opportunity to penetrate the mass with our theoretical organ." Akron incidentally disposes of 50 copies.

Our agent, P. T., in Worcester writes, "September NEW INTERNATIONAL excellent, especially editorial and WPA." She ordered extra copies.

Another important increase came from a very lively group of YPSL comrades in Berkeley, California. First Sara Turner increased the order from 30 to 40 and two weeks later the agent, V. Johnson, increased this order once again to 50 copies. Comrade Turner writes, "The fact is that THE NEW INTERNATIONAL sells itself."

That is true, if only the comrades everywhere will at least make it known that THE NEW INTERNATIONAL is purchasable. We have in mind particularly the New York Party and YPSL organization and membership. Indeed, New York is the key to the immediate maintenance and future of THE NEW INTERNATIONAL.

On New York newsstands, the sales rose sharply. Quite probably at least 100 additional copies have been sold. By and large

nearly all the Party units in the United States are disposing of an adequate quantity of the magazine, but the New York weaknesses continue. Primarily there is one important reason for this situation in New York. The Party membership, and also its City and Branch committees, take the press too much for granted and do not undertake systematic and regular efforts to circulate and sell the magazine. Especially is this true in the matter of subscriptions. These matters have been taken up directly with the City Committee, as well as with the branch committees, and plans have been laid for improvement. We state simply; *New York is the key to the maintenance and future of THE NEW INTERNATIONAL.* New York comrades, what will be your answer?

The same problem applies to the New York YPSL and here the matter is one of also utilizing THE NEW INTERNATIONAL for the theoretical development of the Youth. The new YPSL agent, Comrade Miller, a real live-wire, is confident that the New York YPSL will respond with sharp increases.

New bundle orders came in from John Patrick, San Pedro, California, 10 copies; Fitchburg, Massachusetts, 8 copies.

There are several new agents in charge of THE NEW INTERNATIONAL. Among them is Harry Baker of Los Angeles, who has already shown in the brief weeks he has been in charge that he is the best Los Angeles has had, and we are certain that Los Angeles will now move forward in increasing THE NEW INTERNATIONAL circulation. Already Comrade Baker has sent in a dozen subscriptions.

Another new agent is Henry Thurman of Cleveland, who has proceeded to systematize the press circulation there; O. Kiefer, Columbus; E.M., Oakland; Ed Davis, Toledo; E. Henry, Detroit; J. D., Houston, Texas.

In the subscription field Chester Johnson of Minneapolis writes that they are taking steps to increase the newsstand circulation of THE NEW INTERNATIONAL and sends in the names of several stands, as well as several subscriptions.

San Francisco, under the direction of Eloise B., is making big efforts to develop general circulation and subscriptions and already has met with some success.

Local Boston continues woefully weak in the subscription field, and the bundle still remains too low, but the District Literature Agent, John Taber, does the job of a half dozen men himself in promoting the circulation of THE NEW INTERNATIONAL and the *Socialist Appeal* in Boston and the Massachusetts territory generally.

We had not heard from Chicago for a little while, and we were surprised, since Chicago has been good. We just learned that that ace Literature Agent, Sam Richter, has been ill. We hope that by now Sam is thoroughly recovered.

Special mention must be made for recent work with THE NEW INTERNATIONAL by local St. Paul, G. G. V., Agent; Buffalo, New York, Jimmie Brown, Agent; Evansville, Indiana, Henry Schnautz (who certainly does grand work both with THE NEW INTERNATIONAL and the *Socialist Appeal*); E. Washburn, St. Louis; Sol Thomas and S. Margolis in Philadelphia; J. B. in Baltimore; O. M. in New Castle, who has performed a lone job but whose efforts are now being reinforced by others in our ranks; J. T. M., Denver; Harvey D a w e s, Youngstown; George Whiteside in Kansas, despite certain extreme difficulties; Johnny Boulds in Plentywood, carrying on among the farmers; and Morris G. and Al H. in New Haven.

Will THE NEW INTERNATIONAL continue? *We think it can and must. The answer is up to you!*

THE MANAGER

# THE NEW INTERNATIONAL

A MONTHLY ORGAN OF REVOLUTIONARY MARXISM

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## Let the Readers Decide

*An Appeal by the Editors and Manager of the New International*

**W**E CANNOT AND WE DO NOT WISH to conceal from the readers of THE NEW INTERNATIONAL the extreme danger which faces its continued existence.

The Second World War has struck us a terrific blow, far grave than most readers realize. Our review has from the beginning been an international review in every sense of the word. In these times when the poisonous fumes of nationalism are corroding the very vitals of society, we have sought to do all in our power to keep alive and alert the spirit of internationalism. We have never hesitated to devote our pages to the best Marxist talents of other countries who dealt with the political problems of countries other than the United States, even if at times this was done at the cost of analyzing problems and events in this country. We have always been proud of the large and loyal circle of readers which formed around the review in every important country of the world, especially in the English-reading lands.

The advancing wave of totalitarianism washed away part of that circle in some countries in recent times. Now, with the outbreak of the World War which involves directly all the English-reading countries outside the United States, the possibility of distributing the magazine abroad has been drastically limited at a single blow.

We need not enter into too great detail on this score, especially for those readers who have followed the reports on the state of our circulation which appear every month in the manager's department. It is enough to say that with the rigorous press censorship and control over all radical and advanced elements which have already been enforced in the countries of the British Empire, our circulation has been virtually wiped out abroad. The few copies that now get through Britain's police lines simply do not compare, numerically, with the former distribution of the paper.

England, Scotland, Ireland, Canada, Palestine, Australia, South Africa—these countries not only had a flattering circulation of THE NEW INTERNATIONAL but were a sure source of important revenues for the magazine. We always reflected with mingled joy and regret that our friends in these Empire countries were a greater financial mainstay of our review, proportionate to their position, than many of our friends right here in the United States. Now, in view of the situation that has developed, it is impossible any longer to count upon a single penny from these countries in drawing up our budget — and we say this even

though we are aware that our friends abroad retain the warmest feelings toward THE NEW INTERNATIONAL.

So serious is the blow dealt us by this change in the situation that unless we are compensated for the loss by assistance, speedy and generous, in the United States, our review will certainly be suspended. Not *may* be suspended, but *will* be suspended.

We say this with the utmost restraint and objectiveness. Our readers know that we have rarely made appeals for special financial aid to the review. We have not been alarmist in the past and we are not now. In fact, we have tended more often than not to lean too far backward in this respect.

That alone is why the greatest importance should be attached to our assertion now that unless financial aid is given immediately, THE NEW INTERNATIONAL will go out of existence before the next issue can be published.

Yet, our requirements and our appeal are comparatively modest. We are not in business; we seek no profit; we never expect to lay up a huge reserve of funds. Thorough discussion and a carefully estimated budget drawn up to meet the new situation, indicate that in order to continue the review must have from its readers the sum of \$200 right away, before the next issue can go to press. And every month thereafter, at least until the situation is altered for the better, we must have \$100 every month over and above the regular income from subscriptions to and sales of the magazine.

Modest needs—but quintessential for continued life! We have no advertizers to subsidize us; we have no wealthy financial agents. We can depend only on the rank and file of our readers.

This urgent appeal is addressed to them. We are confident that they will answer in such a way as to guarantee THE NEW INTERNATIONAL'S existence. Speed is now of the essence of the matter. Anything from one dollar to ten dollars—and more if you can afford it!—should be rushed to our office the minute you read this appeal.

We are counting on every reader to come through!

Martin ABERN

James BURNHAM

Max SHACHTMAN

# The Second World War

**T**HE SECOND WORLD WAR began on September 1st, twenty-five years and one month after the start of the first world war.

## What the War is About

Capitalist economy produces goods for a market the limits of which are determined not by men's biological, psychological and cultural needs, but by the ability to realize a profit, and to re-convert the profit realized into further production. It is impossible for the economy of any national capitalist state to be self-contained. In the first place, because of the uneven distribution of natural resources in the world, no nation contains all of the raw materials which it requires. Secondly, the effective consumer market in all advanced capitalist nations is never sufficient to absorb the total output of the economy, and markets must be sought outside the national boundaries. Thirdly, because of the limitations of the domestic market and the disproportions generated within every advanced capitalist economy, there is never a sufficient outlet for capital investments internally, and such outlets must also be sought elsewhere.

These difficulties, which appeared early in capitalist history, are greatly magnified in the imperialist stage of capitalist development. Colossal debt burdens, both public and private, weigh like millstones on the neck of production. Huge concentrations of capital in plant, machinery and equipment reduce the flexibility of the system in adapting itself to cyclical and technological changes. Debts and the concentration of capital tend to lower the rate of profit; and the devices of monopoly, tariffs and speeded exploitation employed to counteract this tendency only aggravate the difficulties.

All advanced capitalist nations face these same troubles. Even the most stringent internal measures cannot meet them. All the powers are compelled to try to alleviate them by external means: by cheapening the cost of raw materials through gaining or holding control over the sources of these materials; by extending the range of the available commodity market; by getting new outlets for capital investment and by the super-exploitation of backward peoples in less developed parts of the world.

These three aims control the foreign policies of all the imperialist governments. In peace-time they are served by all the machinery of commercial and cultural penetration, tariffs, loans, expeditionary forces, bribery, exchange manipulation, intrigue and corruption. But since the stake is politico-economic subjugation and possible social death for the losing nation (or group of nations) and its ruling class, the contest must be periodically fought to a decision by arms. Indeed, advantage in the contest always rests on superior force, so that in the process as a whole, peace-time can only be understood as the preparatory interval between wars.

The War of 1914-18 established the temporary dominance of British and French imperialism in the Old World (Europe, Asia and Africa) and of United States imperialism in the West. This dominance was given legal expression by the Versailles Treaty, perhaps the most ruthless treaty

ever written. About seven hundred million colonial peoples were designated as slaves of London and Paris. The map of Europe was re-drawn without the slightest reference to the needs and desires of the European masses, but solely with the object of providing strategical bulwarks to Anglo-French hegemony.

Permanent acceptance by German imperialism of the Versailles order would have meant economic strangulation and death. Not being willing to commit suicide, it had therefore to set for itself the goal of the smashing of Versailles and a new division of the world. At the same time, German imperialism had to prevent the smashing of the Versailles order by the only other possible, and diametrically opposite, way: by the German workers' revolution. The blocking of the revolution, and its gigantic preparatory efforts, would have been impossible under the loose forms of parliamentary democracy; and German imperialism, after casting aside its Weimar stewards, was therefore compelled to utilize Hitler and Nazism.

During the past five years, German imperialism has taken its preliminary steps: building of a new army; re-incorporation of the Saar; re-militarization of the Rhineland; absorption of Austria, Czechoslovakia, Memel. At each step, Britain and France complained and resisted; but, having everything to lose—not merely from the challenge of Germany but even more from the threatening internal collapse of their respective empires—and very little to gain, they feared war. They went along from week to week, hoping that Hitler might somehow soften or become lost in an invasion of Russia; and meanwhile they got their armaments and industry and ideology ready. Hitler did not falter or fall, and he made an alliance with Russia. Dangerous as was war now, it would be still more dangerous tomorrow. If Germany were not crushed, British and French imperialisms were through. Not being willing to commit suicide, therefore, Britain and France declared war.

The second World War, then, is a war among rival imperialisms for a new division of the world, a war for the rights of exploitation of the masses of the world as a whole and the peoples of the colonial and semi-colonial areas in particular. The issue of the war is, simply: who is going to get the major share of the swag?

This is what the second World War is about. And this is all it is about.

## Who Is Guilty?

It would be as absurd to assign degrees of responsibility and guilt among the rival imperialisms as in the case of gang warfare. If two gangs of racketeers were in control, respectively, of Chicago's North and South Sides; and if the South Side gang, finding pickings too slim to sustain operations, were compelled to muscle in on the North Side, we would not argue over who was guilty nor would we worry who fired the first shot. We would condemn the system of racketeering, and assign equal guilt to both the gangs that operated branches of that system.

So also in the second World War. If Hitler has appeared usually as the "aggressor," this is only because he has had

nothing that Britain and France want, whereas they have, as a result of their prior aggressions, what he needs. If we are both hungry and you, having all the food, refuse to give me any, then I will naturally have to appear as aggressor if I try to take some from you. To complete the analogy, however, it should be remarked that all the food has in the first place been stolen from the original producers whom we both intend to go on robbing.

To subject, first Germany itself, then Austria, Czechoslovakia, Danzig and Poland . . . to Nazism is indeed a crime against humanity too black to be painted. But it is a crime of exactly the same character as Versailles, which subjected half of the world to the British and French imperialists.

Sometimes it is argued that even if Versailles was a crime, that crime is in the past, over and done with, and should be, if not forgotten, at least tolerated to avoid still worse crimes of the present and future. This argument is not merely sophistical but false. The crime of Versailles was not finished when the treaty was signed—that only began it. The crime lives day by day in the starvation, misery and oppression of the hundreds of millions in India, Africa, Ceylon, Indo-China, who are crushed beneath the boots of British and French imperialism.

It is the system of imperialism which is responsible for the war. It is the rulers of that system, the big-businessmen and bankers of London and Berlin and Paris and Rome and New York, who are guilty. The blood stains all of their hands alike.

### **The United States and the War**

United States imperialism, far from being immune to those corroding difficulties which beset all imperialist nations, is profoundly troubled by them. Though the most fortunate of all imperialisms in natural resources, geographical situation and unparalleled productive plant, the rifts within United States economy, as shown by such factors as the size of unemployment, are perhaps the deepest of all. The internal program for the salvation of United States capitalism—the New Deal—is a dismal and complete failure. There remains only the external program.

The immediate external objectives of United States imperialism are firm domination of Latin America, free entry into the Far East, and guarantee over access to key raw materials, such as rubber, which are not available in the Americas. But the dream of the American plutocracy, the strongest branch of world imperialism, goes beyond these immediate objectives. It sets as its goal nothing short of world domination—not necessarily world political sovereignty, of course, but economic domination over the entire world, backed by sufficient force to maintain it.

In the present war, United States imperialism must act to secure at least its immediate aims; and will try for as much of its more grandiose goal as proves possible. To suppose, as do some pseudo-sophisticates, that United States imperialism is the duped "pawn" of Britain or of any other nation, is lamentably naive. America's Sixty Families take orders from no other power; quite the contrary, they give them. Far from "bailing out" Britain in the present war, they will be best satisfied if the end of the war finds both Britain and Germany, as well as the other powers, so exhausted as no longer to be serious rivals.

The aim of United States imperialism requires that it be in a position to *dictate the peace*.\* It cannot be in such a position unless it intervenes with military as well as economic force. The armed entry of the United States into the war is therefore a virtual certainty.

Entry into the war, called for by the general aims of United States imperialism, follows also from narrower considerations.

The United States is not neutral in any but a formal sense today. It is acting and prepared to continue to act as the supply base for the Anglo-French bloc. Britain and France have available for purchases in this country something more than \$9,000,000,000 in gold, securities and credit balances. The spending of this money will, as the unprecedented speculative war-boom in Wall Street immediately indicated, increase the profits of American business, and, together with a prospective monopoly in Latin America, has already brought about a partial general industrial upturn. When these funds are exhausted, American business will be faced with catastrophe if foreign purchases are shut off. Therefore the Johnson Act will be dropped, and credit extended, in order to keep production and profits going. But the extension of credit will rapidly become over-extension; the stake in the outcome of the war will become overwhelming; and military intervention, from this point of view also, will have to be undertaken in order to direct the settlement and safeguard Wall Street's mortgage on the world.

How soon may we expect military intervention on the part of the United States?

There are three factors which favor some delay: (1) From a strictly economic point of view, American business would like to squeeze the last drop of profit out of the war under conditions of "neutrality" before taking the risk and expense of military intervention. (2) United States imperialism, as we have explained, would like to wait until both sides are exhausted, in order to be sure that its own intervention will be decisive and controlling. (3) The American people, though undoubtedly favoring Britain and France as against Germany, are overwhelmingly against military intervention. Imperialists never let the will of the people stand in their way, but this resistance cannot be smashed overnight.

Against these three factors must be set at least another three which oppose them and work toward speedy entry: (1) It is probable that the British and French available funds and credits will be rapidly exhausted. Just prior to the first World War, the rate of world armament expenditure was approximately \$2,400,000,000 a year. Just before the present war began, the rate was about this sum per month: that is, twelve times as great. During the last war, the Anglo-French bloc spent around \$14,000,000,000 in this country (including the period while this country was itself at war). Available funds and credits for this war could hardly be made higher than \$14,000,000,000 before the United States would have to enter. If the rate of arm-

\*This was indicated by Bernard M. Baruch, chairman of the War Industries Board in the last war, who on September 14th, immediately following a confidential conference with President Roosevelt at the White House, said: "If this country ever participated in another peace conference it should demand a veto power over the terms of settlement instead of what it did at Versailles. We must not permit a situation like that after the last war when President Wilson made proposals for peace and had them voted down by others who had this veto power."—*N. Y. Times*, September 15, 1939.

ament expenditure is an index of the general rate of expenditure for the war, then the \$14,000,000,000 could last only four or five months. This period should, perhaps, be stretched somewhat by the physical impossibility of transporting that sum's worth of goods within so short a time; but even with stretching, this consideration means that United States business will be faced with the choice of collapse or military intervention in a fraction of the time which elapsed in the last war.

(2) In spite of the fact that they say they are preparing for an indefinitely long war, the imperialists must strive to shorten it. They must do this because they realize perfectly well (and this is why they did not want the war and put it off as long as they could) that if the war lasts a long time, the suffering and social chaos it engenders will bring about revolts at home and above all uprisings in the colonies. Small consolation for Chamberlain if he defeats Hitler only to lose India and Africa—and perhaps London. But, without the United States, the sides seem to be too evenly balanced for a quick end. Since the primary fear of United States imperialism, like that of every other imperialism, is revolution, this too calls for early entry in order "to finish up the job" in double-quick time.

(3) A third and very important factor making for quick entry is the Roosevelt administration. Roosevelt and his immediate associates are the outstanding and most vicious war-mongers in the country. With their entire domestic policy bankrupt, the war is the only item left in their bag of political tricks. Roosevelt's personal future and that of his group depend upon getting this country into the war, preferably before the party conventions next spring. If they succeed in this, they will sail through to continued control of the governmental apparatus and a third term. Roosevelt is scarcely attempting to conceal his intentions. His hold-up of the Bremen, the provocative speeches of his subordinates, his declaration of a state of "limited national emergency," his increases in the armed forces and the espionage and radical squads, his plans for the special session of Congress, as well as his past history, all prove that from the very first week he is steering full speed toward direct participation in the war. There is every reason to believe that one important consideration leading Britain to decide to fight now was that Roosevelt is still in office.

Weighing these factors, we may conclude that the United States will probably enter the war in a period of from three to nine months after its outbreak. A delay beyond that time could be brought about only by an organized strengthening of the popular resistance to the war.

### **The War and Democracy**

Democracy is not involved in the slightest measure among the issues of the present war. This is proved not merely by the positive analysis of what the war is actually about, but in the following additional ways:

(1) Even in peace-time, three-fourths of the subjects of Britain and France—the colonial subjects—live under a political regime not of parliamentary democracy but of dictatorship and brutal tyranny, resting openly on military force. These subjects, moreover, are kept at a level of economic subjection far *below* that of the home citizens of the fascist powers.

(2) In jockeying for alliances, Britain and France spent nearly a year bidding for the Soviet Union, whose political regime is not distinguishable from that of Nazism. They concluded an alliance with Turkey, which has been an unbroken totalitarian military dictatorship since the last war. They made a pact with Greece, which has a fascist government under the dictator, Metaxas. They are even now still trying to swing Italy into their orbit. They are ready to accept any of the Balkan nations, none of which has any pretenses to democracy. They permitted, and aided the victory of Franco in Spain. They delivered what democracy there was in Czechoslovakia to Hitler. The United States, similarly, considers itself in alliance with all of the Latin American countries, not more than three of which have any traces of democracy, and Roosevelt fêtes in Washington Somoza, Trujillo, and Batista, the bloodiest and most dishonored of the Latin American dictators. In its colonial policy, as in the case of Puerto Rico, the United States follows exactly the pattern of Britain and France.

(3) In their entire history, at Versailles, and in their day-by-day rule, the British, French and American empires are engaged in a permanent suppression of the democratic right of the self-determination of peoples, and think of the "independence of small nations" only in terms of the aims of their imperial strategies. Witness: all Africa, India, Ceylon, Indo-China, China, the Arabs, the Nicaraguans, the Cubans and Puerto Ricans and Hawaiians and Filipinos, the peoples of Central Europe carved to bits by Versailles.

(4) Britain and France began the war on the issue of Poland. Poland is not and never was a democracy. Since its reconstruction after the last war, it has been one of the most brutal military dictatorships in the world. It has been ruled with blood and iron by immensely wealthy landowners, industrialists and generals. It is the classic nurse of anti-Semitism, the model for large-scale pogroms, and the imperialist oppressor of a section of the Ukrainian people.

(5) Within one week after the war began, the regimes of England, France and Germany had approached identity, merged in *totalitarian war dictatorships* (which, by the way, are not quite the same as peace-time fascism). The remaining differences—minor from the point of view of the average citizen—will be dropped soon enough. Abolition of the rights to strike, assemble, speak freely; complete censorship (more rigid in England and France than in Germany, according to the *New York Times*); general conscription; universal national registration; abolition of the right to change jobs or even to stop working; indefinite extension of the working day; ration cards . . . Democracy was **blacked out overnight**. The pretense of "opposition parties" is officially kept only because there is no more opposition: the British parties have already agreed "not to contest by-elections"—in other words, one name on the ballot, in the approved totalitarian manner.

In the United States, the development will be exactly the same. Plans for the totalitarian dictatorship in this country, as is now openly admitted, are completed.

But it is necessary to say even more than this. The present war, into which some deluded workers and farmers will, alas, willingly march because they believe it is "against fascism" and "to save democracy," is in actuality *the war to end democracy*, as democracy has been known in the



modern world. The era in which the post-Renaissance form of democracy — that is, parliamentary democracy based on capitalist property relations—was historically possible, comes to an end with this war. It lingers for a few months in the United States, perhaps a little longer in a couple of out-of-the-way nations. But its day is done.

The totalitarian dictatorships of the war will never revert to functioning parliamentary democracies. The dislocations of the war itself and the even greater chaos which will follow the war will not possibly permit democratic government in the old sense. So long as capitalist imperialism remains in the saddle, democracy is finished.

The only kind of democracy possible for the future is socialist democracy.

### **The End of the War**

How and when will the war end? If we rule out the all but impossible miracle of a sudden armistice (which would really change nothing but the time span, and that very slightly), it is apparent that the entire world will participate in this war. Even those nations which do not at first participate by arms must, from the nature of modern war, line up economically in one or another camp. They will be bases of supplies, their destinies linked to the war as integrally as if their soldiers were fighting. And very few nations will escape direct battle.

It should not be assumed that the coalitions are already fixed, or that they may not change during the course of the war itself. Italy? Russia? Japan? . . . the possible combinations are myriad.

But this is plain: there is *no* imperialist solution for the war. What peace terms could possibly be written that would have the remotest chance of solving any of the world's major problems, that would be any more than the passing record of temporary exhaustion, to be shattered again not in twenty-five years but in that many months? How revealing that none of the powers can even suggest, in concrete language, what its war aims are!

If imperialism continues in power, there is no end to war.

But it is far more likely that, through this war, imperialism is killing itself. Arms are being put into the hands of tens upon tens of millions of workers and peasants. Every internal strain of world imperialism is stretched to the breaking point. Will the workers and peasants continue indefinitely to slaughter each other for the profit of their masters? It is scarcely conceivable. Will India and Africa continue passive, when they realize that the agonies of their imperialist rulers are also their own great occasions to seize freedom and power? It is unthinkable.

The overthrow of imperialism, the victory of the masses in the triumph of socialism, and only this can stop the war and bring a just and lasting peace. Through a socialist peace, freedom, security, and economic coordination can guarantee the future. The Socialist United States of Europe, of the Americas, a free Asia and a free Africa, a World Federation of Socialist Republics: these mighty slogans now, with the war, lose all their abstractness. They and they alone are the goal, the *immediate* goal, for mankind.

That goal will be won!

## **"Trotskyism" and the P. S. O. P.**

IT WAS WITH REAL INTEREST that I turned to Marceau Pivert's article, "The P.S.O.P.\* and Trotskyism," appearing in the June 9, 1939, issue of the P.S.O.P. organ. I had supposed that Pivert would finally submit the differences separating him from the Fourth International to a concrete analysis. Regrettably, from the very first lines I was disappointed. Pivert does not make even an attempt to venture into the field of Marxian theory and class politics. His entire criticism of "Trotskyism" remains on the level of psychology, moralizing, and the rules of politeness. Pivert manifestly avoids any serious discussion of the fundamental problems of the labor movement. This I shall try to demonstrate through patient analysis of all the ideas and even nuances of ideas contained in Pivert's article, which in its theme is programmatic.

### **"Claims to Hegemony"**

Pivert is ready to collaborate with "Trotskyism," provided only that the latter abandons all claims to "hegemony" and takes the pathway of "trustful collaboration with all elements that have courageously broken with social patriotism and national-communism." The very counterposing of collaboration to "claims to hegemony" is enough to arouse suspicion. The participation of different tendencies within a party unquestionably presupposes trust in the

possibility of convincing one another, learning from one another. If differences arise, every tendency confident of its views will seek to win a majority. Precisely this constitutes the mechanics of party democracy. What other "hegemony" is possible within a democratic party save that of winning a majority to one's views? After all did not Marceau Pivert and his friends strive to gain a majority at the last congress of the P.S.O.P.? And didn't they obtain it? Didn't they thereby install their "hegemony" in the party? Was that to their discredit? Pivert's line of argumentation shows that he considers the "hegemony" of his own tendency as the norm and the law, and any attempt of another tendency to win a majority a violation of the norm, a crime, worse yet—Trotskyism. Where then is democracy?

### **"Factional Methods"**

Having thus proclaimed "hegemony" to be his private monopoly in the party, Pivert thereupon demands that the Trotskyites "abandon factional methods." This demand, repeated several times, comes somewhat incongruously from the pen of a politician who constantly underscores the *democratic* nature of his organization. What is a faction?

\*Parti Socialiste Ouvrier et Paysan (Workers and Peasants Socialist Party).

It is a temporary non-statutory and voluntary grouping of closest co-thinkers within a party, whose aim is to convince the party of the correctness of their viewpoint in the shortest possible period of time. The appearance of factions is unavoidable even in the most mature and harmonious party, owing to the extension of its influence upon new layers, the cropping up of new problems, sharp turns in the situation, errors of the leadership, and so on. From the standpoint of monolithism a factional struggle is an "evil"; but it is an *unavoidable* evil and, in any event, a far lesser evil than the prohibition of factions. True enough, attempts at the formation of factions lacking an adequate principled basis in consequence of political immaturity, personal ambition, careerism, etc. are frequently observable, especially in young parties. In all such cases it is the task of the leadership to expose, without recourse to police measures, the hollowness of these enterprises and in that way to discredit them before the party membership. Only in this way is it possible to create profound attachment for the party so that episodic conflicts, no matter how sharp, do not threaten its unity. The existence of factions, in the nature of things, provokes friction and involves an expenditure of energy, but this is the inevitable overhead expense of a democratic regime. A capable and authoritative leadership strives to reduce factional friction to a minimum. This is achieved by a correct policy tested by collective experience; by a loyal attitude toward the opposition; by the gradually increasing authority of the leadership; but never by prohibition of factions, something which cannot fail to invest the struggle with a hypocritical and poisonous character. *Whoever prohibits factions thereby liquidates party democracy and takes the first step toward a totalitarian regime.*

### Building "cells"

Pivert next demands of the "Trotskyites" that they renounce "building cells commanded from outside." The possibility itself of such a "demand" arises from a glaring **confusion of concepts**. Pivert himself doubtlessly considers it the duty of every P.S.O.P. member to organize cells in the trade unions to win over the majority of the workers. To the extent that these cells are attacked by the Jouhaux clique, Stalin's spies and the Sureté Nationale, they are compelled to lead an undercover existence. The P.S.O.P., as a party, retains, I believe, the leadership of these cells in its hands "from outside". Were the P.S.O.P. to renounce such methods of work within the trade unions, within Blum's party and Stalin's party, it would thereby abandon the struggle for "hegemony" of the working class, that is to say, its revolutionary mission. I hope that is not the case! Where then are the differences? Pivert is simply scaring himself and scaring the party with the bogie of the Bolshevik method of "cells" without having reflected upon the gist of the problem.

But perhaps it is not a question of that at all, but rather of "Trotskyite" cells within the P.S.O.P. itself? We are then merely confronted with a restatement of the charge of factionalism. In this case, however, it is altogether wrong to speak of building cells, since it is open political collaboration which is involved, and an equally open ideological struggle between two tendencies. Assuredly, if the ideological struggle were to be replaced by bureaucratic representations, then the "Trotskyites" would not only be justified

but duty-bound in my opinion to resort to the method of undercover cells. *A la guerre comme à la guerre!* But the responsibility for the existence of undercover cells would in that case fall squarely upon the shoulders of the totalitarian bureaucracy.

### "Commanded from Outside"

Just what is implied by "commanded from outside?" (Here, too, Pivert mentions no persons, no institutions and no facts (apparently in the interests of politeness). We may assume, however, that he wished to say: "Commanded by Trotsky." Many, for lack of serious arguments, have resorted to this insinuation. But just what does the term "command" signify in this case? The Stalin bureaucracy commands by dint of power and money. Blum's machine commands by dint of its ties with the bourgeoisie. The Trotskyites have neither money, nor a G.P.U., nor ties with the bourgeoisie. How then can they "command?" It is simply a question of solidarity on fundamental questions. Why then the insinuation?

Nor is the expression "from outside" in any way happier. Is that an allusion to people outside the party? Or foreigners? Of what crime are these foreigners guilty? Of expressing their opinions and offering advice? When a serious struggle occurs within a revolutionary party, it inevitably engenders international repercussions. The representatives of one and the same tendency in various countries naturally seek to support each other. What is malicious or criminal about it? On the contrary, it is a manifestation of internationalism. Instead of chiding the "Trotskyites," one should learn from them!

### An Example of "Comradely" Tone

Pivert then goes on to demand of the Trotskyites that they abandon their "means of pressure (?) or corruption (??) or systematic denigration. . ." What is implied by the expression "means of pressure?" The apparatus of the party is in Pivert's hands, and the methods of pressure permitted by that apparatus are by no means alien to Pivert. The opposition has nothing at its disposal, save its ideas. Does Pivert wish to prohibit the exercise of ideological pressure? The term "corruption" has a very precise meaning in the language of politics: bribery, careerism, etc. In my opinion the Fourth International is the last organization one could possibly accuse of such sins. There remains "systematic denigration." Experience has demonstrated that the vaguer the views of a politician, and the less he endures criticism, the more readily does a trenchant argument seem to him "denigration." An excess of sensitivity is a symptom of inner lack of confidence. As a party leader, Pivert should set an example of "trustful collaboration" and yet he permits himself to speak of "corruption." Let us hold that Pivert's pen slipped and that he himself will find occasion to make the correction.

### Bolshevism and Factions

After refusing the opposition the right to struggle for a majority ("hegemony") in the party, and in accordance with this prohibiting factions, that is, trampling underfoot the elementary principles of a democratic régime, Pivert is imprudent enough to counterpose the democracy of the P.S.O.P. to Bolshevik centralism. A risky contraposition!



The entire history of Bolshevism was one of the free struggle of tendencies and factions. In different periods, Bolshevism passed through the struggle of pro- and anti-boycottists, "otzovists," ultimativists, conciliationists, partisans of "proletarian culture," partisans and opponents of the armed insurrection in October, partisans and opponents of the Brest-Litovsk treaty, left-communists, partisans and opponents of the official military policy, *etc.*, *etc.* The Bolshevik Central Committee never dreamed of demanding that an opponent "abandon factional methods," if the opponent held that the policy of the Central Committee was false. Patience and loyalty toward the opposition were among the most important traits of Lenin's leadership.

It is true that the Bolshevik party forbade factions at the Tenth Party Congress in March 1921, a time of mortal danger. One can argue whether or not this was correct. The subsequent course of development has in any case proved that this prohibition served as one of the starting points of the party's degeneration. The bureaucracy presently made a bogie of the concept of "faction," so as not to permit the party either to think or breathe. Thus was formed the totalitarian régime which killed Bolshevism. Is it not astonishing that Pivert who so loves to talk about democracy, freedom of criticism, *etc.*, should borrow not from the vital, vigorous and creative democracy of young Bolshevism, but rather from the home of decadent Bolshevism take his bureaucratic fear of factions?

### **Discipline in Action**

The corrective for factional struggle is *discipline in action*. The party is not a social club but a combat group. If Pivert had stated that the "Trotskyites" were violating discipline in action, that would have been a serious argument. But Pivert makes no such claim, which means that this is not the case.

### **Pivert's Faction**

The demand to "abandon factional methods" is all the more inadmissible since Pivert himself has wholly at his disposal "hegemony," without doubt his own faction also, his own undercover meetings (for example, in the struggle against Trotskyism), *etc.* The only difference lies in this, that "Trotskyism" deals its blows against the right and Pivert against the left.

### **The Fourth International and Factions**

In complete contradiction with reality, Pivert depicts the régime in the Fourth International as a régime of monolithism and blind submission. It would be hard to invent a caricature more fantastic and less scrupulous. The Fourth International has never prohibited factions and has no intention of doing so. Factions have existed and do exist among us. Controversy occurs always over the content of the ideas of each faction, but never over its right to existence. From the standpoint of Bolshevik ideas on party democracy I would consider it an outright scandal to accuse an opponent, who happened to be in the minority, of employing "factional" methods, instead of engaging in discussion with him over the gist of the question. If the differences are serious ones then factional methods are justified. If the differences are not serious then the adversary will

find himself discredited. The factional struggle can result only in a more profound principled fusion or a split. No one yet has invented another alternative, if we leave aside the totalitarian régimes.

### **Verification of a Concrete Question**

On the question of entry into the P.S.O.P., for example, one could least of all discover among the "Trotskyites" "monolithism" or "blind submission." Our French comrades for a long time passionately discussed the question and in the end they split. What was my personal attitude in the matter? Let me state frankly—I hesitated. A few months ago I expressed myself in a private letter rather negatively. This did not prevent an influential group of French comrades under the leadership of Rous from entering the P.S.O.P. I believe they have been proved correct.

A part of our French section has obviously revealed organizational conservatism and sectarianism. It would be an astonishing thing if under present political conditions such tendencies did not manifest themselves among those of the hounded and persecuted extreme left. Irrefutable facts testify that the Fourth International struggles against sectarianism and moreover with increasing success. A split is of course a regrettable episode, but nothing more than an episode. If the P.S.O.P. continues to evolve in a revolutionary direction (and we heartily hope that it will), it will draw into its ranks the dissident section of the "Trotskyites." If under the pressure of the bourgeoisie, social patriots and Stalinists the P.S.O.P. expels the "Trotskyites", unity will be reestablished outside of the P.S.O.P.

### **"Leader—Party"**

Generalizing his views on the party Pivert writes: "To the conception of a leader-party, a kind of centralized staff which prepares under cover of conspiracies a so-called (?) revolutionary action we prefer the conception of a party wide open to the real mass movement and offering the revolutionary vanguard all the possibilities of direct contact with the widest possible layers of the worker and peasant proletariat." As always, Pivert remains in the realm of abstractions and nebulous formulas. What "leader-party" is referred to here? Is it the old Bolshevik Party? If so, why isn't this stated openly? Is it possible to educate workers by anonymous allusions? Furthermore, these allusions are false to the core. There has never been a party in history with a profound internal democracy, which was distinguished by such awareness, boldness and flexibility in approaching the masses as the Bolshevik Party. Pivert still can only promise to establish contact with "the broadest possible layers;" while the Bolshevik Party united millions in action for victory. Incidentally, of what "under cover conspiracies" does Pivert speak so contemptuously? Is it perhaps the preparation of the October insurrection? But in that case he is merely repeating what has always been maintained by liberals, Mensheviks, and Social-Revolutionaries.

### **Bolshevism Alone Built the Revolutionary Party**

Organizational conceptions do not of course possess an *independent* character. But through them, and through them alone, is the programmatic and tactical position completely expressed. To dilettantes of the former Parisian magazine, *Masses*, and their ilk, organizational questions

are reduced to assuring their "hegemony" over a little magazine and of protecting themselves from disagreeable criticism—further than that they do not go. The organization of the Social Democracy was and remains entirely adapted to electoral tasks. To this day Bolshevism alone has been able to find organizational forms suitable for the revolutionary struggle for power. To wave Bolshevism aside by means of clichés without having behind one any other revolutionary experience is inadmissible, frivolous, and ignoble. That is not the way to educate workers!

### **Rosa Luxembourg**

To prop up his organizational views (more exactly, their absence) Pivert of course cites Luxembourg. But that does not advance us greatly. Much can be learned from Rosa; but her organizational views were the weakest points in her position, for in them was summed up her errors in the sphere of theory and politics. In Germany, Rosa was unable to build a revolutionary party or a faction and this was one of the causes for the foundering of the 1918-1919 Revolution (on this point see the article of Walter Held in *Unser Wort*). As for the Polish Party of Rosa Luxembourg, under the influence of the events of the revolution it was compelled to reconstruct itself on the Bolshevik model. These historical facts are far more important than quotations!

### **Trotskyism in 1904**

In 1904 I wrote a brochure, *Our Political Tasks*, which in the organization sphere developed views very close to those of Rosa Luxembourg (Souvarine quotes this brochure with sympathy in his biography of Stalin). However, all subsequent experience demonstrated to me that Lenin was correct in this question as against Rosa Luxembourg and me. Marceau Pivert counterposes to the "Trotskyism" of 1939, the "Trotskyism" of 1904. But after all since that time three revolutions have taken place in Russia alone. Have we really learned nothing during these thirty-five years?

### **"Libertarian" Promises**

The better to recommend his spirit of democracy, Pivert promises that his "method of building socialism will not be authoritarian but libertarian." It is impossible not to smile sadly at this pompous and vague phrase. Does this formula of "libertarian" socialism signify anarchy, that is, rejection of the dictatorship of the proletariat? But Pivert considers himself a Marxist and not a Proudhonist or Bakuninist. The dictatorship of the proletariat by its very essence is "authoritarian," otherwise it would not be a dictatorship. It goes without saying that there are limits to "authoritarianism", that is, within the régime of the dictatorship there are differences. If Pivert wishes to say that he would strive to have the Soviets as the organs of dictatorship preserve the broadest possible internal democracy, then he will only be repeating what the "Trotskyites" have struggled for since 1923. However, for Pivert's promise to ring more convincingly he should not now be trampling internal party democracy underfoot in the manner of Léon Blum and Paul Faure, refusing the minority its most legitimate rights, prohibiting oppositional factions and preserving "hegemony" as a monopoly for his own faction; he should, in other words, establish at least

one-tenth of that democracy which distinguished the Bolshevik Party under Czarist illegality and during the first years of the Soviet régime. As long as this is not so, the promise of "libertarian" benefits in the indefinite future carries little value. It recalls somewhat the promise of recompense beyond the grave for sufferings in this world.

\* \* \*

Such are the organizational views of Pivert. They signify in effect a break with party democracy and the substitution of bureaucratic centralism for democratic centralism, that is, the hegemony of the apparatus over ideas. We shall see presently that in the sphere of doctrine, program and politics, things do not go much better.

### **A Unilateral Demand**

Pivert demands, as we know already, "trustful" collaboration with all those elements which have "courageously" broken with social patriotism and national-communism. In principle we are prepared to accept such a demand. But unfortunately Pivert himself violates it and in a fashion that cries out. Bolshevism broke with all species of patriotism a quarter of a century before the P.S.O.P. Pivert, however, doesn't at all reveal a "trustful" attitude towards Bolshevism. The Trotskyites, who have demonstrated the revolutionary character of their internationalism through a long struggle and with innumerable victims, are duty bound to trust Pivert; but Pivert is not at all obliged to trust the Trotskyites. Pivert's rule is—trust for the right—threats and repressions for the left. But this is the rule of Léon Blum, shifted only a few degrees.

### **The Break with Social Patriotism**

Internationalism is indubitably the fundamental premise for collaboration. Our French comrades have taken into account very seriously the P.S.O.P.'s break with the social patriotic party of Blum, otherwise they would not have entered the P.S.O.P. But to depict the matter as if a split with a putrified party automatically solves *all* questions is incorrect. After the break it is necessary to elaborate a revolutionary program and to determine exactly who are one's friends and one's enemies. The leadership of the P.S.O.P. has not yet done this. And this is not accidental. It is still a long way from having cut completely the old umbilical cord.

### **Freemasonry**

The misfortune is that the leaders of the P.S.O.P. have not broken "courageously" with social-patriotism, for they have not broken with Freemasonry, that important reservoir of imperialist patriotism. The other day I received the excellent pamphlet of Pierre Bailly *Yes, Freemasonry Is a Danger*. Rejecting all psychological and philosophical hogwash, which hasn't the slightest value since in the course of its entire development Freemasonry has contributed nothing either to science or philosophy, the author approaches the question in a Marxist manner, that is, from the *class* standpoint. On the basis of the documents of Freemasonry itself he has irrefutably demonstrated its imperialist, reactionary and demoralizing rôle\*

\*To avoid any misunderstanding let us point out that Freemasonry has played a different *political* role in different countries at different epochs. But we are considering here contemporary France with its putrefying capitalism and putrefying democracy; contemporary French Freemasonry fulfills a thoroughly reactionary function.

Bailly's pamphlet is, incidentally, the best proof of the fact that in contrast to all other factions and groups our comrades know how to approach a complex problem as proletarian revolutionists. Even the minor fact that Niko-litch's pamphlet, hollow and loaded with bourgeois sentimentality, is very well printed while Bailly's serious work is mimeographed illustrates well enough the social position of centrist and revolutionary ideas.

### **Social Pacifism**

No, Pivert hasn't at all broken "courageously" with social patriotism and its variation, social pacifism,—otherwise he would not have concluded an alliance against us with Maxton, the leader of the British Independent Labour Party. Between revolutionary Marxism and the imperialist pacifism of Maxton there is an abyss. Fenner Brockway is slightly to the left of Maxton. But, as the entire experience of the Independent Labour Party has demonstrated, Maxton at every critical occasion threatens to resign and Fenner Brockway immediately flops on hands and knees before Maxton. One may shut one's eyes to this. But the facts remain. Let Pivert explain to the workers just what links him with Maxton against the Fourth International. "Tell me who your friends are and I will tell you who you are."

### **Sneevliet**

Pivert marches hand in hand with Sneevliet, whose entire politics in recent years has been—with God's help!—not to provoke the anger of the Dutch government and not to deprive his sectarian trade union organization of government subsidies. Dozens of times we demanded that Sneevliet's party elaborate a political platform, that Sneevliet as a member of parliament advance fighting slogans, that agitation among the masses be conducted in a revolutionary spirit. Sneevliet systematically equivocated so as not to break with his conservative government. It is best not to recall the "tone" which this democrat employed in discussions with young comrades. When the Conference of the Fourth International finally convened and at last took up the question of the Dutch section, Sneevliet quit our organization and naturally began complaining about our bad "methods." Beyond doubt, Pivert's methods are much better: he keeps silent about the capitulatory politics of Sneevliet and directs his blows against the Trotskyites.

### **The P.O.U.M.\***

Pivert strives to defend the personal memory of Andres Nin against base calumnies and this is of course excellent. But when he depicts Nin's politics as a revolutionary model then it is impermissible to call this anything but a crime against the proletariat. In the heat of revolutionary war between the classes Nin entered a *bourgeois* government, whose goal it was to destroy the workers' committees, the foundation of *proletarian* government. When this goal was reached, Nin was driven out of the bourgeois government. Instead of recognizing after this the colossal error committed, Nin's party demanded the re-establishment of the coalition with the bourgeoisie. Does Pivert dare deny this? It is not words which decide but facts. The politics of the P.O.U.M. were determined by capitulation before the bour-

geoisie at all critical times, and not by this or that quotation from a speech or article by Nin. *There can be no greater crime than coalition with the bourgeoisie in a period of socialist revolution.*

Instead of mercilessly exposing this fatal policy Pivert reprints in its justification all the old articles of Kurt Landau. Like Nin, Landau fell victim to the G.P.U. But the most ardent sympathy for the victims of Stalin's executioners does not free one from the obligation of telling the workers the truth. Landau, like Nin, represented one of the varieties of left-Menshevism, was a disciple of Martov and not of Lenin. By supporting Nin's mistakes, and not our criticism of these mistakes, Landau, like Victor Serge, like Sneevliet, like Pivert himself, played a regrettable role in the Spanish revolution. Within the P.O.U.M. a left opposition is now beginning to raise its head (José Rebull and his friends). The duty of Marxists is to help them draw the final conclusions from their criticisms. Yet Pivert supports the worst conservatives in the P.O.U.M. of the Gorkin type. No, Pivert has not drawn the conclusions of his break with Blum!

### **"Practical Results"**

It is with a disdain sufficiently out of place that Pivert speaks of the "practical results" achieved by Trotskyism as far too insignificant to force him to change his point of view. But just how in our epoch of universal reaction can a revolutionary party become a mass movement? At the present time owing to the avowed bankruptcy of the two former Internationals, the situation is becoming more favorable for the revolutionists. One of the signs is the split of the P.S.O.P. from Blum's party. But we began the struggle a long time before that. If Pivert thought in a critical manner he would understand that without the long preparatory work of the "Trotskyists" in all probability he would not yet have broken with Blum. From the broad historical outlook, *the P.S.O.P. as a whole is only a by-product of the struggle of Trotskyism.* Can it be that Pivert considers this "practical result" insignificant?

### **Reaction and "Trotskyism"**

The fact that the Stalinists, as well as the bourgeois police, label every leftward tendency as Trotskyism shows that in the last analysis the entire force of world reaction beats down upon the Fourth International. The G.P.U. maintains a large staff of agents on the one hand for espionage, frame-ups and murders and on the other for provoking conflicts and splits in our ranks. Never before in history has there been a revolutionary tendency subjected to such persecution as ours. Reaction understands only too well that the danger is the Fourth International. Only thanks to the relentless criticism and propaganda of the Fourth International have the centrists begun to stir, the left centrists to separate themselves from the right centrists, the latter to demarcate themselves from the avowed social patriots. Several years ago Pivert stated correctly that struggle against Trotskyism was a certain sign of reaction. Sad to say, however, this reaction is drawing him into its ranks.

\*Partido Obrero de Unificación Marxista (Workers Party of Marxist Unification).

### ***The Inner Power of the Fourth International***

The international organization of Brandler, Lovestone, etc., which appeared to be many times more powerful than our organizations has crumbled to dust. The alliance between Walcher of the Norwegian Labor Party and Pivert himself burst into fragments. The London Bureau has given up the ghost. But the Fourth International, despite all the difficulties and crises, has grown uninterruptedly, has its own organizations in more than a score of countries, and was able to convene its World Congress under the most difficult circumstances, the terror of the G.P.U. (murder of Klement!), and to elaborate its program, to which no one has yet counterposed anything equivalent. Let Pivert attempt to enumerate Marxist publications which in their theoretical level can be placed alongside THE NEW INTERNATIONAL, *Clave*, *Unser Wort*, and other organs of the Fourth International.

All the left groupings which gravitate in the orbit of the London Bureau or thereabouts represent heterogeneous splinters of the past without a common program, with senile routine and incurable maladies. The Fourth International is developing as a grouping of new and fresh elements *on the basis of a common program growing out of the entire past experience, incessantly checked and rendered more precise*. In the selection of its cadres the Fourth International has great advantages over the Third. These advantages flow precisely from the difficult conditions of struggle in the epoch of reaction. The Third International took shape swiftly because many "lefts" easily and readily adhered to the victorious revolution. The Fourth International takes form under the blows of defeats and persecutions. The ideological bond created under such conditions is extraordinarily firm. But the tempo of growth, at all events in the initial period, remains a slow one.

### ***A Dilettante's Criterion***

Victor Serge says: "You cannot create a workers' International worthy of the name just by wanting it." What a smug and at the same time hollow statement! One might imagine that Serge carries in his back pocket all the measurements for an International, exactly as for a pair of trousers. And can a national party "worthy of the name" be built "just by wanting it"? Does the P.S.O.P., for example, correspond to Serge's measurements? People who approach the matter with such superficial criteria thereby demonstrate that for them the international is a solemn and pompous institution, something in the nature of a temple. When the magnificent edifice shall have been built (By whom? How?), then they will enter its arch. We approach it in a different manner. The International is for us, like a national party, an indispensable instrument of the proletariat. This instrument must be constructed, improved, sharpened. This is just what we are doing. We do not wait for someone else to do this work for us. We call upon all revolutionists to take part—right now, immediately, without losing an hour. When the Fourth International becomes "worthy of the name" in the eyes of Messrs. Literateurs, Dilettantes, and Sceptics, then it will not be difficult to adhere to it. A Victor Serge (this one, or another) will then write a book in which he will prove (with lyricism and with tears!) that the best, the most heroic period of the Fourth

International was the time, when bereft of forces, it waged a struggle against innumerable enemies, including petty-bourgeois sceptics.

### ***Our Section in the U.S.A.***

Pivert should beware of hasty conclusions! The P.S.O.P. is still far from being a mass party and has not yet had the opportunity of testing the power of its resistance to the pressure of imperialism. On the other hand our various sections have not only proved their viability but have also entered the arena of mass struggles. In the United States, the most powerful capitalist country in the world, the Socialist Workers Party, from a propaganda circle, which it had been for a number of years, is turning before our very eyes into a militant factor in working class politics. The struggle against fascism and the struggle against war are headed by the American section of the Fourth International. One of the chief fascist agitators, Father Coughlin, was recently compelled to devote one of his radio speeches to our American section and its struggle to build workers defense guards. The Socialist Workers Party is engaged in serious work in the trade unions, publishes an excellent twice-weekly newspaper, a serious monthly journal, a newspaper for the youth (issued twice monthly) and renders important ideological and material assistance to other sections.

### ***In Belgium***

Our section in Belgium, almost wholly proletarian in composition, received some 7,000 votes in the last elections. Each vote in the present background of reaction and chauvinism is worth a hundred votes cast for reformist parties. Let Pivert not be too hasty in drawing a balance sheet! Let him rather attentively read the declaration issued by our Belgian comrades elected at Flénu. But alas! Instead of seeking ties with the Belgian Revolutionary Socialist Party, Pivert lends his ear to bankrupts and sectarians. Is it Ver-eecken together with Sneevliet and Victor Serge who will hew a highway to the masses?

### ***A Voice From Saigon***

In connection with the elections to the Colonial Council held April 30 of this year, the Bolshevik Leninists have written me from Saigon (Indo-China): "Despite the infamous coalition between the Stalinists and bourgeois of all colors, we have gained a brilliant victory. This victory was all the more hard-won because the minds of the voters were befuddled for months by the foggy propaganda of a centrist group called "October". . . . We marched into the struggle with the banner of the Fourth International fully unfurled. . . . Today, more than ever before," the letter continues, "we understand the significance not only of the program of the Fourth International, but also of the struggle of 1925, 1926, 1927, and 1928 against the theory and practice of socialism in one country, the struggle against the Anti-Imperialist League and other pompous parade committees, Amsterdam-Pleyel and *tutti quanti*."

This voice of the revolutionary workers from Saigon is infinitely more important than the voices of all the London Bureaus and pseudo-"Marxist centers." The advanced workers of an oppressed country rally to a persecuted In-

ternational. From the experiences of their own struggles they have come to understand our program and they will know how to champion it. Especially precious and important is the declaration that the advanced Saigon workers understand the meaning of the struggle of the Left Opposition during the years from 1925 to 1928. Only continuity of ideas creates a revolutionary tradition, without which a political party sways like a reed in the wind.

### ***In England and France***

In the old colonizing countries, England and France, the labor bureaucracy, directly interested in colonial super-profits, is more powerful and conservative than anywhere else in the world, and the revolutionary masses find it very difficult there to raise their heads. This is the explanation for the extremely slow development of the sections of the Fourth International in these countries. Upon the evolution of the P.S.O.P. depends to a large extent whether the revolutionists will succeed there in forcing a serious breach in the wall of betrayal and treachery in the coming months. But no matter how things turn out in this respect, the general course of development leaves no room for doubt. When the most oppressed strata in England and France erupt to the surface, they will not tarry at halfway positions but will adopt that program which gives an answer to the profundity and sharpness of the social contradictions.

### ***"Dogma"***

Pivert either refuses or is unable to understand that our invincible strength lies in our theoretical thoroughness and irreconcilability. "Trotsky allows in his organization," writes Pivert, "only those members who accept as dogma (?), and consequently without discussion (?) a systematic reference to the principles elaborated in the first four congresses of the Communist International. Our conception of the party is altogether different." Subject to all sorts of dubious influences, Pivert attempts to reduce the movement of the Fourth International to a single individual: "Trotsky allows in his organization. . . ." Pivert couldn't possibly be ignorant of the fact that the Left Opposition from the very first embraced the flower of the Bolshevik Party: revolutionists tempered in illegality, heroes of the civil war, the best representatives of the younger generation—hundreds upon hundreds of exemplary Marxists who would have done honor to any party. Tens of thousands of "Trotskyites" died a lingering death. Was it really only because "Trotsky allows" or doesn't allow? Such gibberish should be left to Brandler, Walcher, Lovestone, Sneevliet and other cynics . . . but let us return to "dogma." In the Bolshevik Party differences arose *after* the first four congresses of the Comintern whose decisions were elaborated with the most direct participation of the future leaders of "the Left Opposition." A sharp turn towards opportunism was sanctioned by the Fifth Congress. Without renouncing the revolutionary tradition, the greatest in the annals of history, we have nevertheless not made of the first four congresses more than *our starting point*, nor have we restricted ourselves to them. We have observed, studied, discussed, criticized, worked out slogans and marched ahead. I might cite as proof our theoretical journals, internal bulletins, scores of programmatic books and pamphlets issued in the last fifteen years. Perhaps Pivert can mention a single seri-

ous critical work of our opponents which remains unanswered by us? Perhaps Pivert himself and his friends have a criticism of the decisions of the first four congresses not considered by us? Where is it?

In the very same article, Pivert demands of Trotskyists "that they accept the charter (of the P.S.O.P.), its structure, its statutes, the decisions of the majority, and oblige themselves to fulfill them without remiss." This demand is legitimate in itself but does this mean that the charter of the P.S.O.P., its structures, statutes, etc. are "dogma"? Or is it solely the programmatic decisions of the first four congresses that are "dogma"?

### ***Make-believe***

Pivert reasons as follows: We must find, uncover, and reject those traits, those peculiarities and shortcomings of classic Bolshevism which Stalinism subsequently seized upon. This reasoning is formalistic and lifeless. Stalinism didn't at all formally seize always upon the worst traits of Bolshevism. Self-sacrifice is a magnificent quality of a revolutionist. Some of the defendants in the Moscow trials were undoubtedly guided by the spirit of self-sacrifice: to give their lives and even their reputations for the sake of "defense of the U.S.S.R." Does this imply that in place of self-sacrifice it is necessary to inculcate egoism? To this one might reply "it is necessary to develop critical insight". But that is a commonplace. The Bolsheviks were by no means less capable of critical insight than their latter-day critics. But objective historical conditions are more powerful than the subjective ones. When a new bureaucracy in an isolated and backward country rises above the revolutionary class and strangles its vanguard, of necessity it utilizes the formulas and traditions of Bolshevism, qualities and methods inculcated by it, but it charges them with a diametrically opposite social content. Lenin following Marx taught us that during the first stages of socialism elements of inequality will inevitably still remain. The bureaucracy transformed this idea into justification of its gangster privileges. Must we, because of this abuse, unconditionally reject the correct idea of Marx?

The dialectic of the class struggle throughout the length of history has accomplished similar transformations, substitutions, and transfigurations. This was the fate of Christianity, Protestantism, democracy, *etc.* This in particular was the fate of Freemasonry. It originated in the 17th Century as a reaction of the petty bourgeoisie against the decomposing spirit of capitalist individualism and attempted to resurrect the idealized morality of guild "brotherhood." In the course of the class struggle it later became an instrument in the hands of the big bourgeoisie for disciplining and subordinating the petty bourgeoisie to its own aims. It is impermissible to approach principles outside of social reality, outside of those classes which support them.

The criticism of Bolshevism which Pivert develops in the wake of Victor Serge and others does not contain an iota of Marxism. It substitutes for a materialistic analysis a game of make-believe.

### ***For the Hegemony of Scientific Thought***

A serious revolutionist who foresees the grave decisions which the party must make in critical times, feels acutely his responsibility in the preparatory period, painstakingly,



meticulously analyzes each fact, each concept, each tendency. In this respect a revolutionist resembles a surgeon who cannot rest content with commonplaces concerning anatomy but must know exactly the articulation of the bones, the muscles, the nerves and the tendons and their interconnection, so as not to make a single false movement with his scalpel. The architect, the physician, and the chemist would regard indignantly any proposal against rendering scientific concepts and formulas more precise, against claiming "hegemony" for the laws of mechanics, physiology, or chemistry, in favor of a conciliatory attitude toward other views no matter how erroneous. Yet this is precisely Pivert's position. Without plumbing the gist of programmatic differences, he repeats commonplaces on the "impossibility" of any one tendency "claiming to incorporate in itself all truth." Ergo? Live and let live. Aphorisms of this type cannot teach an advanced worker anything worthwhile; instead of courage and a sense of responsibility they can only instill indifference and weakness. The Fourth International wages a struggle *against* quackery—for a scientific attitude toward the problems of proletarian politics. Revolutionary ardor in the struggle for socialism is inseparable from intellectual ardor in the struggle for truth.

### **Bolshevism or Menshevism?**

To Pivert it seems that we are the representatives of dogmatism and routine whereas he is a proponent of critical thought. As a matter of fact in his criticism of "Trotskyism" Pivert merely repeats the hoary formulas of the Mensheviks without adding to them one original syllable. But Menshevism was also put to a test, and not a minor one. The Bolshevik Party victoriously led the greatest revolution in history. Finding itself isolated, it was unable to withstand the pressure of hostile historical forces. In other words Russian Bolshevism found it beyond its powers to substitute itself for the international working class. Menshevism on the contrary contributed nothing to the revolution except prostration and perfidy. Left Menshevism in the person of Martov signified sincere perplexity and impotence. The historic task posed by October has not been resolved. The fundamental forces participating in the struggle

are the same. The choice is not between "Trotskyism" and the P.S.O.P. but between Bolshevism and Menshevism. From the starting point of Bolshevism we are ready to march forward. We refuse to crawl back.

### **The Program of the Fourth International**

Pivert finds it necessary in June 1939 to return to the "four congresses," but we have succeeded already in marching far ahead. Last autumn, a year ago, our international conference adopted the program of Transitional Demands corresponding to the tasks of our epoch. Is Pivert familiar with this program? What is his attitude towards it? For our part we are desirous of nothing so much as criticism. In any "tone" you please, but getting to the heart of the matter!

Here is a concrete proposal which I take the liberty to make "from outside"; to proceed immediately to a discussion and an elaboration of an international program of the proletariat and to create a special publication for an international discussion on this question. As a basis for this discussion I propose the program of the Fourth International, "The Death Agony of Capitalism and the Tasks of the Fourth International." It goes without saying, however, that our International is prepared to accept as a basis for discussion another draft if it is forthcoming. Perhaps Pivert and his friends will accept this proposal? It would undoubtedly be a great step forward!

\* \* \*

I have analyzed Pivert's article with a meticulousness which might appear to some as superfluous and tiresome. To others the "tone" might again appear too sharp. But I believe, nevertheless, that a detailed explanation, precise and clear, is far greater evidence of a desire for collaboration than diplomatic equivocations supplemented by threats and insinuations. I should like not only Marceau Pivert but also Daniel Guerin to reflect on this. It is necessary to cease feeding on the empty formulas of yesterday. It is necessary to take the road of serious and honest discussion of the program and strategy of the new International.

July 15, 1939

L. TROTSKY

# The Friends of the War Referendum

*"Defend me from my friends; I can take care of my enemies myself."*—Marechal Villars.

*"Thy friendship oft has made my heart to ache:—Do be my enemy, for friendship's sake."*

—William Blake, "To Hayley."

**N**OT THE LEAST OF THE obstacles to an effective anti-war struggle are the manifold "friends of peace." We speak here not only of such eminent peace-lovers as Franklin D. Roosevelt, who announces that "I Hate War" with as great gusto as when he calls for a couple of more billions for the admirals, or appoints Morgan's men to the War Dictatorship Board.

There is another group of men in Washington who play a different, but as important, a role in side-tracking a real anti-war fight. They appear before the people as sincere opponents of war; they oppose certain of Roosevelt's war

measures; they seek to be recognized as the mouthpieces in Congress of the desire of the people for peace. They are informally grouped as the "isolationist" or "neutrality" bloc in Congress. Their most prominent representatives are Senators Nye, La Follette, Bone and Clark, and in the other house, Representative Louis Ludlow of Indiana. They are mainly from the West and Middle West. There is no doubt that in their own distorted way they represent the pressure of the popular masses for anti-war action.

*There is also no doubt that their activities are objectively an integral part of the preparation of the people for accepting the coming war.*

There is no better illustration of this fact than their rôle in the present movement for giving the people the right to vote in a direct referendum on whether the United States should go to war.



## **Betraying a Progressive Demand**

We raise no question of the honesty of these Congressmen in their proclaimed desire to keep America out of any war, because there is no psychoanalytical data available on this point. It is a question of their politics. Senator Nye (for example), as the chairman of the Senate Munitions Investigating Committee, performed a valuable job in exposing the Industrial Mobilization Plan as a "blueprint for dictatorship"; yet when he introduced his own "take-the-profit-out-of-war" bill in the Senate, he included some of the worst features of that same plan. If the government were so unfortunate as to need higher moral sanction for the M-Day machinery than can be provided by E.R. Stettinius, Jr., the M-Day dictator chosen by Roosevelt from Morgan's payroll, the Nye bill could be useful to it.

Similarly, starting with the truly progressive anti-war demand for the war referendum, this pacifist bloc has incorporated it into a resolution which guts it completely of its effective content and distorts it into a sanction of rapacious imperialism.

The way this happened deserves closer study, not only because it makes clear that the people cannot rely on the *official sponsors* of the war referendum for any kind of fight against war, but also because it clarifies the actual process whereby bourgeois pacifism merges into imperialist war-mongering.

## **History of the War Referendum Proposal**

The proposal to let the people vote before the United States enters into a new war goes back at least to the World War; and back in 1924 both the elder LaFollette and the Democratic Party incorporated it as a plank in their presidential platforms. Only in the last years, however, with the visible approach of the new world war at a rapid pace has it assumed major proportions.

Its recent history began when Representative Ludlow introduced his first war-referendum resolution in the House, in February 1935. For two years it remained on ice in the Judiciary Committee to which it had been referred. Then, in December 1937, under the stimulus of the war scare following the *Panay* sinking, Ludlow sprang a surprise in securing the necessary 218 Congressional signatures to a petition to discharge the committee and bring the resolution to the floor. On January 10, 1938, therefore, a vote was taken in the House—not on the proposition itself, but on whether it should be discussed on the floor. The Ludlow forces lost this vote by a narrow margin. In the intervening month the Administration, which had not previously taken the resolution seriously, rallied all its forces—Farley's patronage club, a special message by Roosevelt, strong speeches by the House Democratic whips. They also brought up supplementary cannon from the rear in the shape of thunderous pronouncements from the American Legion lobby and from the big newspapers, especially the *N. Y. Times*.

Ludlow's unexpected *coup* of December 1937 projected the war referendum among the first rank of the war questions before Congress. In 1938 the arena shifted to the Senate where—again under the stimulus of a war scare, this time Hitler's grab of Czechoslovakia—a group of Sen-

ators headed by LaFollette and Nye introduced a new draft of the war referendum. A hearing\* was held by a Senate Judiciary subcommittee in May 1939.

## **Progressive Capitulation**

During this period the supporters of the war referendum in Congress made great personal capital out of it for themselves. Ludlow himself, running for re-election in November 1938, staked his entire campaign upon it, and won handily. At the above-mentioned hearing Congressman after Congressman referred to the pressure in their own districts in explanation of their support of the proposal. Fullmer of South Carolina, for example, prefaced his remarks with: "I went back home some days ago, and practically everybody I met wanted to know: 'Are we going to be forced into another war?'" In general the Congress bloc for the referendum have their ears very close to the ground and are distinguished mainly by their greater sensitivity to and utilization of the mass anti-war feeling.

But while the mandate of the people is clear on the issue, the official sponsors of the war referendum idea have done nothing but retreat in haste before the attack of the Congressional and Administration warmongers, until they occupy the same ground as their opponents, differing only verbally.

This progressive capitulation of the "progressive" Ludlows and LaFollettes is sufficiently documented by the texts of the successive versions of the resolutions which they have introduced.

## **The Three Incarnations of the Ludlow Resolution**

Ludlow's *original* draft provided that a war referendum shall be held "EXCEPT in the event of an invasion of *the U. S. or its territorial possessions* and attack upon its citizens residing therein."

Now any realistic understanding of history would show that this exception by itself negates the presumable purpose of the resolution. No American government need lack a pretext for eliminating a referendum in a war crisis when it can claim that Guam, or the Aleutian Islands, or the Panama Canal has been invaded—Ludlow will not have a chance to send an investigating committee down to find out before the war machine is in motion, assuming he would want to. Even without the passage of a resolution, the government would not neglect to construct a similar pretext.

But even this version (which we shall call Version I) lasted only as long as the whole proposition was ignored in Congress.

Version II appeared in the middle of November 1937, just before the controversy broke out in the House. It was introduced by LaFollette in the Senate, and by this time the "exceptions" had grown to include several more lines of the resolution and a larger slice of the earth's surface:

EXCEPT in the event of an invasion of, or *military expedition against the U.S. or its territorial possessions, or attack by a foreign military force upon its citizens residing therein, or invasion of or a military expedition from abroad against any other North American or Caribbean nation.* . . . (The new exceptions are italicized.)

\*Hearings Before a Subcommittee of the Senate Judiciary Committee on S. J. Res. 84. (Government Printing Office, 1939.)

A referendum could now be dispensed with if the President claims knowledge of an expedition aimed at the U. S. or at Canada, Alaska, Cuba, Venezuela, etc. The provisions which made invasion *and* attack upon citizens the necessary condition (a provision against which the *N. Y. Times*, for example, had especially aimed its fire) is changed to: invasion *or* attack. And a slice of the Monroe Doctrine is included, not covering however the Latin American states south of the Caribbean Sea.

This draft was only a stepping-stone. By December 23, Nye was in favor of including all of South America, swallowing the Monroe Doctrine complete. By January 7, three days before the test vote in the House, Ludlow was in a panicky flight: a meeting of his supporters was called, and Ludlow proposed postponing the whole business and delaying the vote—for a month or so, he said. This was voted down at the caucus, and instead the resolution was ripped open and its provisions rubberized.

The new exceptions made were: (1) the whole of the Western Hemisphere was included, and (2) a provision to "extend Congressional freedom (to declare war) to protection of American shipping." (*N. Y. Times*, Jan. 9, 1938.)

The House vote of Jan. 1938 took place on this resolution, the second new provision being included in a hypocritically concealed form, as we shall explain. Thus Version III was born, and it is this version which is now before the Senate as the LaFollette resolution for a war referendum (S. J. Res. 84.) It reads:

EXCEPT in case of *attack* by armed forces, *actual or immediately threatened*, upon the United States or its Territorial Possessions, or by any non-American nation against any country in the *Western Hemisphere*, the people shall have the sole power by a national referendum to declare war or to engage in warfare overseas.

The key word "invasion" is changed to "attack"—what an innocent-seeming substitution! And the language about a "military expedition" fades into an "immediately threatened" attack.

It would be inaccurate to say that this resolution has some loopholes; it consists of little else.

### **From National-Defensism to Aggressive Imperialism**

In order to get the full import of these qualifying exceptions, and in order to see how the transitions were made, we must now turn to the testimony given at the Senate subcommittee hearings.

Ludlow started off with a single exception: the invasion of the territory of the United States. We are willing to defend our borders ("defend our homes")—he said in effect—but we refuse to sanction anything beyond that. He thus took his stand in support of the national defense of the capitalist state, in its "pure-and-simple" form so to speak—that is, its isolationist form.

But with the introduction of Version III and by the time the hearings had ended, the Ludlow forces were forced to take three further steps:

(1) Incorporation of the Monroe Doctrine by including the whole of the Western Hemisphere under "national defense."

(2) Support of war to protect American commercial or financial interests anywhere on the globe, from infringement by other nations.

(3) *Support of admittedly aggressive warfare.*

We want to emphasize that this transition was not made because the Ludlowites *abandoned* their original standpoint. On the contrary, it was made because they *clung* to it and accepted the three other steps as the *necessary* consequences. Here's how it was done.

(1) *Acceptance of the Monroe Doctrine.*—The going over, from national defense of the American capitalist state, to war for the defense of America's "back yard" in Latin America, was an easy step which the Ludlowites took immediately. The original inconsistency of the Ludlow national-defensists was ably exploited by Maj.-Gen. O'Ryan who spoke in opposition to the referendum. Referring to the changes from the first draft, he said:

At the outset may I say that the bill as it now appears, bears little relation to the hopes induced in the minds of some millions of sincere men and women who saw in the original bill a simple solution of the war problem so far as our country is concerned. . . They had not realized that an invasion of Canada was, in military effect, an invasion of the United States, only more effectively so. . . They had not realized that the Republic of Cuba, at our doorstep, being no part of the United States or its territories, might be made the rendezvous for aggression against the United States. . . They had not realized how vital to our Navy is the maintenance of the Panama Canal. . . I might go on. Suffice it to say that the bill was so amended as to leave with the Congress the power to declare war, if, for example, Patagonia is threatened with invasion . . . but is without power to declare war if the civilization of Great Britain or France, which is akin to our own, were at stake. . .

Once you accept the principle of national defense, says O'Ryan, you cannot avoid taking the next step.

(2) *Protection of American shipping and interests in the Eastern Hemisphere.*—The Senators of the hearings committee fastened on the word "attack" in the LaFollette resolution and pushed the witnesses to the next position. Isn't an attack on an American ship "attack on the United States"? Couldn't Congress have declared war without a referendum—assuming the LaFollette resolution had been on the books at that time—when the *Panay* was attacked by a Japanese airplane?

Stephen Raushenbush, former investigator for the Nye Munitions Committee, was on the stand and answered in the affirmative.

Again, in the matter of the *Panay*. That was attacked, and the President decided that that was not an act of war, although that was a naval vessel. . . I think generally that attacks on our naval vessels engaged in peaceful pursuits would suspend the referendum if the President and the Congress both chose to consider an attack as an act of war, really. I do not see how you can get out of that, but the point is, Congress remains the ultimate judge of the definition of what is an "attack."

Senator Nye likewise went on record on this point.

SENATOR WILEY: Suppose an American warship were sailing in foreign waters, and a submarine, such as we have seen in recent days, attacked that warship, would the ship be justified in defending itself?

NYE: Most assuredly it would.

WILEY: Then that would not be an act of warfare.

NYE: It certainly would be an act of warfare.

WILEY: Then you could not do it without a mandate from the people under this resolution.

NYE: *That would be an attack upon us. In that event, the power to declare war would be vested in Congress.*" Our emphasis—H. D.)\*

According to these admissions, then, even if the LaFollette resolution had been on the books in 1917, Congress could have declared war against Germany without a referendum!

The essential inconsistency of the Ludlow supporters was brought out in the open by the further statement of Raushenbush:

We certainly are going here, Senator (he said in closing), to give an awful amount of confidence to the President and to Congress in this thing. Any unscrupulous man, if he were of the character of a foreign dictator for instance, could let false news get around that we had been attacked. They did it in Germany. You remember that at the beginning of the last war there were stories that the French airplanes were over Nuremburg even before the war was declared—a perfectly false story. They got it up. We would simply have to count on two things—an amount of honesty on the part of our Executive, and the ability of Congress to look into these matters and assure the people, whether they are true or false.

The answer of the opponents of the referendum to this is simple: If we eventually have to trust the President and Congress on such things anyway, why not trust them all the way? Professor Gideonse of Barnard, an opponent of the referendum, had a much better appreciation of the meaning of the war-referendum movement when he said: "The fundamental thought behind the agitation for the war referendum is that Congress and the President cannot be trusted."

(3) *Aggressive warfare.*—One might think that the Ludlowites had already conceded as much as any jingo could desire. The World War had been justified, the Panay incident had become a suitable pretext for war, and trust in the government was restored. Not satisfied, however, Senator Borah opened another line of attack.

He tried it first with Morris L. Ernst on the stand.

Suppose (he said), we had a situation such as we have in these days, when there are a great many people who actually believe that, as a matter of self-defense, we must first proceed to defend some other nation, for fear they may be destroyed?

Ernst dodged by answering that he "did not want to get into legalisms"!

Borah continued this line with George W. Hartmann of Columbia University on the stand. "Suppose . . ."

Suppose . . . the situation seems to be such that in order to wage a successful war we must anticipate what this foreign power may

do in the way of attacking us, and, as a countermove, attack them. We are defending ourselves. . . . We cannot wait to make that a domestic war. If we do, we are at a disadvantage. . . . That would not be a foreign war, would it?"

Senator Wiley took this up and pressed it.

WILEY: It (the resolution) says "except in case of war actually or immediately threatened." The words "immediately threatened" would bear upon the situation about which Senator Borah spoke when he started questioning you, would it not? . . .

HARTMANN: *I believe it is broad enough to cover that.*

The Senators did not have to go further than this! Starting with "defense of the territory of the United States from invasion", the Ludlow national-defensists are driven to accept the idea of *preventive aggression*—trusting in the President and Congress to keep this aggression pure! Pure-and-simple defensism transforms itself into its opposite, and the shade of Hegel chuckles.

### **How to Fight for the War Referendum**

To pursue the dialectics of bourgeois pacifism a little further, it is worth while pointing out wherein lies the unity of Ludlowism and the open and aggressive imperialism which is represented by Roosevelt. It lies in their common acceptance of the principle of national defense, as applied specifically to the imperialist state of this country. *National defense of the "defend our borders" type is not only false in Marxist theory; it is also an impossible straddle in practical life.* It is the illusion attendant upon the dream of isolationism, just as aggressive imperialism is the politics behind collective security. And in real life, the two form different sides of the same coin.

That is why the revolutionary Marxists reject all qualification to the demand that the people have the right to vote in a referendum on the war into which the war-mongers propose to hurl the youth and toilers of the United States. In this way can the imperialist designs of the Washington-Wall Street war clique be exposed. In this way can the healthy mistrust of the government, which is evidenced by the popular demand for the referendum, be fostered.

In this way, also, can the Ludlow-LaFollette type of pre-war pacifist be exposed in their true role before the workers who still give them their confidence.

\*Other examples of such statements may be found on pp. 137, 67, and 115 of the report of the hearings. Incidentally, all the witnesses who spoke for the resolution had been hand-picked by Ludlow and LaFollette to represent their views.

Hal DRAPER

# Negro Slavery in North America

**H**ISTORY IS RICH in examples of the revival of institutions appropriate to more primitive civilizations in advanced societies. Mankind is infinitely ingenious in adapting old cultural forms to new uses under the changed conditions of a new social order. Like a thrifty housewife, humanity hesitates to discard familiar acquisitions, however outmoded; it prefers to store them in attics or cellars in the hope of finding a use for them in the future. The history of economics, no less than the history of philoso-

phy, religion, and politics, shows that such expectations are often realized.

The rise of chattel slavery in America is a striking case in point. Slave labor was the characteristic form of labor in ancient society and the economic foundation of the classical Greek and Roman cultures. Long after it had vanished from the centers of European society it was reborn in the **New World at the dawn of capitalist civilization** and continued to flourish in the bosom of the capitalist system for

three centuries and a half. This reversion of the infant society of the New World to one of the most antiquated social institutions of the Old World, its longevity and its tenacity, makes chattel slavery the most conspicuous instance of the law of combined development in American history.

American society, the child of European capitalism, reproduced not only the features of its father but also of its more remote forebears. Almost every form of social relationship known to mankind sprang up on the soil of the New World, either in a pure form or in a medley of combinations. All the successive stages of civilization preceding the advent of capitalism, primitive communism, barbarism, slavery, feudalism, had a place in the sun until they withered away or were uprooted by the advance of capitalist forces. This varied profusion of social institutions makes the early history of America an extremely instructive textbook for the student of civilization.

Except for self-employed farming, chattel slavery was the earliest, the most widespread, and in the long run proved also to be the hardest of all these pre-capitalist methods of production in the field of agriculture. Wherever the European settled in America, slavery was sooner or later established. It made its way through the Spanish, Portuguese, Dutch and French possessions; it became the keystone in the structure of the richest English and French colonies; it constituted the foundation of the Southern Cotton Kingdom. In the course of three hundred and fifty years slavery thrust its roots so deeply into North American soil that it required the greatest revolution of the nineteenth century to destroy it.

The history of chattel slavery in North America must be divided into two distinct periods. The first period extended from the introduction of slavery into the New World by the Spaniards and Portuguese at the beginning of the sixteenth century through its development in the West Indies and North American coast to its decline in the British and French colonies at the end of the eighteenth century. The second period covers the rise, growth, and decay of the Cotton Kingdom in the United States during the first part of the nineteenth century.

These two epochs of chattel slavery were the offspring of two different stages in the development of capitalist society. In its initial phase American slavery was a collateral branch of commercial capitalism; in its final stage it was an integral part of industrial capitalism.<sup>1</sup> We shall see that opposite forms of plantation life dominated the slave system of the two periods in North America.

## I. Slavery in the North American Colonies

*The Introduction of Slavery.* The first question that suggests itself in connection with chattel slavery is: how did such an historical anomaly come into being? Slavery in America is as old as its discovery. When Columbus set sail for "the Indies" in 1492, chattel slavery was a familiar institution in Spain and Portugal. The Spaniards were accustomed to enslave the peoples they conquered. The Moors, the African Negroes, and the American aborigines were all infidels, subject by divine law to serve Christian masters. Slavery did not however constitute the productive basis of Spanish society but existed alongside of it in

the interstices of feudal life. Many Spanish vessels engaged in the slave trade and carried Negro slaves in their crews. It is not surprising to find that captain Christopher Columbus likewise had African slaves among his crew on his first voyage of discovery. It is even less surprising that within two years after reaching the West Indies he had five hundred of the natives seized and sent back to Spain to be sold on the auction block at Seville. Chattel slavery was one of the blessings brought, like syphilis, to the natives of the New World by their white conquerors.

The Spanish adventurers who followed Columbus took possession of the inhabitants of the West Indian islands, Mexico, and Peru, forcing them to labor in the mines and in the sugar fields. When the West Indians died off from overwork, starvation, and abuse until only a miserable few were left, large numbers of Negroes were transported from Spain and the West Coast of Africa to replace them.

From 1520 on, Spanish, Portuguese, Italian, Dutch, and English vessels poured Negroes in a never-ending stream into the West Indies. Sanctified by religion and legalized by the crown, the African slave trade became the most profitable of commercial enterprises. A Flemish favorite of Charles V of Spain obtained the exclusive right of importing four thousand Negroes annually into the West Indies and sold the patent for 25,000 ducats to some Genoese merchants who established the first regular trade route from Africa to America. In 1562 John Hawkins, an English sea-dog who scented the profits of the slave trade, sailed to Guinea with three ships and a hundred men provided by a company of gentlemen in London, where he procured at least three hundred Negroes and sold them in Hispaniola (Spanish Santo Domingo). The next year the first Negroes were imported into the English West Indies.

The slave traffic had already been flourishing for over a century when the first boatload of twenty Negroes was brought to Jamestown, Virginia, in 1620 by a Dutch vessel. Negro slavery made its way more slowly and gradually in the coastal colonies than in the West Indian islands. There were not more than three hundred Negroes in Virginia thirty years after their introduction. By the close of the seventeenth century, however, Negro slaves began to displace white servants as the main body of the laboring population in Virginia and Maryland. Black slavery was soon transformed from a supplementary source of labor into the fundamental form of agricultural production.

Negroes were imported into South Carolina by way of the West Indies when it was discovered in 1694 that the lowlands were suitable for rice cultivation. Thereafter slavery spread as fast and as far throughout the English colonies as conditions permitted. Georgia was the only colony to oppose its introduction. So long as the philanthropic Oglethorpe governed the colony, slavery and rum were prohibited. When Georgia reverted to the Crown in 1752 the inhabitants were finally allowed to gratify their desires for black labor and hard liquor. On the eve of the Revolution there were over half a million Negroes among

<sup>1</sup>In general, the history of modern slavery cannot be properly understood unless viewed in connection with the development of capitalism. Capitalism, itself based upon one form of enslavement, wage-labor, creates, fosters, and battens upon other forms of servitude. Commercial capitalism produced and profited from the African slave trade and from plantation slavery in the West and East Indies. English industrial capitalism of the early nineteenth century thrived upon Negro slavery in the Southern states. Twentieth-century American finance capitalism supports the semi-slave plantations in Liberia which grow rubber for Akron tire-factories.

the three million inhabitants of the colonies. Less than forty thousand lived in the North; the rest were concentrated in the South. In five Southern colonies the Negroes equalled or outnumbered the whites. The reason was obvious. While the ownership of slaves in the North was a badge of aristocracy and wealth, in the South it was the necessary basis of society.

### **The Necessity of Chattel Slavery**

Why did negro slavery strike such deep roots in the New World? Some historians attribute its persistence to physical factors. There is no doubt that favorable natural conditions facilitated the development of slavery. The tropical and semi-tropical regions of the earth have always been the motherlands of chattel slavery. This particular form of production thrives best upon an extremely rich soil which yields abundant crops with comparatively little cultivation by the crudest labor. Warm climates moreover enable the working force to labor without pause from one year's end to the next and to be sustained with a minimum of the necessities of life. The smaller the amount of labor required for the maintenance and reproduction of the actual producers, the greater is the surplus value available for appropriation by the agricultural exploiter. Slavery cannot flourish without an inordinately high rate of surplus value since it is the costliest of all forms of labor.

Different natural conditions in the North as well as in the regions adjoining the plantation districts in the South led to the prevalence of quite different forms of agricultural labor. Slavery withered away in these parts, not through the indisposition of its proprietors to employ slave labor, but because the rocky soil and harsh climate prevented the cultivation of staple plantation crops. They were suitable only for raising corn, wheat, and other foodstuffs in which expensive slave labor could not compete with the small self-employed farmer or the hired laborer. Consequently, in those sections of the colonies, agriculture fell mainly into the hands of the small family farmers.

However great a role natural conditions played in the development of slavery, they did not constitute the decisive factors. Nature by itself only provided a more or less receptive seedbed for implanting this form of labor. For slavery to become the predominant method of colonial agriculture, certain social conditions had to be present. The main reasons for the growth of slavery were therefore to be found, not in the natural environment, but in the specific social and economic problems confronting the colonial planters.

They proposed to grow sugar, tobacco, and rice for commercial export to Europe. The large-scale agricultural operations required for cultivating these crops cannot be carried on by solitary laborers. They demanded an associated working force of considerable proportions. How were such working forces to be procured in the colonies where land was plentiful but labor lacking?

The labor problem was the most serious of all problems for the colonial planter. Some form of bondage was necessary to bring workers to the new lands and to keep them working thereafter for their masters. The colonizers grasped at any kind of labor within reach. Negro slavery was not the first nor the only form of servitude in North America; it was preceded by Indian and white slavery.

The sparse native Indian population proved no solution. The English colonists tried to enslave the North American Indians in the same manner as the Spaniards enslaved the natives of West Indies, Mexico, and Peru. When they discovered that the Indians were either not numerous enough or, like certain African tribes, would not submit to slavery but sickened and died in captivity, they had little further use for them. They proceeded either to slaughter them on the spot or to drive them westward.

At first the landed proprietors relied upon the importation of white bondsmen from the mother country. England and the continent were combed for servants to be sent to America.

Some of these indentured servants came of their own accord, voluntarily agreeing to serve their masters for a certain term of years, usually four to seven, in return for their passage. Many others, especially German serfs, were sold by their lords to the slave merchants and shipowners. In addition the overflowing prisons of England were emptied of their inmates and the convicts brought to America to be sold into servitude for terms ranging from four to fourteen years.

The Cromwellian conquest of Ireland in the middle of the seventeenth century made slaves as well as subjects of the Irish people. Over one hundred thousand men, women, and children were seized by the English troops and shipped over to the West Indies where they were sold into slavery upon the tobacco plantations. In *The Reconquest of Ireland* James Connolly quotes the following instance of the methods used.

"Captain John Vernon was employed by the Commissioners for Ireland to England, and contracted in their behalf with Mr. David Sellick and the Leader under his hand to supply them with two hundred and fifty women of the Irish nation, above twelve years and under the age of forty-five, also three hundred men above twelve years and under fifty, to be found in the country within twenty miles of Cork, Youghal and Kinsale, Waterford and Wexford, to transport them into New England." This British firm alone was responsible for shipping over 6,400 girls and boys. . . .

As a result of the insistent demands of the planters for labor, the servant trade took on most of the horrible features of the slave trade. Gangs of kidnappers roamed the streets of English seaports and combed the highways and byways of Britain and Ireland for raw material. In the rapacious search for redemptioners the homes of the poor were invaded. Where promises could not persuade, compulsion was brought into play. Husbands were torn from their wives, fathers from their families, children from their parents. Boys and girls were sold by parents or guardians; unwanted dependents by their relatives; serfs by their lords—and all this human cargo was shipped to America to be sold to the highest bidder.

Thus the bulk of the white working population of the English colonies was composed of bondsmen and criminals, who had been cajoled or coerced into emigration and had to pass through years of bondage before they could call themselves free. These people and their children became the hunters, trappers, farmers, artisans, mechanics, and even the planters and merchants, who were later to form the ranks of the revolutionary forces against the mother country.



These white bondsmen however provided neither a sufficient nor a satisfactory supply of labor. They could not be kept in a permanent condition of enslavement. Unless they were marked or branded, if they ran away they could not readily be distinguished from their free fellows or their masters. As production expanded, it became increasingly urgent to find new, more abundant, and more dependable sources of labor.

The Negro slave trade came to the planter's rescue. Negroes could be purchased at reasonable prices and brought in unlimited numbers from the African coasts. They were accustomed to tropical climates and could be worked in such miasmatic, malaria-breeding swamplands as those of South Carolina. They were gregarious, prolific, and, once domesticated, were willing to breed in captivity. By keeping the Negroes scattered, ignorant, and terrorized, the slave-owners could keep them in perpetual subjection and prevent them from escaping with impunity. The color of the black man's skin became the sign of servitude, enabling the white man to keep the slave yoke fixed firmly on his shoulders.

The profits of the slave trade was another potent factor in the extension of Negro slavery. The traffic in slaves became too lucrative an enterprise to remain in private hands. The sovereigns of Spain and England contended with each other for the lion's share of the trade to fill the royal treasuries. The possession of the slave trade was one of the richest prizes at stake in the War of the Spanish Succession. The Treaty of Utrecht which concluded the war in 1713 awarded a monopoly of the slave trade to England. Their majesties organized a company for carrying on the traffic: one quarter of the stock was taken by Philip of Spain; another by Queen Anne of England; and the remaining half was divided amongst her subjects. Thus the sovereigns of Spain and England became the largest slave merchants in the world.

The slave trade became a cornerstone of Anglo-American commerce. Many fortunes in Old and New England were derived from the traffic. This trade enjoyed the special protection of the Crown whose agents persistently vetoed the efforts of colonial legislatures to abolish or restrict it. It is estimated that from 1713 to 1780 over twenty thou-

sand slaves were carried annually to America by British and American ships. In 1792 there were 132 ships engaged in the slave trade in Liverpool alone.

How economic necessity and political pressure combined to impose slavery upon the colonial upper classes is explained in the following extract from a letter written in 1757 by Peter Fontaine, a Huguenot emigrant to Virginia, to a friend across the Atlantic.

The Negroes are enslaved by the Negroes themselves before they are purchased by the masters of the ships who bring them here. It is to be sure at our choice whether we buy them or not, so this is our crime, folly, or whatever you please to call it. But, our Assembly, foreseeing the ill consequences of importing such numbers amongst us, hath often attempted to lay a duty upon them which would amount to a prohibition, such as ten or twenty pounds a head, but no governor dare pass such a law, having instructions to the contrary from the Board of Trade at home. By this means they are forced upon us, whether we will or not. This plainly shows the African Company hath the advantage of the colonies, and may do as it pleases with the ministry. . . .

To live in Virginia without slaves is morally impossible. Before our troubles, you could not hire a servant or slave for love or money, so that unless robust enough to cut wood, to go to mill, to work at the hoe, &c., you must starve or board in some family where they both fleece and half starve you. There is no set price upon corn, wheat, and provisions, so they take advantage of the necessities of strangers, who are thus obliged to purchase some slaves and land. This of course draws us all into the original sin and curse of the country of purchasing slaves, and this is the reason we have no merchants, traders, or artificers of any sort here but what become planters in a short time.

A common laborer, white or black, if you can be so favored as to hire one, is a shilling sterling or fifteen pence currency per day; a bungling carpenter two shillings or two shillings and sixpence per day; besides diet and lodging. That is, for a lazy fellow to get wood and water, £ 19.16.3, current per annum; add to this seven or eight pounds more and you have a slave for life.

"It seems probable," says Charles Beard in *The Rise of American Civilization*, "that at least half of the immigrants into America before the Revolution, certainly outside New England, were either indentured servants or Negro slaves." The original foundations of American society rested not upon free but upon slave and semi-servile labor, both white and black.

(To be continued)

George E. NOVACK

# British Imperialism in India

## A Chart of the Exploitation of 375,000,000 People

"The history of British Imperialism is written in letters of blood from Congo to Canton."

(Statistics compiled by Sherman Stanley from "The India Year Book"; "Industrial Labour in India"—I.L.O. publication—series A, No. 41; Simon Commission Reports; Times of India; The Hindu; Congress Socialist, National Front; Bulletins of the *Kisan Sabha*, etc., etc.)

### The Facts:

- (a) The British have been in India for 250 years.
- (b) They have been the complete masters of India for 150 years.
- (c) There are 285,000 Englishmen in India—that is, 1 Englishman to 1,300 Indians.
- (d) The British Army comprises 60,000 soldiers, plus

British officers for the native army of 600,000.

### British Profits:

- (a) (1800-1860)—1,000,000,000 sterling in gold, jewels, interest, etc., taken out of India.
- (b) Total Capital Investment: approximately \$7,800,000,000—yielding annual average return of \$900,000,000.
- (c) September 21, 1931 to December 31, 1932: \$298,000,000 in gold bullion was shipped to London from India.
- (d) Interest collected annually on Indian National Debt: \$100,000,000.
- (e) Marx's Estimate of England's Profits: *Rent* plus



dividends on capital investment plus railway profits plus civil and military pensions plus war taxes equals annual income of 60,000,000 Indian workers.

**The Peasantry:**

- (a) There are 270,000,000 peasants.
- (b) They are divided into 700,000 villages.
- (c) There are 40,000,000 unemployed agricultural workers.
- (e) *The Halis* (slaves): average of 12 years debt slavery each; 4½ annas (9c) fixed wages per year.

**Interest, Debts and Taxation:**

- (f) Bengal peasants: Total annual taxation equals 40% of total harvest value.
- (g) (1929-1939) 50% of Bombay Presidency peasant debts paid by seizure and sale of peasant lands.
- (h) Interest rates on loans: 25% (minimum) to 200%.
- (k) Total agrarian debt: \$4,500,000,000.

**(1) Peasant Taxation and Debt Burden:**

- (1) Rent to local, private landlord.
- (2) Land tax payable to province or native state government.
- (3) Land tax payable to British government.
- (4) Interest on loans from local money lenders.
- (5) Taxes on water wells, streams, cattle, grazing lands, forests, license fees, wood-chopping, etc.
- (6) Tax on imported and exported agricultural products.
- (7) Feudal obligations: forced labor on roads, buildings, etc.; marriage, birth and death taxes; religious dues; hunting taxes, etc.

(m) *Land Hunger: Bengal* (1931): 9,995,000 landless laborers (25% of total Bengal peasantry).

*Bombay:* below 5 acres—1,128,732 families.  
1 to 25 acres—2,047,986 families.

**(n) "Making a Living": Bihar Province:**

	<i>Annual Expenses</i>	<i>Annual Income</i>
Rent .....	\$ 85,000,000	\$250,000,000
Interest .....	100,000,000	
Cultivation .....	85,000,000	
	\$270,000,000	\$250,000,000

Deficit: \$20,000,000  
plus: Central government land taxes  
plus: *Livelihood of peasantry*  
Total: Permanent Slavery

**The Workers:**

(a) There are 51 million "Untouchables" (outcasts) with no rights whatsoever. They constitute the bulk of the industrial and agricultural proletariat.

**(b) Average Annual Income: (per capita)**

	<i>India</i>	<i>England</i>	<i>United States</i>
	\$13.50	\$369.00	\$680.00

(c) *Percentage of population with annual income over \$300: 7%*

**(d) Bombay Wages: (highest in India)**

<i>Men</i>	<i>Women</i>	<i>Children</i>
27c per day	20c per day	7c per day

**The Native Princes:**

- (a) There are 562 native rulers (Maharajas) in India.
- (b) *Estimated wealth of the Nizam of Hyderabad:*

Annual Income .....	\$ 50,000,000
Gold Bars .....	250,000,000
Jewelry .....	2,000,000,000
Total .....	\$2,300,000,000

**The Indian Budget: (1935-1936)**

	<i>Percent</i>
Military Expenses .....	23.9
Interest on National Debt .....	22.5
Police and Jail Expenses .....	9.6
Civil Administration .....	8.7
Education .....	5.7
Medical and Public Health .....	2.6
Agriculture and Industry .....	2.1
Miscellaneous .....	24.9
Total .....	100.00

**Police Rule:**

(a) At the height of the Civil Disobedience Movement (1931) the following number of arrests took place in *some* of the districts of *one* of the 11 provinces:

<i>District</i>	<i>No. Arrests</i>
Midnapore .....	13,731
Arambagh .....	906
Tamil .....	3,942
Karnatak .....	4,633
Kalra .....	4,715
Ahmedabad .....	2,793
Surat .....	837
Total .....	31,557

Note: This was during a 6-month period (Jan.-June 1931).

**The Government of India:**

(a) War-time India is ruled by the Viceroy; the provincial Governors; the British "advisors" in the native states.

(b) Each of these men possesses full military and decree powers in his area.

(c) *Parliamentary representation under new Constitution:*

	<i>British India</i>	<i>Native States</i>
Population .....	256,859,787	81,310,845
Number of Seats (both houses) .....	400	229

**General Conditions of Life:**

(a) *Illiteracy:* 345 million people cannot read or write any language.

(b) *Education:* 2/3 of 700,000 Indian villages have no schools.

(c) *Life, Death and Infant Mortality:*

	India	England
Life Expectancy: . . . . .	23 years*	55 years
Death Rate per Thous. . . .	26.8	12
Infant Mort. per Thous.	250	51

(d) *Deaths:*

- (1) 6,000,000 die annually in India.
- (2) 44% of deaths are due to malaria.
- (3) *Bengal province:* 750,000 under the age of 15 years die each year.

(e) *Housing:* Calcutta: An average of 9 to 10 people inhabit rooms having an average size of 8 ft. x 6 ft.

(f) *Nourishment:* (Estimate of Sir John Megaw).

39%—Well nourished
41 —Poorly nourished
20 —Badly nourished

(g) *Hospitals:* There are 6,700 hospitals—that is, 1 hospital to each 163 square miles.

*Miscellaneous:*

- (1) *Bengal*—1771: 10,000,000 died in food famine.
- (2) 1858-1922: There were 72 military expeditions on the Northwest Frontier.
- (3) Upkeep of one British soldier equals 4 times that of an Indian soldier.

\*Life expectancy in 1881 was 30 years.

# The Socialist Crisis in France

## III

**T**HE PRESENT ATTITUDE of the Jaurès group towards the policies of the government is, in one sense, in direct contradiction to its position during the Dreyfus Affair. But, in another sense, it is nothing but a direct continuation of the previous policy. The same principle—unity with the bourgeois democrats—served as the basis of socialist policy in both cases. It served during two years of unyielding struggle for a solution of the Dreyfus Affair, and, today, because the bourgeois democrats have deserted the fight, it leads the socialists to also liquidate the Dreyfus Affair and to give up all attempts at a fundamental reformation of the army and a change in the relations between Republic and Church.

Instead of making the independent political struggle of the Socialist party the *permanent, fundamental* element and unity with bourgeois radicals the *varying and incidental* element, this principle caused Jaurès to adopt the opposite tactic: the alliance with the bourgeois democrats became the *constant*, and the independent political struggles the *accidental* element.

Already in the Dreyfus campaign, the Jaurès socialists failed to understand the line of demarcation between the bourgeois and the proletarian camps: If the question presented itself to the friends of Dreyfus as an attack upon the by-products of militarism—as the cleansing of the army and the suppression of corruption—a socialist had to view it as a struggle against the root of the evil—against the standing army itself. And if the bourgeois radicals considered justice for Dreyfus and punishment for the guilty ones as the single central point of the campaign, a socialist had to view the Dreyfus Affair as the basis for an agitation in favor of the militia system.\* Only thus would the Dreyfus Affair and the admirable efforts of Jaurès and his friends have been a great agitational service to socialism. Actually, however, the agitation of the socialist camp, on the whole, ran in the same shallow channels as the agitation of the bourgeois radicals with a few individual exceptions in which the deeper significance of the Dreyfus Affair was touched upon. It was exactly in this sphere that the social-

ists, despite their greater efforts, perseverance, and brilliance, failed to be the vanguard, and acted as the co-workers and camp followers of the bourgeois radicals. With the entry of Millerand into the radical cabinet, the socialists stood entirely upon the same ground as their bourgeois allies.

The circumstance which divides socialist politics from bourgeois politics is that the socialists are opponents of the entire existing order and must function in a bourgeois parliament fundamentally as an *opposition*. The most important aim of socialist activity in a parliament, the education of the working class, is achieved by a systematic criticism of the ruling party and its politics. The socialists are too far removed from the bourgeois order to be able to achieve practical and thorough-going reforms of a progressive character. Therefore, principled opposition to the ruling party becomes, for every minority party and above all for the socialists, the only feasible method with which to achieve practical results.

Not having the possibility of carrying their own policies with a parliamentary majority, the Socialists are forced to wring concessions from the bourgeois majority by constant struggle. They achieve this through their critical opposition in three ways. (1) Their demands are the most advanced, so that when they compete with the bourgeois parties at the polls, they bring to bear the pressure of the voting masses. (2) They constantly expose the government before the people and arouse public opinion. (3) Their agitation in and out of parliament attracts ever greater masses about them and they thus grow to become a power with which the government and the entire bourgeoisie must reckon.

The French socialists grouped about Jaurès have closed all three roads to the masses by the entry of Millerand into the government.

Above all, an uncompromising criticism of the government's policies has become impossible for the Jaurès socialists. If they wanted to chastise the cabinet for its weaknesses, its half-measures, its treachery, the blows would beat down upon their own backs. If the efforts of the government at Republican defense are a fiasco, the question

immediately arises, what is the rôle of a socialist in such a government? In order not to compromise the ministerial post of Millerand, Jaurès and his friends must remain silent in the face of all the acts of the government that could be used to open the eyes of the working class. It is a fact that since the organization of the Waldeck-Rousseau Cabinet, all criticism of the government has vanished from the organ of the right wing of the socialist movement, *Petite République* and every attempt at such criticism is immediately denounced by Jaurès as "nervousness," "pessimism," and "extremism." The first consequence of socialist participation in a coalition cabinet is, therefore, the renunciation of the most important task of all socialist activity and, above all, of parliamentary activity: *the political education and clarification of the masses.*

Furthermore, in those instances where they have been critical, the followers of Millerand have robbed their criticism of all practical significance. Their conduct in the matter of the amnesty proposals showed that no sacrifice is too great for them in order to keep the government in power. It revealed that they are prepared in advance to cast their votes for the government *in every instance* when the government levels a pistol, in the form of a vote of confidence, at their breast.

It is true that the socialists in a country governed by a parliament are not as free in their conduct as, for instance, in the German Reichstag where they can take a position of opposition without regard for the consequences and at all times express themselves unmistakably on it. Out of regard for the "lesser evil," the French socialists on the contrary, see themselves constantly forced to defend a bourgeois government with their votes. But, on the other hand, it is specifically through the parliamentary régime that the socialists gain a sharp weapon which they can hold over the head of the government like a Sword of Damocles and with which they can give their demands and their criticisms added emphasis. But in making themselves dependent upon the government through the cabinet post of Millerand, Jaurès and his friends made the government independent of them. Instead of being able to use the spectre of a cabinet crisis to force concessions from the government, the socialists, on the contrary, placed the government in a position where it could use the cabinet crisis as a Damocles sword over the head of the socialists to be used at any time to force them into line.

The Jaurès group has become a second Prometheus bound. A striking example is the recent debate on the law regulating the right of association. Jaurès' friend, Viviani, tore to pieces the government's proposals on the religious orders in a brilliant speech in the Chamber and counterposed the real solution to the problem. When, however, Jaurès, on the following day, after overwhelming praise for the speech, puts into the mouth of the government the answers to Viviani's criticism, and when, without even waiting for the debate to open and before all attempts to improve the government's proposals, Jaurès advises the socialists and the Radicals to guarantee the acceptance of the government's measures at any price, the entire political effect of Viviani's speech is destroyed.

The ministerial position of Millerand transforms—this is its second consequence — the socialist criticism of his

friends in the Chamber into empty holiday speeches, *without any influence whatsoever upon the practical politics of the government.*

Finally, the tactic of pushing the bourgeois parties forward through the pressure of the socialists reveals itself, in this instance, as an empty dream.

In order to safeguard the future existence of the government, the supporters of Millerand think they must maintain the closest coöperation with the other groups of the Left. The Jaurès group is swallowed up entirely by the general "republican" swamp of the Left, of which Jaurès is the leading brain.

In the service of Millerand, his socialist friends play, at present, the rôle usually played by the bourgeois Radicals.

Yes, contrary to general practice, the Radicals play the rôle of the most thorough-going oppositionists within the present Republican majority and the socialists play the rôle of the right wing, the moderate governmental elements.

D'Octon and Pelletan, both Radicals, were the ones who forcefully demanded an inquiry into the horrible colonial administration, while two socialist deputies of the right wing found it possible to vote against the inquiry. It was the Radical Vazeille who opposed the strangling of the Dreyfus Affair by means of the Amnesty Law, while the socialists finally voted against Vazeille.

Finally, it is the socialistic Radical, Pelletan, who gives the following advice to the Socialists (*Dépêche de Toulouse*, December 29) :

The question comes down to this; does a government exist to serve the ideas of the party that supports it or to lead that party to a betrayal of its ideas? O, the men whom we maintain at the helm don't fool us! With the exception of two or three Ministers, they all rule about in the same manner as a Cabinet headed by Méline\* would. And those parties that should warn the Cabinet and chastise it, crawl upon their stomachs before it. I, for my part, belong to those who view as excellent strategy the attempt of the Socialist party to place one of its people in power, instead of isolating itself as a result of a systematic struggle against the government. Yes, I hold this strategy to be first-rate. But to what purpose? So that the progressive policies in the Cabinet receive added support, and not so that the worst omissions by the Cabinet find the socialists as hostages. . . . Today, Waldeck-Rousseau is no longer an ally, as we would like to believe, but the guide of the conscience of the progressive parties. And he guides them, it appears to me, a little too far. It suffices to have him pull out of his pocket the bogey-man of the Cabinet crisis to make himself obeyed. Beware! The politics of the country will lose something when out of us and out of you there will be formed a new category of sub-opportunists.

Socialists who attempt to win away petty-bourgeois Democrats from their position of opposition to the government, and petty-bourgeois Democrats who accuse the socialists of crawling on their stomachs before the government and of betraying their own ideas—that is the lowest level to which socialism has yet sunk, and at the same time, the final consequence of socialist Ministerialism.

Thus the tactic of Jaurès, which through the sacrifice of the socialist principle of opposition sought to achieve practical results, has revealed itself to be the most impractical in the world.

Instead of increasing the influence of the socialists upon the government and the bourgeois parliament, the tactic of Jaurès has made them into involuntary tools of the gov-

ernment and passive appendages of the petty - bourgeois radicals.

Instead of giving the progressive policies of the Chamber a new impetus, the withdrawal of the socialist opposition killed the last chance of bringing the Chamber to act in a decisive and courageous manner.

And this is their greatest failure. The fiasco of the Waldeck-Millerand-inspired actions of republican defense was not accidental but the logical result of the impotence from which the bourgeois radicals in the Chamber suffered from the very beginning and to which the socialists condemned themselves through their participation in the bourgeois radical government.

If the miserable "actions" of the Waldeck-Rousseau government signified the sad end of its republican mission to an impartial observer, they signified to Jaurès, despite weaknesses which he could not deny when pointed out from his own ranks, the happy beginning of a great era of democratic renaissance in France, based upon the firm alliance of socialism with petty bourgeois democracy.

That is why [writes Jaurès], the building of an ever so timid left majority for the support of an ever so indecisive and weak a government of the left, is, in my view, a fact of the greatest importance. I regard it as an embryonic, but necessary foundation of the legislative and administrative organism which will lead society into the path toward the realization of the highest equality for which we strive. (*Petite République*, January 8, 1901.)

It is this distant vision of the coming epoch when the socialist proletariat and the radical petty bourgeoisie will rule together that makes it necessary to maintain the government of Waldeck-Rousseau at the price of principled political aims! This it is that makes it necessary to maintain the alliance with the bourgeois left at the expense of independent Socialist opposition! Jaurès has only left out of sight, in this grandiose political cloud-castle, the fact that petty bourgeois radicalism, which he wants to place in power with the support of the socialists, has already collapsed long ago as the result of a tactic which has sad similarities to that of Jaurès.

The Republican program has been the foundation for the political rôle of the French petty bourgeoisie since the Great Revolution. As long as the big bourgeoisie entrenched themselves behind the monarchy, the petty bourgeoisie could appear as the leader of the masses. The contradiction between the working class and the bourgeoisie, in large measure, took the form of a difference between the Republic and the Monarchy and constituted a firm backbone for the petty-bourgeois opposition.

These circumstances have changed with the development of the Third Republic. With the transformation of the big bourgeoisie from an enemy into the very backbone of the Republic and the realization of the petty-bourgeois program—republican form of government, "sovereignty of the people" through a parliamentary régime, freedom of press, organization, and conscience—the ground was pulled from under the feet of petty-bourgeois politics and its spear directed against the bourgeoisie was broken. Only the outer decorations of a bourgeois republic remain as the aim of the petty-bourgeois "radical" program, like a progressive tax system, reform of public education, and the struggle with clericalism.

While the political differences between the petty bourgeoisie and the big bourgeoisie disappeared, the social differ-

ences between the bourgeoisie and the working class developed still more deeply. Together with the soul of its program, the petty-bourgeois radicals lost many of their supporters. The proletariat appeared on the scene as an independent party in the sharpest conflict with the Radicals as well as with the Moderates. Within the Radical camp itself a differentiation took place. While one section was impelled by material interests to draw close to the bourgeoisie, another section found itself forced to adopt a socialist coloration.

"Pure" middle class radicalism, reduced to the rôle of a weak buffer party, could only choose one of two courses to carry through its program. It could either limit itself to the rôle of an opposition in the Chamber and use the extra-parliamentary pressure of the masses to support it, or it could limit itself to parliamentary combinations for the purpose of participating in the government of the big bourgeoisie.

The first course, to win the support of the masses in competition with a socialist working class party, had now become doubly impossible for the Radicals. Not only could they offer the working class little, but due to the prominence and stability of small industry in France, the petty bourgeoisie was frightened away by the social aspirations of the proletariat. And since it persisted with its paltry program, there was no other way left open but parliamentary coöperation with the bourgeoisie. And this was the beginning of its collapse.

In ordinary times, petty-bourgeois radicalism was assigned the rôle of being a passive accomplice of the opportunistic bourgeoisie in the joint cabinets. But from time to time it had the opportunity to prove that it was absolutely indispensable. This occurred whenever the bourgeoisie had compromised itself by some scandal and threw the Republic into a crisis. In such a situation, radicalism finds the opportunity to again pull out its old tattered program of "defense of the Republic" and to temporarily take over the helm. Regularly at this point, the fact that the Radicals lack a parliamentary majority to carry through their program is "discovered," though this is always a known fact from which the proper conclusions can be drawn in advance.

In order to keep itself at the helm and to rule, Radicalism is forced to desert its own program and either hide behind pretenses designed to conceal its inactivity or to take to the road of openly opportunistic politics. In either case it reveals to the Chamber its superfluity and to the country its unreliability and thus becomes ever more an impotent tail to the bourgeois kite.

The record of the Waldeck-Rousseau Cabinet is a faithful picture of such Radical politics. If one regards the "united left," upon which Jaurès wants to build the entire present-day politics of the Socialist party, as a compact political group that has come together for the cleansing and reforming of the Republic, one makes the same mistake of overestimation as made in that view according to which the nationalist camp is a compact mass with serious monarchist longings.

Quite the contrary, we see in the "united left" the most varied elements, with all shades from socialism to reaction represented. The extreme right wing, the Progressives of the Isembère group, rub elbows with the storm troops of

Méline. The "united left", internally divided, has only come together out of a common necessity for the reconstitution of law and order. When this objective has been achieved—and it appears as if the Amnesty Law is its classic solution—the binding interests recede into the background, the left disintegrates, and the "government of Republican defense" is left suspended in mid-air. The fact that the Meline Cabinet had a majority in this very same Chamber indicates that the present majority is only a temporary one. And the recent election of Deschanel to the presidency of the Chamber, which could only take place due to the betrayal of their own candidate, Brisson, by a section of the Left, shows that the collapse of the "united left" is only a matter of time.

And this situation gives a logical explanation of the conduct of the Waldeck-Rousseau Cabinet. Not having the possibility to undertake any sort of thoroughgoing action, it feels itself compelled to blunt the edges of the contradictions that had been sharpened by the crisis through a series of capitulations. Thus it emerges true to the traditions of petty-bourgeois radicalism. Taking over the helm without the power to carry out its own program, it ends up by betraying it.

The government of Waldeck-Millerand is, therefore, not the beginning of an era of democratic rule based upon the socialist-radical alliance, as Jaurès sees it. It is much more the continuation of the previous history of the petty-bourgeois radicals who feel themselves called upon, not to realize their own democratic program, but to periodically clean

away the political dirt piled up by the big bourgeoisie so that bourgeois reaction can continue a normal existence in its republican form. The new era begun with the Cabinet of Waldeck-Rousseau, unfortunately, consists of the fact that for the first time the socialists have participated in this historic mission of the petty bourgeoisie. The socialists, under the illusion that they were serving the program of socialism, were in reality serving as shock troops for the petty-bourgeois radicals in the same manner that the latter, under the illusion that they were serving the program of democracy, were in reality serving as the shock troops of the big bourgeoisie.

The tactic of Jaurès is, therefore, built on sand. The rise of petty-bourgeois democracy, which was to be facilitated by Millerand's entry into the government and by the surrender of their position as parliamentary opposition by the socialists, reveals itself to be a phantom. Contrary to his aim, Jaurès has crippled the only force in France that could have defended democracy and the Republic, by chaining the socialist proletariat to the corpse of petty bourgeois radicalism.

(To be concluded.)

ROSA LUXEMBURG

(TRANSLATED BY ERNEST ERBER)

\*The militia system, or the "people in arms", as the social democrats often phrased it, was regarded by the pre-war socialist movement as the solution to the problem of militarism. Lenin, writing during the World War, exposed the fallacy of this demand.

\*Felix Jules Meline started his career in the typical fashion of the French politician by becoming a lawyer. In 1880 he emerged as the leader of the party fighting for a high tariff to protect French industry. In 1896 he became Premier at the head of a reactionary Cabinet and governed during the Dreyfus Affair until the scandals in the army caused his cabinet to fall in 1898.

## Correspondence

### Rebuttal on the Palestine Question

The recent "Spark" article on Palestine was written after the first article of Comrade Rock had appeared in print. Since then Comrade Rock has published two further articles, but naturally the "Spark" criticism could deal only with the first of his articles. Today, however, that criticism would have been much stronger, because in his subsequent articles all the contradictions of Comrade Rock's argument stood out in stronger relief. To be frank, those contradictions appear to us to be those of a man torn between the theory of Revolutionary Marxism and the practice of narrow Nationalism, i.e., centrist contradictions.

"It is very hard to establish an international class policy for the Palestine proletariat", complains Rock at the very outset of his article. How often have we and other Revolutionary Marxists heard the complaint: "Internationalism sounds so well, but it is not applicable to the peculiar conditions of our country. Internationalism elsewhere is all right, but not here." From a man who accuses the "Spark" (which does not and never did complain of the difficulty of establishing an international policy for the South African proletariat) of expressing non-in-

ternationalist views, the dubious phrase is very strange indeed. But, as we are about to show, it is not at all accidental.

The first contradiction appears at once in the first chapter of the article, where he deals with "the definition of the essence of the Arabian National Movement" and the conclusions therefrom. Comrade Rock has to admit that the Arab National movement in Palestine is, like its parallel in other colonial countries, an anti-imperialist movement. He has further to admit that the Revolutionary Marxists are in duty bound to support the national liberation movement with all their strength even if the bourgeoisie or the feudalists stand for the time being at its head. The Marxists will of course preserve their party independence and will always point to the proletarian road, etc. So far so good—in theory. But when Comrade Rock comes to practice, he not only does not support this admittedly anti-imperialist movement, but he turns his wrath upon the "Spark" for expressing its great satisfaction with the anti-imperialist struggle of the Arabs, and their united will to attain national liberation. We regret having to repeat here what we have already said in that article, but it is obviously necessary:

"Nothing will blind us or distract us from the fundamental issue, namely, the progressive revo-

lutionary struggle of a colonial people against imperialism. We had and we have no illusions concerning this struggle, whatever the outcome of the present political manoeuvres in Palestine may be. Whether British imperialism will succeed by its new move for a round-table conference in breaking the Arab united front (as it succeeded before by a similar move in India), and by corruption succeed in side-tracking the national movement, or whether the present struggle will go on, we are under no illusions, we have no doubt that, so long as the national movement is led and dominated by the Arab national bourgeoisie and clergy, the struggle for liberation cannot be crowned with success. It will terminate in a foul compromise between the national bourgeoisie and imperialism. Time and again this has been proved by history. But, so long as the fight is progressive, we have to support it, while at the same time warning the Arab workers of their treacherous bourgeoisie." ("New International", Feb. 1939, p. 42).

Once we consider this struggle as progressive, we support it wholeheartedly and without a sour face. We wish to see this struggle against Imperialism taking place in every colony all over the vast colonial world. Without these colonial revolts, these national liberation struggles for independence, the national wars in the colonies, it is simply impossible to visualise the World Revolution and its victory.

But not so for Comrade Rock. Having paid lip-service to Marxist theory, having even admitted in theory that we are in duty bound to support this movement, he forgets his part and shows his real face. He rebukes us for expressing satisfaction with an event, a colonial people's struggle against the op-

pressors, which he considers a terrible calamity.

"What is so terrible in the situation in Palestine is that, on the one hand, there is a strong national differentiation between Jews and Arabs, and on the other, the unity of the Arab camp is very firm."

But this sentence reveals more than the contradiction of a centrist torn between theory and practice as referred to above. It reveals a Jewish Nationalist for whom the revolutionary aspects of the anti-imperialist struggle are completely overshadowed by the one single aspect of this struggle that affects the Jews. And even looking at this aspect of the events, it is impermissible for a Revolutionary Marxist (which is synonymous with Internationalism) to overlook the fact that the national unity in the Jewish camp is similarly very firm. It is surely not by accident that Comrade Rock failed even to mention, let alone condemn, this fact, when he speaks of what is so terrible in the Palestine situation. Yet it is precisely here that condemnation is required. For if the firm national unity in the Arab camp, instead of a class unity of all workers, is to be deplored by Revolutionaries, how much more must be condemned the firm national unity in the Jewish camp! Why then forget so conveniently the latter altogether?

Moreover, the national unity in the two camps does not stand in the same category. While the former is leading a struggle against Imperialism, for national independence, for democratisation, for a Constituent Assembly, a struggle that is progressive, the latter is directed to the strengthening of British Imperialism, is directed against the independence and democratisation of the country. The latter is openly reactionary, and stands in no comparison with the former, with the national unity of the oppressed. If, as the Jewish workers claim, they are more civilised—and undoubtedly they should know more of the class struggle than their Arab fellow-workers—then it is clearly their duty to show the Arab workers the way to class solidarity, by breaking away from their Zionist United Front. Yet they show not the least intention of breaking with their bourgeoisie and with Imperialism. And herein lies the tragedy for the Jewish population of Palestine. How then can Comrade Rock, if he is an internationalist, forget altogether those who are chiefly responsible for this tragedy?

Unfortunately Comrade Rock is not an internationalist, and nothing could illustrate it more clearly than this last article, where after much juggling with Marxist phraseology and centrist sophistry he comes out openly for the All-Zionist National slogan of unrestricted Jewish immigration!

He is not in a position to refute a single one of our arguments against this immigration, which we maintain is not immigration but invasion under the protection of, and for the strengthening of Imperialism, with the avowed aim of trampling upon and destroying the rights of the native population of that country, with the aim of reducing the Arabs to a minority in a then Jewish State.

Comrade Rock cannot refute these arguments. He even admits them himself. He ad-

mits that the Jewish population maintains a closed economy against the Arab economy, "100 per cent Jewish products, 100 per cent Jewish labour." He admits that most of the Jewish population demands a Jewish majority in Palestine, a Jewish State. In his second article on Palestine ("New International", Nov. 1938, p. 337) he even half-heartedly admits that the Jewish immigration in Palestine stands in no comparison with the Jewish immigration in America. He says:

"The Jews in America are a part of the general economic system and entertain no chauvinistic aspirations such as the boycott of foreign goods and labour or the establishment of a National State. The Jewish population in Palestine does strive to become a majority and determines its political road in accordance with this perspective, building up a relatively closed national economy and boycotting Arab labour and goods. Influenced by Imperialism and Zionism both, this population is against every attempt to obtain the democratisation and independence of the country." (Our emphasis).

But, having admitted all this, he is now trying to reconcile it with the nationalistic slogan for free immigration, which he later smuggles in as a part of his proposed minimum programme of Revolutionary Socialists. To achieve this, he employs a very convenient word, viz., "objectively":

"The Jewish population in Palestine therefore has objectively a dual character. Corresponding to its class differentiation, it contains on the one hand a Jewish working class and accelerates the rise of an Arab working class, i.e., forces which are objectively anti-imperialist; and on the other hand, to the extent that it is permeated by Zionist exclusivist tendencies, i.e., submitted to bourgeois influence, it strengthens the position of imperialism and of reaction in the country. On this premise the revolutionary socialist policy and its attitude towards Jewish immigration must be built up."

And then follows another transformation. The first dubious part, which is analogous to Otto Bauer's "objective progressiveness of Fascism", is then conveniently transformed into the corner-stone of the "correct policy for a Marxist party", while the second part is also conveniently shelved and forgotten. Then, to remove any embarrassment which his contradictions may cause to his readers, he brings in an additional piece of sophistry; namely, "The complete victory of the movement for independence in Palestine is, however, impossible without the support of the Jewish toilers, who hold important positions in Palestine's political and economic life."

That should dispose of all arguments, thinks Comrade Rock. But in his naive sophistication he simply ignores the hard facts: (i) That the Arabs alone are conducting the struggle for independence in Palestine and have already achieved some success in this struggle without the support of the Jewish toilers and even against the combined strength of the latter attached to Imperialism. (ii) That the Jewish toilers up till now show no inclination to join the struggle for independence of the country, show no inclination to break away from Imperialism-Zionism, show no inclination to drop the demand open or hidden for a majority. (iii) That no rapprochement on class lines is possible between Arab workers and Jewish workers, so long as the latter persist in their aspirations to a majority, persist in their Zionist ideology of a Jewish State.

But Comrade Rock does not want to face these facts and draw the correct conclusions from them. Instead of this, he announces with the assured air of a card-player who

holds the trump card, that without the support of the Jewish toilers the final victory is impossible. And because he thinks that this support will not be forthcoming "so long as the Arabian toiling masses will struggle against Jewish immigration", he advises—not that the Jewish toilers should give up their Zionist ideal of a Jewish State, but that the Arab toilers should give in to the Zionist demand for free immigration. Like all Zionists of the "Left", he grants to the Arab the "equal" right also to immigrate from the surrounding countries. The sugar-coating of the pill is really too thin to deserve consideration.

What amazes us is not so much the display of naivete on the part of Comrade Rock. We could leave it to him to work out the ultimate results of his (?) plan. (a) Free Jewish immigration will lead to a Jewish majority, and (b) to the strengthening of Zionism and its hold over the Jewish toilers, and (c) to a Jewish State which must always look to British Imperialism for protection from a hostile Arab world. Thus his advice to the Arabs implies that in order to get support from the Jewish toilers, in their struggle against Imperialism they should give up this struggle against Imperialism! But what does amaze us is that he should put this Zionist demand into his proposed programme of the Bolshevik-Leninist movement in Palestine! Can he think for a moment that the Fourth International would take responsibility for such a pro-Imperialist and pro-Zionist proposal? We on our part have no doubt of the answer which such a programme would receive from every section of the Fourth International, if indeed the Palestine section should share the views of Comrade Rock.

In conclusion: Comrade Rock is trying to discredit the views of the "Spark" on the ground that the Stalinists in Palestine use the same kind of argument and arrive at the same conclusions, and also that the reactionary Jewish Labour group, "Hashomer Hatzair", argues similarly—but from the opposite point of view. This, we must admit, does not disturb us. So long as our views are correct and further the aim of the Revolution, we are not perturbed, when the Stalinists, Anarchists, Lovestoneites, or Socialists adopt them. That the "Hashomer Hatzair" should be diametrically opposed to our views is only natural.

May 8, 1939

The "SPARK"

## A Letter from Bolivia

I HAVE arrived here after an extensive and busy trip through the eastern part of Bolivia where the toiling masses of "camba" Indians starve under the black regime of the feudal barons. Upon arriving I read all the issues of THE NEW INTERNATIONAL and the Socialist Appeal you have sent me. The important articles on "Intellectuals in Retreat" and the national convention of the SWP (especially the article of James P. Cannon) were translated into Spanish and made accessible to a small but hopeful newly-formed student group at the university



and agricultural school whom, after long and patient work, I have succeeded in introducing to revolutionary political ideas. So, with the help of THE NEW INTERNATIONAL my work has ended its disagreeable period of purely personal effort and become a socially meaningful one. . . .

The strongly pronounced internationalism of the Socialist Workers Party publications was able to produce an unbelievable effect, considering the extreme backwardness of the social movement in the eastern region of Bolivia. . . .

Now I pass over to a more interesting subject: the fascist-Coughlinite offensive in the United States. The campaign put forward by the SWP is in every way well-organized. But there is a question which I can not help recalling in these dark days of reaction and the preparation for war. The various propositions of the writers in the *Socialist Appeal* are good; they display the results of an extensive observation of the laws that determine the rise of Fascism and the measures that must be taken to prevent it. But I have not read one word upon the Brazilian experience, perhaps the most instructive concerning the application of a correct policy toward a fascist movement. Although they numbered no more than a dozen in the Sao Paulo region, the Brazilian comrades of the former "Liga Comunista Internacionalista" were the most energetic fighters against the fascists. And their fight was not restricted to propaganda or defensive action. Upon the heroic day of the 7th of October, 1934, the Brazilian comrades, particularly in the State of Sao Paulo, stopped the Integralista movement permanently. And that was not merely a defensive action but an *offensive* one, based upon the general hatred that the working masses felt against fascism and the tremendous material support those masses gave them.

The action was *offensive* and *victorious*. It gave public opinion an exact measure of the value of the mercenary forces bought by the fascist leaders, that is, their true lack of *genuine* courage and *genuine* unity. The Integralistas, after the violent intervention of the armed workers, were literally swept away from the place of the meeting and, although defended by the squads of Special Police, were unable to reassemble themselves. Pursuing them along the streets and avenues, the anti-fascist workers, led by a handful of Trotskyists, made them flee literally for miles. This historic flight was responsible for the new name the public gave the "Integralistas," who formerly called themselves "the green-shirts," but who from then on were called "the green hens" because of their excellent capacity for sprinting.

More than fifteen people were killed and nearly twenty-five wounded as a result of the battle. But public opinion, especially among the petty-bourgeoisie, was frightfully impressed by the real danger involved in making oneself "heroic" under the fascist banner. Members of the "Integralista Action" dropped like flies from its ranks and the movement lost its attractiveness. It can be said that, following this date, the "Integralistas" had other opportunities and had

some successful political achievements to their credit, and that in Rio they were able to threaten the existing power. This is by no means the truth. The real explanation for the incapacity of the Brazilian fascist movement to conquer the power lies in its crucial defeat in the industrial city of the Republic. After that date, they were maintained by Getulio Vargas for his particular political purposes. In the first place, they were used as a right wing force against the bourgeois political opponents of Getulio Vargas in order to give the Vargas clique sufficient strength to defeat them and also at the same time as a menace to the workers' movement. In the second place, they were employed by the Vargas clique to menace North American imperialism, in order to obtain greater concessions through negotiations by threatening it with this surrogate for Nazi-Italian imperialism. In the third place, they were maintained as "raw material" and for "reasons of state" for a new coup d'etat. Despite the apparent lack of sense of this third reason, it is quite credible once we examine the peculiar politics personally played by Vargas for the maintenance of his domination.

No wonder that, from October 1934 to October 1935 the representative of the "Liga Comunista Internacionalista" of Sao Paulo was elected *President of all the 14 illegal executive committees of United Action (including Stalinists, Socialists, the trade-unions, etc.) that were then organized to fight fascism with full rights of freedom of criticism in action.* And today, the seventh of October resounds as the most heroic action of the proletariat of Brazil.

I couldn't finish without mentioning these few matters in order to contribute, in some way, to the present task of the SWP in dealing with the fascist question. I hope that the Brazilian experience will serve to help the American.\*

GUIDO

\* *This letter comes from a Brazilian comrade, who was jailed after the putsch led by Prestes in November 1935 along with thousands of other anti-fascist workers. He was condemned with other Trotskyists to two years imprisonment. While he was in prison, the former Liga Comunista Internacionalista was transformed by its acting leaders who escaped arrest into the Bolshevick-Leninist Group which later merged with a left-oppositional group inside the Communist Party to constitute the Leninist Workers Party (Brazilian section of the Fourth International). Comrade Guido's relation to the new Fourth Internationalist organization in Brazil was still unclarified when he had to flee the country after his release. Though we have certain differences of opinion concerning the questions dealt with in his letter, we gladly print this communication from him.*

## Kronstadt Again

TO THE EDITORS:

KRONSTADT is with us once more—this time as *The Truth About Kronstadt*, a mimeographed pamphlet written by John G. Wright and published by the National Edu-

cational Department of the S.W.P. I have no great wish to rehash the Kronstadt affair. It seems to me there are many more basic questions than Kronstadt involved in the problem of the degeneration of the Soviet state. Furthermore, at this time, the problems of the present are so pressing and threatening that one begrudges time and energy spent on even the most important historical questions. Let sleeping dogs lie, for the moment at least, I would say. But the very fact that Wright's pamphlet has just been published seems to show that *this dog—wretched cur!—is not sleeping.*

I feel a special obligation not to pass Wright's pamphlet by in silence because of the fact that my first appearance in the pages of THE NEW INTERNATIONAL was as a critic of Trotsky's article on Kronstadt. I was not convinced by that article, and I am not convinced by Wright's pamphlet. Wright scores some sharp points, particularly as to the haste with which the insurgents precipitated the uprising, and the evidence that bourgeois counter-revolutionary forces abroad made use of the uprising for their own purposes. But he does not meet either of the two strongest charges levelled at the Bolsheviks in this affair—does not meet them, I suspect, because they cannot be met.

The first charge is that the uprising was primarily an explosion of mass discontent with the Bolshevik rule because (1) the masses were being starved by the oppressive regulations of "War Communism", and (2) the Communist party, in gutting the Soviets of all political power and outlawing all other parties, whether working-class or not, had blocked all avenues through which the masses could express their opposition to this War Communism.

If I may be allowed the metaphor without being accused of perpetrating an amalgam, Wright presents the Kronstadt uprising in much the same terms as the American press usually presents a strike—as the work of a handful of "agitators", in this case, bourgeois - Menshevik - White Guard agitators. But, as we know from strike experience, agitators can set masses in motion only when there is a basis for their agitation in widespread popular discontent. The fact that within a few weeks after Kronstadt, Lenin retreated from War Communism to the N.E.P.—and, incidentally, later admitted it was a serious political error not to have done so earlier—and the fact that the published demands of the rebels were for free elections to the Soviets, a relaxation of the restriction on internal trade, etc.—all this seems to indicate that Kronstadt was primarily an expression of deepseated popular protest against the policies of the Communist party. Party, irrespective of what use party. (And it does not settle anything to talk about "the grey mass" or "petty-bourgeois elements".)

Wright's pamphlet, however, does not even mention the specific demands of the Kronstadters.

The other main charge is that the Bolsheviks suppressed the uprising with extreme brutality. Wright does take notice of

this in a footnote, but only to distort it. "A fortress had finally been taken by storm," he writes, "after a resistance that was most stubborn and determined. Previous assaults had been repulsed with heavy losses, Now the fighting shifted to the streets, block to block, house to house. A hand-to-hand struggle ensued, the most **savage form** of modern warfare. 'A massacre!' wails Serge. . . ." But Serge, as I recall it, makes no such infantile accusation as this. He charges that, *after the rebels had been disarmed*, there was a general massacre of prisoners. And that such as were not shot down on the spot were **executed in batches** by the Cheka, after secret trials, for some weeks after the uprising had been completely crushed. Granted it was necessary to suppress the uprising once it had reached the stage of armed rebellion, I can see no moral or political justification for such

bloody reprisals. They appear rather to be the automatic, mindless, brutal product of those same bureaucratic tendencies which Lenin spent the last years of his life in fighting and which finally drove Trotsky into exile.

To see the Kronstadt uprising as flowing from the mistakes of War Communism, and to criticize the severity with which the rebels were punished—this is by no means to agree with the anarchists and the social democrats that Kronstadt "exposes the fundamentally anti-democratic and totalitarian nature of Bolshevism". I think Kronstadt was a bad mistake, but a mistake explained and, to some extent, justified by the terrible social and economic difficulties of those early years of the revolution. (Incidentally, the book which more than any other I have read convinced me of the *necessity* for many of the stern and undemocratic measures

taken by the Bolsheviks in these years was, oddly enough Victor Serge's *L'an Une de la Révolution Russe*, a really excellent history which deserves to be issued in an English edition.) It seems to me a serious error to defend Kronstadt—and many other actions taken by the Bolsheviks in those early years—as a *normal* mode of behavior for a revolutionary party. I am in favor of less defense, less polemicizing against all critics on this subject, and more willingness to examine the whole affair dispassionately and objectively with a view to extracting whatever historical lessons it may hold as to what seems to me to be a key problem for all revolutionaries today: how to maintain the maximum degree of working-class democracy after the revolution has been made.

NEW YORK

Dwight MACDONALD

## Whitewashing the P. O. U. M.

IN THE SPRING of 1937, when the defeats of the Catalan workers led the vanguard to question the past actions of their leaders, the P.O.U.M. chiefs refused any reconsideration of their positions. Within the P.O.U.M. heated discussions were forced by the rank and file. The brilliant, though politically yellow, Andrade suggested in his *La Batalla* column that there might be room for a little self-criticism in the approaching party congress; he even went so far as to say that the wisdom of the P.O.U.M.'s entry into the government of Catalonia might be questioned. After this one guarded criticism, Andrade shut up like a clam.

The Catalan proletariat was beginning to grasp at the political analyses laid down months before by the revolutionary Marxists in Spain. Faced with demands from within, and without, their own ranks for some political justification of their course, Nin and the Executive Committee of the P.O.U.M. maintained an absolute silence: their documents merely recounted what they had done. Only Gorkin, the bright young showman and would-be European diplomat replied—by calling the Bolshevik-Leninist leader, Moulin, "fish-face" and by raising the Stalinist slander-cry of "Trotskyite" against the P.O.U.M. left wing. This was supposed in some way to answer their political criticism.

Now, after the direst predictions of the IVth Internationalists have been fulfilled: after the suppression of the P.O.U.M. and a year and a half of G.P.U. prisons for the P.O.U.M. leaders and thousands of Spanish workers, after the final liquidation of the revolution by the Stalinist-Republican Government, the victory of Franco and his final mopping-up, it was to be hoped that the P.O.U.M. leaders would have had the time and incentive to learn something from their own mistakes.

It would be an inestimable service to the international working class could they courageously analyze their own political errors and draw clear lessons for the future; but not only did they consistently fight Bolshevik analysis and criticism with all the weapons at their disposal; even now, when the lessons have been drawn in blood, they refuse to see them. At last, however, they have been forced by the tragic course of events to try to answer the revolutionary criticisms politically.

Here is Gorkin's alibi, printed in the press of the London Bureau:

"And what was this Central Committee of Soldiers?" (a literal translation for the Spanish of Anti-fascist Militia Committee—D.C.)

"The Trotskyites say: 'The organ of the revolution', and they reproach us as criminals for dissolving it. It was really a prolongation of the Popular Front to the C.N.T., to the F.A.I. and to the P.O.U.M.—exactly the same as the government which was to follow it."

What a tremendous falsification of history Gorkin has packed into these three lines! Of the three surviving theoreticians of the P.O.U.M., Molins, Andrade and Gorkin, only Gorkin is capable of making such an apology for the P.O.U.M. The others at least knew enough to keep silent.

After lashing out at all the other traitors and cowards: the counter-revolutionary Stalinists, the right-wing Socialists, the weak-kneed Caballero and the childish anarchists of the C.N.T.-F.A.I., Gorkin finds only the mildest eye-wash for the P.O.U.M.—he even attempts to justify their key mistake.

To confuse the Anti-Fascist Militia Committees with the autonomous Government of the Generality of Catalonia is no less grotesque than to confuse the Provisional Government of Kerensky with the Russian

Soviets. To confuse the revolutionary committees set up throughout Spain by the workers and peasants with the Popular Front government, dominated by the bourgeoisie and its agents and interested solely in *stopping* the revolution, reveals an abysmal ignorance of the most elementary Marxist teachings on the nature of the state. Or perhaps Gorkin doesn't know what went on in Spain from 1936 to 1938. Here are a few of the main lines.

The social and economic revolution in Spain in 1936 was one of the most profound and rapid ever accomplished: this was due solely to the work of the numerous committees—military, economic and political—set up by the Spanish workers and peasants. The Anarchist, Socialist, P.O.U.M. and Communist workers began the creation of their own organs for fighting Franco even before his July 19th rising took place. In the first days the workers and peasants acted through fragments of their trade union and party structures—in most cases without the knowledge or consent of their leaders; local sections of the organizations met together to arm and to force a general strike. In Catalonia the initiative in stopping the rebellion was taken by the rank and file men of the F.A.I. (the Anarchist Federation)—who drew into the struggle the best elements of their syndicalist union, the C.N.T.; by groups of P.O.U.M. workers, who acted independently to arm themselves, as did the best elements in the Socialist union, the U.G.T. The same independent action of the rank and file of all the working class organizations stopped the Franco forces in Madrid, Valencia, the north, and two-thirds of Spain.

For the first three days after the rising there was a general strike. When the necessity of going back to work, producing arms and organizing the economy became clear, local coordinating committees, and commit-

tees of action, sprang up on all sides: Popular Committees, Revolutionary Committees, or, as the central Catalan body was called, **Anti-fascist Militia Committee**.

These committees were always termed by the Bolshevik-Leninists and the P.O.U.M. left wing as "imperfect" organs of power. The already constituted workers' organizations—their political parties, trade unions and the peasants' organizations—sent their best men to these committees. The local committee tended to be dominated by the most powerful group in their own districts. The Anarchists controlled the committees in most of Catalonia and Aragon, the P.O.U.M., the committees in Lerida and many smaller towns, the Socialists in Madrid and Valencia, while the village committees across Spain varied in political composition from region to region. These decentralized base committees everywhere in Spain took over the functions of the government and the economy. For a time everywhere, in Catalonia for ten months, *they were the de facto government*. They were the dominant force in a situation of dual power. They ran the militia, the police, supplies, industry, transportation, communications, censorship, customs. The Popular Front government, in most places, was dead; in others it was the thinnest shadow of its old self.

The revolutionary committees, following Anarchist, P.O.U.M. or Socialist lines, were the *indirect* democratic expression of the will of the workers and peasants. To turn them into democratic soviets it was necessary: (1) to have elections of delegates in the factories, farming centers and at the front; (2) to elect the central bodies from these lower bodies; (3) to coördinate all the independent committees (such as the C.N.T. Transportation Committees, the village Provisioning Committees, workers' police bodies, etc.) under various departments of the central revolutionary committees.

These reforms would have made the delegates responsible to the broad masses of workers, instead of only to their own parties or unions. In many of the smaller towns the Revolutionary Committee had merely taken over the functions of the municipality (always a strong unit in Spain) and left the economic problems to the unions, the military problems to the militias. The subordination of the militia and the labor unions—with all their peripheral committees—to the political committees would have been the first step toward solving the economic and military problems, which were first of all political. Their successful solution depended on the resolution of the situation of dual power in favor of a strong centralized revolutionary government based on the democratized committees.

The Barcelona Central Anti-fascist Militia Committee, as actually set up, did not in any way reflect the base committees or the relation of class forces in Catalonia. Yet it could by no stretch of the imagination be called merely an extension of the Popular Front to the C.N.T.-F.A.I. and the P.O.U.M., as Gorkin would have it. This Central Committee was set up to coördinate and di-

rect the activities being carried out through all Catalonia by innumerable *new organizations*; it was an outgrowth of these new revolutionary committees. It represented committees of all shades and descriptions, carrying out all sorts of tasks: economic, political, military, dominated by many different fractions,—but all alike in one important respect: they had *nothing whatsoever in common with the old governing apparatus* and its middle class bureaucrats. They had taken over the functions of the old government and were ignoring it completely.

In the first days of the war and the revolution, who heard of the Popular Front? In Catalonia it had never been very real, and the Anarchist and P.O.U.M. workers had no illusions that it had any connection with their new committees and tasks. The Popular Front was an electoral and parliamentary combine which was only dragged into the Central Anti-fascist Militia Committee with the rest of the Stalinist garbage. Gorkin knows as well as anyone that in August, 1936, the Stalinist P.S.U.C. tried unsuccessfully to set up a Popular Front Cabinet in the Catalan Generality. Unsuccessfully because the Anarchists refused to be a party to it—then.

If the workers' committees were merely extensions of the Popular Front, why weren't the Popular Frontists satisfied with their rule? Why set up another Popular Front government? Why the constant sabotage of the workers' committees by the P.S.U.C., the Madrid Government, the Catalan Left Republicans and the Russian Consul—all tried and true Popular Frontists? If the workers' committees and the Popular Front were the same thing, why put these committees down in blood? Why not dissolve the Popular Front Government, which had already lost its power to the working class?

No, the revolutionary committees had no connection organically or ideologically with the Popular Front. The true Popular Frontists, devoted to the interests of the bourgeoisie and the "great democracies", would have none of them, no matter how diluted or rechristened they later became.

When, due to their inability to answer in a revolutionary way the problems posed by the war and the revolution, the Anarchists were forced to adopt the Stalinist answer and form a Popular Front Cabinet—trailed, as ever, by the P.O.U.M.—the local revolutionary committees supposedly became a part of the Generality apparatus. The plan was to incorporate them much as the *Arbeiterräte* were incorporated into the Weimar Constitution. Those with political functions were dissolved by Generality decree and replaced by Municipal Councils with the same proportion of representation as the Catalan Government Council; transportation committees, supply committees, etc., were to be absorbed one by one into the corresponding government departments.

These laws remained long unenforced—in many cases until after May, 1937. The committees were so "identical" with the Barcelona Popular Front Government that they

refused even to obey its orders, much less amalgamate with it. The Catalan workers and peasants had seized the political power too firmly. They knew that to take their committees back into the old government was to lose this power. The constant disagreements and petty warfare between the provinces and the Central Catalan Government bear witness to the fact that these workers' and peasants' organs, devoted to organizing and consolidating the workers' power, remained the antithesis of the Popular Front Government in Barcelona, which was devoted to daily, fatal concessions to the Central Republican Government, and to the political line of "courting the democracies".

The Central Anti-fascist Militia Committee represented, not its own base committees, but the Executive Committees of the various anti-fascist organizations. Thus, it was no more democratic than its constituent organizations; and when it adopted the Peoples' Front line, it only meant that these Executive Committees had adopted that line. The same Executive Committees which had never stopped Franco or taken over the factories in the first place.

In this sense Gorkin might possibly compare the Central Anti-fascist Militia Committee with the Popular Front Generality Government it dissolved into: neither was democratic, both favored the Popular Front. But to see no further than these superficial parallels shows that Gorkin has no real understanding of the class content of the two contesting governments. Gorkin lightly skips over the tremendous social upheaval which shook Spain to its very foundations, which took the combined forces of the Communists, Republicans, France, Britain, Russia, Germany, Italy and Franco three years to break. Gorkin completely ignores the passage of political power from the bourgeoisie to the Spanish workers, this power that the rank and file of the Spanish working class seized and tried in vain to organize, and which they finally lost because they had no Bolshevik party to lead them.

Instead of deepening and democratizing the revolutionary committees where the real hope for the revolution, and the victory over fascism lay, the P.O.U.M. signed a decree suppressing them. The P.O.U.M. by its actions told the workers to put their faith in the Popular Front Government of the Generality—from which Nin was later kicked as a reward for his services. And now Gorkin comes whining back with an attempt to change history a bit to suit his newly-found line.

Since Gorkin failed to understand what was happening around him in the heat and fire of social revolution, it is too much to expect him to understand it now. His answer to the question of the revolutionary workers "Why did Spain go down?" is just as bankrupt as his answer to the Catalan workers asking "How shall we complete our revolution?"

Douglas CONLEY and  
Mary WILLS

# Books

## Organizing Negro Labor

BLACK WORKERS AND THE UNIONS By HORACE R. CAYTON and GEORGE S. MITCHELL. The University of North Carolina Press. 1939. 437 pages.

MUCH has been written of the role of the Negro in the American labor movement in the past century. To put the matter bluntly, the history of the Negro worker consisted mainly of chapters of strike-breaking. In steel, packinghouse, railroads, mines and other vital industries, Northern employers found one main use for Negro workers: import them as scabs. Bloody Homestead is a classic example; the 1919 steel strike another.

Add to this historic factor the racial prejudices infesting the labor movement which also grew out of the special status of the Negro people in American society and one can readily understand why the problem of the Negro in the labor movement has been so difficult and acute.

However, under the impact of a declining capitalist system which now finds itself in an inescapable social crisis, class interest and class solidarity have measurably relaxed racial tensions, and by doing so, have mitigated the divisive effects of racial antagonism. This is recognized by the authors of this excellent survey of the black workers in the unions.

They necessarily devote much time to the C.I.O. because one of the progressive features of this industrial union movement was its attempt to tackle seriously the problem of the Negro worker and bring him into the labor movement. The C.I.O. did commendable spade work in this field, as the authors show.

Previous sporadic attempts of the A.F. of L. to unionize the huge mass of unskilled workers in steel had met with failure. A union basing itself on the aristocracy of labor could hardly be expected to do otherwise. The poorest paid, least vocal and most exploited of the unskilled workers, the Negroes—who entered the industry largely as strike-breakers—were least, when not adversely, affected by the A.F. of L. campaigns, before and after the first world war. Yet they comprised 10 per cent of the 500,000 steel workers.

In approaching this question the C.I.O. had a rich experience to base its strategy on. The backbone of the C.I.O., the United Mine Workers of America, for decades had been tackling the job of organizing the thousands of Negro coal miners and did succeed. The U.M.W.A. had been able in 1933 to organize all of Alabama's coal mines which employed thousands of Negro workers. Many Negroes held positions as union officials.

When the C.I.O. entered the steel industry field through the Steel Workers Organizing Committee, the Negro worker was one of its major concerns. For decades the steel barons had used the simple but effective strategy of playing off black against white workers to prevent union organization. Wages for Negroes

were always lower and they were given only the dirtiest and hardest work. Under the steel code of the N.R.A., for example, minimum rates of pay for common labor varied from 40 cents an hour in the Ohio district to 25 cents an hour in the Birmingham area. "The low rates of 25 and 27 cents an hour for the two southern districts are presumably based on the predominance of Negro labor in those districts," Secretary of Labor Perkins admitted at the code hearings.

Mutual suspicion and distrust between black and white workers was inevitable under those conditions. Promotion was impossible for the Negro worker, although steel employers admit they make fine employees. The Negro worker resented the wage differential. The white worker saw an economic threat in the lower-paid Negro worker. Frequent double-crosses of the Negroes by labor bureaucrats added to the suspicion. Steel-company financed Negro churches did their part to keep the Negro worker from the "white union". Breaking down the antagonism through special appeals to the Negro workers, advancing Negro workers into official union positions, fighting for social, political and economic rights insofar as possible: these were the weapons of the C.I.O. Hundreds of interviews with Negro workers in steel plants, and with S.W.O.C. organizers are quoted by the authors to depict in detail this process. By no means has it been completed. . . . The socialist revolution is necessary to solve the problem fundamentally. But the 200 pages of this book on the steel unions is an indispensable guide for all progressive unionists who want an immediate answer to the problem of organizing and building mixed unions.

Current interest alone would dictate reading the section of the book on the Negro in the meat-packing industry. It provides an excellent background to the present C.I.O. moves, including a strike threat, against the big packing house companies.

Out of the 164,882 persons engaged in the meat-packing and slaughtering industry, 18,426 are Negroes, most of whom are found in the semi-skilled and laboring divisions. Boss-fomented friction provoked the notorious Chicago race riots of 1919 giving a bloody background to that industry. The A.F. of L. Amalgamated Meat Cutters and Butcher Workmen dropped from a total membership of 70,000 to a few thousand when its strike failed because the race riots were engineered to break union solidarity. Importation of Negro strike-breakers, the antagonism of Negro organizations like the Chicago Urban League, and the bitter hatred among white workers against the "scabs" poured further kerosene on the flames of race hatred. Chicago remained open shop.

Conditions in the meat packing industry have scarcely improved since Upton Sinclair wrote "The Jungle" in the early 1900's. Under the N.R.A. the packing house workers expressed their dissatisfaction by flocking back into the Amalgamated Meatcutters and Butchers union. In 1935, 5,000 Negroes in Chicago had signed union cards, along with 30,000 other workers. Conservative policies

and racial discrimination soon brought another drop in the A.F. of L. union. Then the C.I.O. entered upon the scene. Although handicapped by Stalinist leadership, the C.I.O. union has made considerable gains primarily because of its industrial union policy with no racial discrimination.

Since the overwhelming majority of the Negro people live in the South and constitute potentially one of the most dynamic revolutionary forces in the country, the story of unionism in the South has special significance. To give a picture of the problems involved, the authors selected Birmingham, the Pittsburgh of the South, for a survey of the Negroes in unions. Out of 250,000 population, Birmingham has 100,000 Negroes. For Jefferson County as a whole, in a population of 431,493 in 1930 some 173,031 were gainfully employed; 96,295 of those were white and 76,736 Negroes.

Union membership in Jefferson County increased 48,000 in the N.R.A. days. 31,200 were Negro recruits. It was a remarkable reversal of the history of the Alabama labor movement which has been featured by racial discrimination, lynchings of Negro militants by the Klu Klux Klan, and ruthless crushing by police power of all strikes which involved black and white workers. "Divide and rule" is not so easy for the Southern bosses any more. However, "Jim Crowism" exists even in most of the union movement. Certain obnoxious practices are accepted by both white and black unionists in union meetings. Separate locals prevail in the building trades. Study classes, more active participation in union matters, and the development of Negro union leaders tend to break down the barriers still existing.

The changes in the role and status of the Negro in the labor movement reflect themselves in the life of the Negro communities and their social organizations. Once all Negro social organizations were antagonistic to "white unionism." But class differentiation among Negroes, copying that of capitalist society in general, created the basis for a new attitude. How this occurred in the National Urban League, a Negro organization, is told by the authors. The "Uncle Tom" role of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People likewise is analyzed.

Although we disagree with the program advocated for Negro labor by the authors, namely the formation of a federated trades organization of Negro workmen, we can certainly agree with the spirit of the concluding remarks in the book.

"The growth of a trade union movement is a long and slow process; certainly the fetters of race prejudice within the trade unions cannot be released by fiat. Persons interested in enlisting Negroes in the union movement can hope to overcome only gradually the many difficulties involved. Under present conditions, Negroes will remain the lowest paid of the industrial workers. Only when they realize that the myth of 'black economy' is just another escapist mechanism, with even less validity than Garvey's Black Republic, will they attempt to organize and demand a greater share of the national income. Those interested in assisting them in industrial emancipation will face the problem of invading every institution in the community, contesting the Church's doctrine of salvation through resignation, questioning the worth of the vicarious grandeur offered by the fraternal orders, and emancipating the mass of the workers from the ideological hold of the ultra-nationalistic, race conscious upper class."

B. J. WIDICK

## A Correction

On page 232 of the August issue, Leon Trotsky is made to say, in his article on "Moralists and Sycophants against Marxism", that "Victor Serge wished in reality to say something altogether different, namely, that my immoral ideas are a generalization of the practise of Lenin, the 'immoralist'."

The actual and correct text of the article spoke of the "practise of Lenin, the 'amoralist'."

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