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NOTES OF THE MONTH

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THE NEW INTERNATIONAL

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THE NEW INTERNATIONAL

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VOLUME IX

JULY, 1943

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NOTES OF THE MONTH

The Struggle Between Congress And Roosevelt

What has been called the revolt of Congress against the President is a significant sign of the times in this country, and not the only one.

Before its adjournment, Congress blocked such important political appointments as the presidential nomination of former Democratic Party National Committee Chairman Edward J. Flynn as Ambassador to Australia, of Texas' New Deal Governor James V. Allred to the United States Circuit Court of Appeals, and the designation of Vito Marcantonio to membership on the House Judiciary Committee, that modest payment the Administration tried to make to the Stalinists for their zealous support.

Congress ran amok against a number of special wards of the Executive. Appropriation requests of the OPA were cut down, and the presidential propaganda ministry, the OWI, was ordered to abandon its domestic activity. Only liquidation funds were granted the National Youth Administration, the federal crop insurance program, and the National Resources Planning Board. A rider on the urgency deficiency appropriation bill, constitutionally dubious, provided for the dismissal of Robert Morss Lovett, government secretary of the Virgin Islands, and Goodwin B. Watson and William E. Dodd, Jr., of the Federal Communications Commission, suspect of entertaining ideas in advance of the average Mississippi congressman. The Home Owners Loan Corporation was granted a reprieve until February of next year, when it must walk through the little green door.

The presidential program to subsidize the "rollback" of retail butter, meat and coffee prices, after being rejected by both Houses, was saved in the Senate by the impressive majority of one vote. But the modified Ruml gift-plan to tax-wear plutocrats, which the President threatened to veto, was nevertheless carried by the recalcitrant Congress, which at the same time nullified the executive order limiting salaries to \$25,000 a year after taxes. And, most spectacular of all, the elaborate veto of the Connally-Smith anti-strike bill was overridden by both Houses by a better than two-to-one vote and in record time.

So much for the relationship between the War Congress and the War President.

On the executive and administrative front itself, there is no quiet either. Turmoil, turbulence and confusion prevail. The struggle for control of production materials and allocations between the War Department and the War Production

Board is not a new one nor has it been resolved. The battle between Ickes and Perkins, on one side, and the War Labor Board, on the other, was all but public during the miners' strikes. The departure (or sacking) of the meat packers' darling, Chester C. Davis, from his post as War Food Administrator, was only one of the outstanding examples of chaos in administration. Much more spectacular is the violent public dispute between Vice-President Wallace and Secretary of Commerce Jones, both members of the Cabinet.

The general domestic front, so to speak, runs no smoother than the various Washington fronts. Three times in a row, half a million coal miners responded unanimously to a strike call, unmoved by threats or by pseudo-patriotic adjurations, not even by those coming from the White House. In one city after another, the most violent pogroms against Negroes and Mexicans have taken place, and even after the horrors of Detroit, there is no sign that an end has come to what are erroneously described as race riots. In the important field of price control and rationing, the Administration program, carried through by the hopeless, helpless, planless OPA, has completely collapsed, generating the most widespread discontent since the United States entered the war.

What is the meaning of this unprecedented chaos and conflict right in the midst of the most decisive war ever fought in history, certainly in the history of the United States, and where is it leading?

That some of the conflict and disorder is due to petty political maneuvering, to a campaign to embarrass Roosevelt and prevent his inevitable nomination for a fourth term, is undoubtedly true. But that explains some of it, and only a very small and minor part of it. That it is due to a "reactionary Congress" which is not "wholeheartedly for all-out war" is not true; for although the adjourned Congress was undoubtedly the most reactionary within living memory, it has not hesitated to grant every one of the staggering war appropriations asked for by the President—all the money made available to various government institutions for war purposes alone since January 6 of this year amount to almost one hundred and twenty-five billion dollars. One Washington report, after detailing the Congressional rebuffs to the President, nevertheless concludes with the obvious truth that "On questions touching on the war and foreign policy, Mr. Roosevelt met with little opposition."

The conflict between the legislative and executive arms of government is explained differently by Arthur Krock: "The British people exercise constant restraints on their executives by their power to remove them at any time. The American people, able to use the axe quadriennially only, must in the meantime resort to blunt instruments of correction or set no restraints at all." A "blunt instrument" is standard police parlance for an unknown homicidal weapon and is therefore not very flattering as a description of Congress or of its intentions. Be that as it may, the important thing in the *New York Times* writer's analysis is that the inner-governmental rioting is depicted as a proud tribute to and evidence of the

virility of American democracy. Mr. Krock thereby comes closer to an important truth—to the important truth—than he realizes.

The muddling, confusion, conflict, chaos, planlessness or disruption of plans that are increasingly evident throughout the country are only a reflection or a product of the contradiction between the inescapable need of totalitarian organization and control in modern warfare and the patent inability of the present economic and political setup in the country to comply fully with that need. Put more simply, the organization of a country for modern total war is incompatible with *bourgeois* democracy. To prosecute such a war effectively (it is not the Spanish-American or the French and Indian wars that are involved, but World War II), requires the restriction of bourgeois democracy to the point of extinction.

In some countries this point is reached sooner, in some later. Basically, if more or less constant considerations like geography are allowed for, two factors determine the speed and depth of totalitarian development in the capitalist countries at war or while preparing for war: one is the economic strength of the country; the other is the resistivity of the only fundamentally democratic class in modern society, the proletariat. Merely to make adequate preparations for large-scale war, to say nothing of prosecuting it year-in and year-out, imperialist Germany found itself compelled to shake off the burdensome trappings of bourgeois democracy, reorganize its economic and political life on the basis of totalitarian control, and of course to extirpate the labor movement and enslave the working class. All wills are now subordinated to one by directly forcible means. In Germany, there are no conflicts between the Reichstag and the Reichskanzler, no public feuds between Wallaces and Joneses, Wilsons and Eberstadts, Perkins and Davises, no pogroms except those organized, directed and controlled by the state, and of course no strikes. The war machine functions fairly smoothly at home and on the battlefield, profits are high and undisturbed by public clamor, the booty of conquest is fairly distributed to finance capital, the people are gagged while endless columns of troops are sent to their graves, the masses toil like slaves and mass hunger and suffering are planfully organized.

If the United States has not yet reached such a point of restriction (that is, of abolition) of bourgeois democracy, it is not at all because it is immune to the workings of the same basic forces that brought Germany to its present state. It is merely because the virulence of these forces is reduced by the greater economic strength of this country and by the existence of a great and still undefeated labor movement. A formula of almost mathematical exactness can be worked out for the development of totalitarian reaction: Capitalism plus war equals an *X*-degree of totalitarianism, in which *X* is determined by the relative ability of the country to bear the costs of the war and by the resistance of the labor movement to being shouldered with the economic and political burdens of the war, the two being of course closely related.

The United States has tremendous economic resources to draw upon. When one looks at the veritable miracles of production and distribution that are being accomplished here for this futile and devastating war, accomplished in spite of the planlessness, mismanagement, incompetence and all-dominating profit lust, he cannot help thinking of the all-satisfying abundance and comforts that the people could make available to itself if society were rationally and peacefully organized,

and the resources, skills and labor combined socialistically to produce for use, and not for profit and mutual destruction.

However that may be, the resources of the United States are not inexhaustible. Estimates show that this country will spend, dollar for dollar, something like five times as much on the war in 1943 as it did in 1918. In May of this year, an average of \$280,400,000 *a day* was being spent to carry on the war, which is more than Yugoslavia spent for military purposes in the *four years* of 1938 to 1941. The war cost may be even more graphically presented by the fact that the amount already appropriated by the USA for the prosecution of the war through the current fiscal year, ending June 30, is four billion dollars greater than the American government spent *for all purposes* from the time of its founding, in 1789, to the end of June, 1932!

The longer the war lasts, the more unbearable the burden. The more unbearable the burden, the more the bourgeoisie will be compelled to economize on luxuries. The war is a necessity, but democracy is a luxury, at present the main and most expensive luxury, even for American capitalism. If the war is protracted, the luxury will go faster. And at present there is no serious sign that the war is coming to an early end. If it took six months to conquer North Africa under favorable circumstances; another six months to take complete control of the jungles and swamps and one airfield of Guadalcanal, several thousands of miles from Tokyo; and weeks to conquer a godforsaken rock in the Aleutians, the end of the war by a victory of one imperialist camp over the other is hardly a matter of months.

The conflict between Roosevelt and Congress boils down, then, to a difference in estimating the speed and extent to which the democratic luxuries are to be dispensed with. The former represents that belated bourgeois reformism which burgeoned briefly in the heyday of the New Deal and of which only a few bright tatters are now left. The latter represents the growing bourgeois reaction, even though it likes to present itself, in the columns of Mr. Krock and over the airplanes of Mr. Fulton Lewis, Jr., as the virtuous defender of popular, legislative democracy holding the fort against the encroachments of executive despotism. How "fundamental" is the difference between the two may be judged from the fact that the President's alternative to the Connally-Smith strikebreaking bill was a strikebreaking system of his own (actually, it was a plagiary from decades of European reactionary practice), by means of which the great and popular American Army of Democracy would be transformed into a penal institution to which criminals, that is, strikers, would be sentenced by their draft boards.

But if the difference is not fundamental, it is considerable enough to be important. Not in the sense in which the labor leadership of the country construes it, namely, that the unions must support Roosevelt against the reactionary Congress. Its importance lies in the fact that the bourgeoisie is obviously not yet united firmly on a domestic course during the war, except in a general way. "Domestic course" means, essentially, what to do about the working class and the labor movement, its demands and its rights, and the measure of the war burden that is to be imposed upon it. In Germany, this question was solved decisively, even if not permanently, by the advent of fascism, which united the whole bourgeoisie under the leadership of finance capital. In this country, while the general tendency of capitalist political evolution is clear, the goal has not

yet been reached. No such capitalist unity as prevails in Germany exists here—not yet.

This situation is one of the factors enabling the labor movement to act with success. The other is its truly tremendous organized strength. Even so outrageous an attack upon labor and its rights as the Connally-Smith law remains a piece of precarious legislation without any real force behind it save its passive toleration by the labor movement. Decisive, independent action by the organized working class would speedily reveal the unenforceability of the act or would render it null and void.

And if the labor movement does not act decisively? Then a powerful brake upon totalitarianism will be released, and the movement toward its realization will be greatly accelerated. The only serious guarantee against the victory of fascism or of a reactionary dictatorship similar to it is not simply the *existence* of a labor movement, but the mobilization of that movement for independent and militant class action. Germany had a labor movement even better trained than the American and not less powerful in the country. Fascism triumphed nevertheless. It won because the labor movement relied upon its "friends" in the capitalist class and in the capitalist parties, who gradually moved further and further to the right. It did not rely upon itself and its class action. Under the circumstances, that would have sufficed for its own victory. It is worth remembering that the great German labor movement was not beaten and destroyed in battle. It collapsed without a fight and was massacred. Reaction in this country has not yet taken the form of fascism, but the tragic lessons of the German experience are nevertheless fully applicable to us here and now.

The Miners' Strikes and the Labor Party

After three unanimous responses to as many strike calls by half a million coal miners in the country, it should now be unnecessary to argue whether or not the American workers, even in wartime, are able and ready to act unitedly and decisively in behalf of their just demands. The fact that the great majority of the miners refused or were reluctant to call off their third strike, even after being urged to do so by their union officials, only emphasizes the genuineness of their action, and is enough in itself to explode the preposterous theory that the strike was an action of unwilling but dumb sheep set into motion for some obscure personal political purpose by John L. Lewis.

Perhaps of greater significance is the fact that the sentiments of the miners were not confined to their own ranks. Anyone who is seriously in contact with the American working class knows that the overwhelming majority, especially of the organized workers in the country, were as solidly on the side of the miners as the official labor leadership was against them. The mood of the miners was and remains pretty much the mood of the working class as a whole. By their action they showed how precarious is the situation established by the "no-strike" pledges of virtually the entire official labor leadership. The "accident" of the miners' union leadership being in the hands of men who have their own particular bureaucratic reasons for challenging Roosevelt and the War Labor Board (a matter which requires analysis and treatment on another

occasion), was enough to break through the film of restraint that covers the labor movement today.

There is no reason to believe, however, that the action of the miners as a whole was an "accident," some sort of unique and inexplicably exceptional phenomenon in the working class. The whole labor movement is seething with discontent, discontent especially with the cowardly "no-strike" pledge by which the labor leaders delivered the unions, bound hand and foot, to the employers and the government; discontent with the disgraceful capitulation of the same labor leaders to the abominable Connally-Smith bill. It will not take much more heat for the pot of boil over. With profits continuing their rich flow, with prices not rolled back but even rising, with the whole rationing system in a state of collapse, with the new taxes digging deeper into the standard of living of the workers, the new anti-strike bill will not prove more effective than the old no-strike pledges.

Louis Stark, the *New York Times'* labor editor, who is close to the union bureaucracy, especially the AFL's, acknowledges (June 20) that an analysis of the bill "tends to support the views of organized labor's spokesmen who believe that the measure will foment strikes rather than prevent them. . . . The bill does not bring the top leaders of labor into the picture by further pressure to carry out their commitments—a pressure which has prevented a great many strikes. Indeed, it takes from them much of their authority by transferring the seat of power in a labor dispute from the national to the local leadership level. . . . It is the impression of many impartial observers that the new labor measure would probably be more harmful than helpful."

We do not know yet if the miners' strikes had any effect upon the analysis of the labor movement's prospects and perspectives and upon the policy of the Cannonites. Since the outbreak of the war, their trade union policy, never far from conservatism, took a sharp turn to the right. Their militants were educated and instructed to be preoccupied exclusively with "preserving" themselves in the trade union movement (forgetting Trotsky's warning to the eminent theoretician at the head of the SWP that if the main concern of revolutionists during the war was with "preserving" themselves, the awakening workers would probably treat them like "preserves," to be put on a shelf). Why? Because the masses were not in motion and there was no early prospect of working class action in the country. "Strike control," wrote their trade union expert last year in a polemic against an "impatient" militant, and obviously on the inspiration of The Leader himself, "continues to remain quite firmly in the hands of Roosevelt and his lackeys in the union hierarchy. . . . Right now we ask the comrades to just be patient. When the time comes that the masses are ready to move, the leadership of the party won't be in their way." The last sentence deserves to be distributed far and wide for the consolation of the American working class and to reassure them that any time they decide to act they will not really meet the opposition of the Socialist Workers Party leadership. On the West Coast, and under the personal supervision of the same expert, the local Cannonites accepted a thesis which proved to the very hilt that the miners could not, should not and would not strike. A few days later, the miners, not having had the benefit of this thesis, nevertheless did strike, and then a second and a third time.

On the trade union leadership as a whole, however, we do know that the miners' strikes had no effect, so far as its policy is concerned. William Green attacked the Connally-Smith bill

as a "fascist measure pointed like a revolver at the heart of labor. . . . It reflects a fascist state of mind in Congress—there can be no question about that. It is definitely totalitarian in character, contradictory of the democratic principles for which America has always stood and for which this war is being fought." If that is how the Milquetoast of the labor movement spoke of the bill, it is not hard to imagine what the other labor leaders said in attacking the bill and demanding a presidential veto.

The veto came, accompanied by Roosevelt's own notorious counter-proposal on how to break strikes, and then Congress overrode the veto by the joint efforts of the two capitalist parties. Thereupon? What did the labor leaders propose to do? We consider the bill a vicious assault upon labor's elementary rights. We do not regard it as quite fascist, because we believe this is an inaccurate use of the term; but it suffices that it is bad enough, and everyone in the labor movement knows it. In any case, so mild-mannered and soft-spoken a man as Green described it as a fascist measure. What is to be done when a fascist measure is incorporated into the law of the land? What do our stout-hearted heroes at the head of the labor movement propose to do to combat this first installment on fascism?

Thus far, we know only of their first, bold and fearless step: No sooner had the bill become law than Green and Murray rushed to the White House as fast as their automobiles could carry them and . . . renewed their no-strike pledge. There you have as courageous and defiant a pair of generals as the labor movement was ever lucky enough to have at its head! They will die in battle before allowing anyone to take from the labor movement its right to strike. Or, more accurately, they will give up this right themselves rather than have it taken from them. As can be seen, the old ladies at the head of the union movement are Virtue Incarnate. They will under no circumstances allow themselves to be ravished. If part they must from their charms, they prefer to give them away freely. Only, in this case, it is someone else's rights they are so lightly proffering, and it remains to be seen if the workers will be traded off so easily.

Meanwhile, the immediate effect of the Connally-Smith bill, carried, let us remember, by an overwhelming bi-partisan vote, has been to stimulate interest in a Labor Party and the movement toward its formation. In recent months and especially in recent weeks, resolutions have been adopted in favor of a Labor Party and even some organizational steps taken toward forming one, in decisive industrial states like New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Michigan. So far as the official sponsors of the movement are concerned, the parties in these states are to be a replica of the caricature of an Independent Labor Party that has existed for several years in New York. Its aim, in the view of Messrs. Rose, Alfange, Counts and Antonini, is to be confined essentially to assuring their Messiah a fourth term in the White House. A miserable, paltry, reactionary ambition for a movement as important and significant as a distinct party of labor. Our reformist labor politicians have not even risen to the low estate of their European brethren. As for the outright bourgeois labor politicians of the Green-AFL kidney, they have not risen at all. Their conception of labor's rôle in politics is that of running around on all fours looking for a "friendly" boot to reward with a kiss in the hope that when it reaches a congressional desk it will not be too violently or too often directed at their prostrated rump.

Labor in this country must and will enter politics—and

politics is in the end the struggle for power—in its own name. The only question is: in what form? Under what program and leadership? There are already important, tangible signs that the movement for a national Labor Party is taking shape, first of all, as mentioned above, in some of the decisive industrial centers. Its present official sponsors naturally want to keep the movement under the closest bureaucratic control in order to guarantee that its program and activity will not be composed of anything stronger than milk and water. In other words, they want a replica in this country of the flabby, ineffectual, conservative, ever-whining, supine reformist workers' parties that contributed so criminally to the crushing of the working class in Europe. It is possible that, in the first period, they will succeed in establishing just that kind of party. But only possible, and by no means dead certain.

However, it should be considered that these reformist labor politicians still constitute a minority of the labor bureaucracy. The big majority of this officialdom—the Greens, Tobins, Bateses, Lewises, Murrays, Careys, Hillmans and the rest—are bourgeois labor politicians. They do not even favor the organization of such a caricature of a Labor Party as Rose and Antonini have in New York, and want to continue the policy of supporting this or that capitalist politician and capitalist party, year-in and year-out. They have now acquired a fairly powerful ally in support of their Gompersist politics, the Frank Hague-Stalinists.

Inasmuch as the class struggle, and the decay of capitalist society, will not wait another hundred years for these gentlemen of the labor movement to assimilate a mildly progressive idea, it is *possible* that, given the combination of their bureaucratic control of the labor movement and their utter political blindness, they may successfully stand in the way of the formation or even a reformist, "official" Labor Party, out of sheer terror at the thought of being obliged to make a sharp break with out-and-out capitalist politics.

This is speculation, to be sure, but it is not without its importance. There are powerful forces at work to awaken the political consciousness of the American working class, but there is no law of god or man that guarantees that our primitive-minded labor bureaucracy will adapt itself to this awakening to the extent of organizing labor into a reformist political party. That is possible, it is even most probable, but it is not absolutely assured. Sad experience has shown that the stupidity, provincialism, and subservience to the bourgeoisie of our official labor leadership, know few limits, if any.

If, then, the weight of the labor bureaucracy is thrown against even a reformist political labor movement, does it follow that the working class is doomed for the next period to remain in tow of bourgeois politics? We do not think so. It does follow that the inevitable development of political consciousness, of class consciousness, among the American workers may express itself in the formation and speedy, powerful growth of a *revolutionary* political movement uncontrolled by the official labor leadership. There is no theoretical consideration that excludes such a possibility, and there is nothing in the objective situation or in the revolutionary world perspectives of tomorrow that automatically prohibits such a development. Should it take place, those who are today already organized and educated in the consistent, revolutionary Marxian movement have a right to look upon themselves, few in number though they are now, as the central, guiding core of the bigger movement to come. Their presence in it

will be additional assurance of its sound and triumphant progress.

Such a hypothesis does not, of course, in any way invalidate the need for continuing, today and tomorrow, the struggle of the revolutionists and the militants in the labor movement for the formation of an Independent Labor Party. On the contrary, the extension and intensification of this struggle, its prosecution in a militant, class-conscious spirit, is one of the indispensable premises for the revolutionary political development of the working class. If the labor bureaucracy takes a step forward and leads in the establishment of a reformist Labor Party, that will mark a new stage for the working class and a new stage for the revolutionary vanguard. It will proceed from there and seek to move the working class to a higher plane. If the labor bureaucrats remain serf-minded and stupidly adamant against any kind of independent political action, the revolutionary struggle for a mass working class party in this country may leap over their heads successfully and thus leap over an important stage in American labor history.

There are no dull days ahead!

Democracy and the War for Democracy

The Second World War for Democracy is not working out so well for democracy. We have the word of the democrats themselves for this, the word of the Liberals (the reader will please note the respectful capital L), in so far as words can be distinguished in the heartrending moans they utter periodically over the "French situation." Listen, for a typical example, to the sobbing of Mr. Edgar Ansel Mowrer, partisan of the "Free French" who, it appears, are not free at all:

We said we were in French North Africa as "guests," not as occupying powers. But we refused to let the French Committee of National Liberation take over control of the entire administration on the ground that this would "endanger our communications." Therefore either we are "guests" who have usurped power or we have ceased to be "guests" and become "occupying powers." Why not say which?

The French Committee of National Liberation was set up largely with our help as the "trustee" of French interests throughout the world. So long as it did just what we wanted, fine; once it started to look after French interests by putting General de Gaulle rather than General Giraud in full command, we announced we would not recognize this decision.

To defend this we had to deny the existence of any real French "sovereignty," which—we stated—will not exist again until it is restored by the Americans, the British and the Russians. (Does Washington care? Remember the poppies in Flanders fields?)

This is disgraceful ethics, poor politics and probably bad international law. . . .

If the French have no sovereignty, then the Committee is nothing but an "instrument" of American and British leaders. But since the Committee was set up to be the trustee of the French people, then France itself is being treated as an "instrument."

Most of the French feel this and resent it keenly. So—we may hope—would Americans under similar conditions. So do the other conquered peoples; suppose we one day decide that Norway, the Netherlands and the rest of them have no "sovereignty" and are going to be allowed no say in their own reconquered countries. . . .

Final—and worst—is the fact that Generals de Gaulle and Giraud have no real status. Since the Committee of Liberation is subject to our orders, then the co-chairmen are just agents, to be cherished when they carry out orders satisfactorily, to be broken and thrown away when they refuse.

Is this the way to enlist French enthusiasm for the United Nations' cause? (*New York Post*, July 8.)

The answer to that question (if our opinion is solicited) is, No. But a more important question at the moment is: Who are the "we" that are doing all this to the Honorable Generals of Not Very Free France? Who are the people who are, according to the *Post* of another date, "conspiring to make of post-war France a neo-fascist, vassal state"? The Liberals are nothing if not straightforward. They come right to the point. The "we" are "certain anti-democratic elements in the U.S., centering in the State Department" (*New York Post*, June 29).

Who are these "certain anti-democratic elements"? A couple of clerks in the State Department? a bookkeeper perhaps? or maybe the second receptionist of the Northwest African Division of the Department? Or dare we go higher up, as high, let us say, as Robert Murphy, the State Department's representative in North Africa? Yes, blurts out the Liberal, he is the man! But go no further, go no higher!

What about the President who, it is said, actually determines American foreign policy and keeps close watch on its execution?

The President is a dope! cry the Liberals. The President is a dupe! The President doesn't know what is happening! The President has been taken in! Someone ought to tell the President how he's being played for a sucker!

Here, lest we be cited for *lèse majesté*, the attention of our vigilant FBI should be called to the fact that this is what the *Liberals* say, not we. Our view is quite different.

After the collapse in France, only one figure of any prominence, de Gaulle, with a small and inconsequential retinue of military and civil functionaries, could be found to associate himself with the seemingly hopeless Allied camp. The British exploited this fact to the utmost: de Gaulle was their only Frenchman and consequently their best Frenchman. He was put on the Downing Street payroll and given a little paper to play with.

The Americans, however, had access to France which was denied the British: Vichy and its North African outpost. The flapping Liberals still think that Washington's Vichy policy was wrong and stupid, but that is only because they know nothing at all about politics and prefer to delude themselves into thinking that this is a war for democracy. The fact is that the Vichy policy yielded American imperialism pretty close to the maximum success that was possible under the circumstances, especially the circumstances of German understanding of the policy and German vigilant surveillance. Britain got de Gaulle and a few discredited French political time-servers who joined him. The United States got Darlan; it settled the question of the French fleet at Toulon (at least to the extent of preventing its employment by the Germans) and finally managed to get full use of that part of the fleet stationed in Dakar, Alexandria and now the Antilles; and, above all, it got comparatively easy access to North Africa and its subsequent occupation, and the bulk of the not insignificant French military machine on that continent.

A triumph for democracy, for the four freedoms or any other freedom, for French sovereignty? Of course not! But a genuine triumph for American imperialism and imperialist policy. Only a man fit for nothing but editing *The Nation* can fail to understand this simple fact.

To make the best of a bad situation, the British for a time sought to play up their protégé, de Gaulle, against the newly-

acquired protégé of the United States, Giraud, for each of our inseparably united Allies works with might and main, under the rose, to protect his own imperialist interests—who else will protect them? But it did not work, and it could not. The United States held the real trumps. The bulk of the French military and civil bureaucracy available to the Allies centers around Giraud, depends upon Washington (and Detroit!) and is intensely hostile to the British.

Matters were made worse for de Gaulle when his preposterous National Committee gained the adherence of the remnants of the French trade union movement, the Socialist Party and the Stalinists, or at least of the official representatives of these movements; and when, as a result, de Gaullism became associated, in the public mind and to a certain extent in actual fact, with the genuinely democratic and even revolutionary underground movements inside France. To have these movements slit the throats of Nazi officers, or blow up a munitions train, is one thing. To do anything to encourage them in the notion that *they* and not their “liberators” will be the France of tomorrow, is another thing entirely. The French masses must not be allowed to liberate themselves from the fascist yoke—and from all other oppression, French included!—they must be liberated by reliable liberators. Who is more reliable, from the standpoint of Anglo-American imperialism, than the sturdy fascist, quasi-fascist and proto-fascist elements represented by Giraud, and dependent upon Washington for everything from bread and cigarettes to uniforms, bullets, mortars and airplanes?

De Gaulle was therefore told—such, alas, is gratitude in politics!—to do as ordered, or else. After Casablanca, Roosevelt told congressmen an oh-so-funny story about how he got Churchill to force de Gaulle to come to Africa for the conference. Who pays him? asked Roosevelt. Why, we do! replied the King’s First Minister. Well, then? said our President archly—de Gaulle arrived in North Africa twenty-four hours later. Several months later the British informed de Gaulle—was this idea also suggested by our clever President?—that it was no longer necessary to publish *La Marseillaise*, “the authentic voice of Free France,” “the clarion call of Fighting France,” so that the great de Gaulle, the noble de Gaulle, de Gaulle the arm and buckler of anguished France and her John of Arc, de Gaulle the beloved of the Allies, doesn’t even have a paper now in which to print his greetings to the French on Bastille Day. As we hinted, there is no gratitude in politics.

And really, of what use is de Gaulle now? How many of the handful of military men he had on his side to begin with have now gone over to Giraud, we do not know. But we do know that he no longer has such men as General Catroux, the hero of the reconquest of Syria for French (or is it English?) imperialism, and Admiral Muselier, the hero of the world-shaking expedition against the St. Pierre and Miquelon Islands. The military bureaucracy of France, the officers’ corps, utterly reactionary, Papist at its heart, fiercely antagonistic to labor, fascist or as bad as fascist, will not lightly forgive this *frondeur* for having broken ranks at any time, for having attacked their idol Pétain, who merely incarnates everything they stand for, and for having associated himself with the old “Popular Frontists,” whom they regard as *canaille* to be dispersed with a whiff of grapeshot.

The United States? It wants to enter France spearheaded by reliable military men who are, thank God, authentic Frenchmen capable of giving orders to the people, of “pre-

serving order” (that’s the most important thing!) and... of taking orders from the all-powerful dispenser of food and money and judiciously weighed-out francs. For Washington, that would be a real victory for the Four Freedoms: it would have nothing to fear; it would want for nothing in France; it would have a press that can be, as every Frenchman knows, bought freely; and the French would have the right to free worship of their liberators!

But what, a reader may ask, has all this to do with democracy? Why, my poor bewildered friend, nothing, absolutely nothing! Don’t you understand yet? Democracy is something you talk about in the war, but what you really fight for has as much in common with democracy as, let us say, Mr. Churchill has in common with the independence of India.

But perhaps we will get democracy in France when our victory-crowned legions march proudly under the Arc de Triomphe? Perhaps all these deplorable trifles are the overhead expenses of military necessity?

Poor friend, you are talking like a Liberal. Our victory-crowned legions have already marched through a score of Victory Arches from Dakar to Bizerte. Where is democracy for the people of North Africa? The population is not made up of Giraud, Catroux, Peyrouton, Eisenhower and Montgomery. In addition, there are its real inhabitants, millions of Arabs. One of the first acts of “liberation” that “we” sanctioned was the nullification of the Crémieux decree, which deprived 40,000 to 50,000 Algerian Jews of their French citizenship and of the vote. That was done to “equalize” them with the Arabs. You may well scratch your puzzled head and ask, Why couldn’t it have been done the other way around—let the Jews keep the vote and give it also to the Arabs? The answer is available. It is perfect, there is not a flaw in it, it is magnificent and authentic and above suspicion, it is a jewel of candor. It comes from the respected foreign editor of the *New York Times*, Mr. Edwin L. James. It should be read, re-read, memorized and repeated ceremonially on all fitting occasions, for it is a classic of its kind and enough to rescue Mr. James from otherwise deserved oblivion. He writes:

It is a good enough argument to be advanced by Jews in this country that a nation like ours, fighting for the preservation of democracy, should not approve an action which deprived Algerian Jews of their citizenship. And that argument was made. But the argument cannot now be carried to its logical conclusion: To give all of the Algerian Arabs full French citizenship, in the name of democracy, would bring a situation which certainly neither our War Department nor General Eisenhower would approve. It would give the Arab vote a two-to-one predominance and if and when an election were held would bring confusion worse confounded.

To be sure! Give the Arabs the vote and the first thing you know they would elect whomever they wished to represent them, as if they were in a democracy. What would Hitler say to such an absurdly outmoded idea? But we are rudely interrupting Mr. James.

And so the matter is one to which common sense rather than theory must be applied. It was perhaps an unwise and unjust move to try to placate the Arabs by pulling the Jews down. The thinking of those in authority appears now directed in the sense of giving the Algerian Jews back their citizenship and at the same time trying to give new privileges to the Arabs in local politics which would cause them to think that they had bettered their position.

Bravo, bravo! There is a statesman of the new democratic order for you, and in the best tradition. Theory? Bah, it’s a matter of common sense. Democracy is a nice thing, of course, but with Arabs (that is, with “our” North African “niggers”) all you have to do is give them a few baubles (glass beads, per-

haps?) "which would cause them to *think* that they had bettered their position.") Just get the benighted Arab to *think* that, and the danger of being outvoted two-to-one is averted, while the miracle of two (in actuality, a thousand) being outvoted by one will be performed. We are not on good terms with Herr Göbbels, but we recommend to his attention the advantages of reprinting the editorial of his co-thinker, Mr. *Parteifäiger* James, for distribution among the population of North Africa.

And the Liberals, not like Mr. James, but with a capital L? They are as interested in the Arabs as they are in last year's snow. What is Hecuba to them? They are still looking under a desk in the State Department for the clerk responsible for preventing Democrat de Gaulle from disfranchizing the Arabs instead of Not-So-Much-of-a-Democrat Giraud. Granted that Arabs are human beings; granted that they are the majority there. But—really now—would you go so far as to say that they are as mature for the enjoyment of the dangerous delights of democracy as, for example, an editor of the *New Republic*, or of the *New York Times*, to say nothing of a professor of

Philosophy at New York University? Besides, how the devil are you going to win the war for democracy if you continually demand that democracy be made a reality? As Mr. James explains:

Naturally, there still exists the purpose of keeping the Arabs in good humor. It goes without saying that the French are not going to give simply full citizenship to the Arabs in the two French departments which constitute Algeria. That would mean that at the next general elections the Arabs would win a sweeping victory. Whatever might be said for the theoretical democracy of such a step it would scarcely help win the war.

All this appears in the *New York Times* on the anniversary of the American Declaration of Independence. How appropriate! Arabs, take note.

He is priceless, this Mr. James. Keep the Arabs in good humor, by all means, for whatever else Mr. James is, he is not a kill-joy. But give them the vote? Idiot! First thing you know they'll win a sweeping victory, and if that's the kind of thing democracy is going to produce, to hell with it. Let us be done with such fol-de-rol, and get on with winning the war.

The Race Pogroms and the Negro

The Beginnings of an Analysis

Gloom and despair have gripped millions of the Negro population of this country. For at least a year the coming explosions were a topic of conversation everywhere. They were written about extensively in the Negro press and in certain sections of the capitalist press as well. Masses of the Negro people had shown their determination, their courage, their willingness to sacrifice, on every possible occasion that an opportunity presented itself. Yet the blow has fallen upon them and they have been powerless to meet it. Not only that. They expect, and with good reason, that more desperate times are ahead. This is not a matter now of a long-range program for abolishing the economic and social basis of race prejudice. The problem is much more urgent than that. Events in states as far apart as Florida, California, Pennsylvania, Texas, Michigan and New York have shown that at any moment gangs of whites will begin to beat up and murder Negroes in the streets, and to wreck and burn down blocks of Negro homes. Yet the helplessness with which the Negroes watched the peril approach shows quite clearly that though they, above all people, realize how urgent the problem is, they are still not clearly aware of the real forces at work against them and, therefore, cannot plan to meet the emergency. Now when they are searching everywhere for a way out of the danger in which they stand, we propose to place before them and their friends certain fundamental facts of the present situation and to draw certain conclusions from these facts.

The first and most important point is that it is useless to depend on the government for protection. By the government, we mean the Washington Administration under Roosevelt, or whoever may be President, the Department of Justice, the FBI, the senators and congressmen, the state administrations, the state governors, the city police, the FEPC, all forms and manner of official power. These will not and, being what they are, cannot protect the Negro people.

First, the Administration in Washington. The Roosevelt government knew that the Detroit outbreak was on the way. After the rioting in 1942 over the Sojourner Truth housing project in Detroit, government investigators reported on the general situation in Detroit as follows: "It is not melodrama when city officials here [Detroit] say this conflict is the most serious the city has faced since way back beyond the time of the big strikes.

"They don't go far enough in what they say. It would be nearer realism to say that, if not today, tomorrow, this country, or let us say the war effort, will face its biggest crisis all over the North!"

The investigator referred specifically to Buffalo and Philadelphia as danger points.

"A person not in the vortex of the situation can hardly realize its urgency.

"Therefore, let it be repeated once more: It is beyond control and extends far beyond Detroit, and unless strong and quick intervention by some high official, preferably the President, is taken at once, hell is going to be let loose in every Northern city where large numbers of Negroes are in competition." (*PM*, June 27.)

We are not going into the question here of whether immigrants or the Ku Klux Klanners are mainly responsible for the outbreaks in Detroit. It is sufficient that whoever they are, in the Northern cities at least, they are a definite minority even among the workers. The point is that the Roosevelt government knew, and the Roosevelt government did nothing. Remember also that the government today wants no interruption in war production. Yet rather than take steps to protect the Negroes, it preferred to let the situation rest as it was. In connection with the Sojourner Truth riot, the government arrested three men, three, on a charge of "seditious conspiracy." This was in February, 1942. Today, eighteen months later,

the government has not brought them to trial. To depend on this government for protection is suicide.

This is what happened before. Now mark what happened during the riots. The police are the local representatives of the state. To them is entrusted the power of the state in its dealings with civilians. Their duty is supposedly to protect the lives and property of civilians who are lawlessly attacked. But the police cannot be expected to act in one way when the government, from whom they derive their authority, acts in another. Their actions, therefore, merely show crudely what is the real policy of the government. *They sided with the rioters!* Every Negro and every friend of elementary human decency should frame and display in his house that shameful photograph in which two policemen hold a Negro while a white rioter hits him in the face, and a third policeman on a horse looks on. That the police, the power of the state, is in this conspiracy against the Negro people has penetrated into the head even of Walter White, national secretary of the NAACP. He writes from Detroit on June 23: "Twenty-five of the twenty-eight who lie dead from the race rioting here are Negroes. Eighty-five per cent of those arrested are Negroes. One hundred per cent of the thirty-two who were tried and convicted of rioting yesterday were Negroes. In these figures lies the answer to the sullenness and bitter despair I saw yesterday on the faces of Negroes."

Of the twenty-four Negroes killed, twenty were killed directly by the shots of the police. So that the lives of the Negroes were in far more danger from the government's representatives than from the rioters. The triggers were pressed by the fingers of Detroit policemen, but the guns were aimed by the government in Washington. For the Roosevelt government had shown the policemen quite clearly where it stood in regard to Negroes. It had not only segregated them in the Army, the Navy, the Air Force and the federal government itself, thereby making it impossible for policemen to have the proper respect for the rights of Negroes. By the government's action over the Sojourner Truth riots, by its refusal to take one single step to avert a crisis which everybody, and particularly the police, knew was on the way, the government had given the police a clear direction as to where the guns were to be pointed. The government in Washington could pretend to be neutral. But when the fighting is actually on, the police have to take action. They acted in accordance with the policy of the government: restore order by putting the Negroes in their place.

The government in all its shapes and forms is responsible for these murderous attacks, not only before they occurred, but while they were going on. On Monday, June 22, two hundred and fifty representatives of labor, fraternal and social organizations, *both Negro and white*, crowded into the dining room of the Lucy Thurman YWCA at noon in order to take measures to protect the Negro people. This was obvious from the speeches. Speaker after speaker indicted the police for murdering Negroes, for concentrating on Negro areas, for refusing to arrest the leaders of the white mobs. They gave examples from their own personal observation. They called on Mayor Jeffries, who was present, to put an end to this lawlessness by the state. They asked him to go on the radio and warn that all instigators would be severely punished. They condemned his handling of the situation.

Jeffries refused point-blank to take the actions they recommended. The latest news is that both Jeffries and the FBI have agreed that there is no need for any investigation. Wash-

ington government, local mayor and local police are all fundamentally one. In Los Angeles, the city police joined with the rioters against the Mexicans and Negroes. After the Mobile outbreak, Monsignor Haas, new head of the FEPC, another government body, recommended that the Negroes be segregated into four Jim Crow shipyards which make only bare hulls. This means that though they can become shipfitters, welders and drillers, they will be debarred from such highly skilled and highly paid work as machine operating, pipe fitting and electrical installation. By this action, rioters are told by the government that if they riot hard enough they can be sure of attaining their substantial demands: "keeping the Negro in his place." A PM reporter in Texas reports again what is common knowledge, that the state guard and police in Beaumont, as all over the South, resented the fact that they were called upon to defend Negroes against white men. And it is no longer a question of only the South.

The Situation in New York

New York has long been known as one of the places where segregation is practiced least (that is the best that can be said) and Mayor LaGuardia is reputed to be one of the great friends of the Negro. Some weeks ago the Mayor gave his assent to a Metropolitan Insurance Housing Project which will exclude Negroes. Thus, at this critical time, the head of the city administration gives an unequivocal demonstration to would-be rioters and his own city police as to what his attitude is on the race question. The city police understood their Mayor even before he spoke. On June 24, at a meeting of the City Council, Councilman Clayton Powell, a Negro, said that New York had recently witnessed "a continuous succession of unwarranted brutality perpetrated upon Negro citizens in our city," with many cases resulting in deaths. He had taken each of these cases up by mail with Police Commissioner Valentine. One letter had been acknowledged, the rest had been ignored. "now say, fellow councilmen," continued Powell, "that the riots of Detroit can easily be duplicated here in New York City. If any riot breaks out here in New York, the blood of innocent people, white and Negro, will rest upon the hands of Mayor Fiorello LaGuardia and Police Commissioner Valentine, who have refused to see representative citizens to discuss means of combatting outbreaks in New York." What protection can be expected from such a police force?

The Negro people, therefore, had better make up their minds. The state, the government, in Washington, Detroit, New York, Los Angeles, or anywhere else, is no protection. There will be some talk. The government may send in some troops after the mischief has been done and the situation seems to be spreading too far. It may even appoint a commission. But before, during and after the rioting, the government and its agents act in accordance with the three hundred-year-old policy of American capitalism—nor could it be otherwise. The state, says Marx, is the executive committee of the ruling class. The American capitalist class has gained untold riches by its specially brutal exploitation of Negroes. To deaden the consciousness of exploitation among the white workers it taught them to despise Negroes. Now today it needs uninterrupted production for its war. But when certain backward elements among the whites attack Negroes, the capitalist class, through its executive committee, the state, shows that even against its own immediate war interests, it must continue that persecution on which so much of its power and privileges have been built. The Army, the Navy, the police, the

Department of Justice, all these are the instruments whereby the capitalist class holds down the masses of the people. These are soaked and trained in race prejudice as a matter of high policy. If even the government dislikes race riots, it cannot take vigorous steps to repress them because that will tear down the prejudice on which so much depends. If Negroes depend upon the government, they are going to be dragged from trolleys and beaten up, they and their wives and children will be shot down by rioters and police, and their homes will be wrecked and burned. Furthermore, these riots are no passing phase. If even by some miracle they are held in check during the war, when the war is over they will burst forth with tenfold intensity.

The Bishop and the Uncle Toms

Two weeks before the Detroit outburst, the Rt. Rev. C. Ransom, bishop of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, addressed a meeting of 1,500 people at Town Hall, New York. The bishop spoke to a people strongly conscious of the danger which hung over them. He made one reference to the work of the President and "his great wife" for Negro equality, but he called upon the Negro people to fight. He made a public confession. "I am tired of lying and compromising; we praise William Lloyd Garrison—he was a white man who died for the Negro—but Negroes must learn to die for themselves!" He concluded: "I'd rather die and be damned than to surrender my absolute equality to any man!" The bishop is a little shaky on the theology. We can assure him on the very highest authority that if he were to die fighting for equality he will at least not be damned. But his political line is impeccable. What makes his speech so noteworthy is that in all the outpourings of the wordy Negro leaders in this crisis, it stands almost alone. With all that had happened and the prospects of still worse to come, not one of the so-called leaders of the Negro people had the courage, the sense, or the honesty to call upon the people to defend themselves. We shall give a selection of what they did say, so that there will be some coordinated record of the shameful cowardice, self-seeking and bankruptcy of these betrayers of the Negro masses. (The selections are all from the June 26 issues.)

The People's Voice: "It is evident that the Axis is planning an invasion of America. . . . Our government has been mysteriously soft-hearted in dealing with the big-time fifth columnists of America. . . . It is time the President of the United States stopped phony investigations of lynchings, police brutality, maltreatment of black soldiers, mob law, and got down to business. . . ." Then, in large capitals: "THE QUESTION THAT NOW CONCERNS US IS NOT—WILL WE WIN THE PEACE, BUT WILL WE WIN THE WAR? AND, IF SO, WHICH ONE? ABROAD OR AT HOME?"

Signed: ADAM CLAYTON POWELL.

To the people in Buffalo, Philadelphia and elsewhere, wondering their turn will come, it must be comforting to know that the Axis is planning an invasion of America and that is why their heads are being busted open.

The New York Age: "The saturation point is fast being reached. The failure of legal authorities to face the situation is bringing near and nearer that fatal day when the limit of human endurance shall have been reached. . . . If and when that day is allowed to come—there will be trouble."

The Pittsburgh Courier: "We urge prompt and immediate action by the Office of the Attorney General. . . . The Federal Bureau of Investigation. . . . Nazi saboteurs, Axis-in-

spired!" Then, in large print: "WE DEMAND ACTION."

The Chicago Defender: "Biddle must be made to act or vacate his high office. . . . Let us still further unify our country and go forward to win the war NOW in 1943."

The Journal and Guide: "The state governments must play their part; the city and country governments must play their part; if they fail the federal government must assume its responsibility as was done in the Detroit case. It is time for America to close ranks if we are to retain the respect of the other members of the United Nations. . . ."

You see, it is not Negro lives which are at stake, but the respect for America of the United Nations.

Lester Granger (for the National Urban League) in a telegram to President Roosevelt: "We therefore call on you to order an immediate investigation of these outbreaks and the possibility of their subversive instigation. . . ."

Walter White (for the NAACP) in a telegram to President Roosevelt: "We urge you to go on the radio at the earliest possible moment and appeal to America to resist Axis and other propaganda. . . ."

Ferdinand Smith, chairman, and *Charlie Collins*, secretary, Negro Labor Victory Committee: "We feel that the Detroit outbreak demands most stringent measures to prevent the further breakdown of morale and war production."

These are the Negro leaders. These are the cringing, crawling, whining Uncle Toms who have not, not a single one, addressed a single manifesto to the Negro people and to their white fellow citizens, many of whom, in organizations and in groups or singly, are ready to do what they can for the defense of the Negro people. No. To that very President, to those very legal authorities who have themselves so criminally, by commission and omission, encouraged and protected the rioters, it is to them that these Negro leaders address themselves, beating the big drum against the Axis. Read those extracts again. What they are saying is this: "Don't you see, Mr. President, that when they shoot us down and bust our heads open, it stops our war production? If it wasn't for that, we wouldn't trouble you."

The President is the same man who so shocked Walter White by openly supporting segregation in the armed forces, who has used the FEPC as a toy windmill to fool Negroes; the same who, according to Adam C. Powell, has instigated phony investigations into the thousands of government-organized brutalities perpetrated against the Negro people every day. So far, the President has kept quiet. As long as he can have Walter White, Lester Granger and Ferdinand Smith to keep the Negroes quiet, why should he say anything? However, Eleanor Roosevelt has not the gift of silence. When the zoot suit riots broke out, she was in Washington, the center of government. The world will little note nor long remember what she did there. She did nothing. But she said plenty. As a fitting crown to a notably platitudinous career she declared that "Americans must sooner or later face the fact that we have a race problem" (*Journal and Guide*, June 26.) The words are not an indictment of Eleanor Roosevelt. This pouring of little thimblefuls of water on great fires is her job. But the colossal insolence and contempt of her remarks is an indictment of the Walter Whites, the Lester Grangers and the Ferdinand Smiths. It will be an everlasting tribute to their rôle as *de facto* agents of the white ruling class among the Negro people that, in this crisis, not one of them turned to the Negroes and said: "Negroes, defend yourselves."

Two voices, and two voices only, spoke up clearly on the riots in general, if not actually on Detroit. The first was the *Afro-American* of Baltimore, which, commenting on the Texas riots, spoke words which should be learned by heart. Every sentence is pregnant with wisdom:

The cause of the attack upon the hundreds of innocent colored people is not important. Some Southern communities need no incentive to mob action. All they want is an excuse.

In a situation like this in the South, it is idle to appeal either to state or federal authorities for assistance. It usually comes too late.

Colored communities must be prepared to protect themselves. Frederick Douglas said that the slave that resisted vigorously was almost never whipped.

If mobsters attacking colored homes get a hot reception once, they will not repeat that visit.

The second, the *Amsterdam News* of New York, was still more powerful:

We knew and we have said repeatedly that there can be no law and order (Negroes really don't care whether whites like them or not) in the United States until the federal government steps in and stops the continuous program of pogroms perpetrated against Negro citizens, particularly in the South. By failing to protect the lives and security of American citizens, our government tacitly enters into what amounts to collusion with the Nazi-minded and acting whites of America. Conditions between the two races are now so bad that any sane citizen fears not only for his country, but for his family, friends and himself.

Because our government refuses to act resolutely—go in and punish the mob members, regardless of their number—it is now mandatory on every citizen to protect himself. To protect oneself in face of mob violence means to fight back hard without giving any quarter to anyone. This may mean death but it's far, far better to die fighting as a man than to perish like a caged animal in Beaumont or elsewhere.

Unfortunately, the Negro citizen's war is right here at home against white mobs. Let us battle them unto death, until our government, dedicated to protect all of its citizens, does its duty as any government worth its salt would. The die is cast and we must fight all the way for our lives, our homes and our self-respect.

There is the whole thing in a nutshell. It is true for the South, and true for the North, and true for everywhere. There are some thirteen million Negroes in this country. They are willing and anxious to defend themselves. In their place, who would not be? But their leaders never do anything else but appeal to the same President, the same state, the same police, the same authorities, who, being what they are, will not and cannot defend the people. We ask the Negroes: Shouldn't Ferdinand Smith, Lester Granger, Walter White and all the Negro press have joined in a common manifesto to the Negro people? Shouldn't they have called upon them to defend themselves, shouldn't they have denounced by name the President, the police officers, the legal authorities, the mayors and all who have so criminally encouraged and aided, directly and indirectly, in the persecution of the Negro people? Shouldn't they have appealed to the great body of white people in this country, telling them that in view of the shameless failure to protect the Negroes, it was up to the citizens themselves to do it? Isn't it this which the situation demands? Is there any other way to save the people from the imminent perils of the future? Any Negro leader who cannot answer in the affirmative to the above questions is a traitor to his people and should be driven out from among them.

Every school club, every street, every church group, can organize for defense where official authority has failed them, as it has. They can pool their resources and train defense guards. The movement should be nation-wide and it could be started tomorrow.

Should the President be ignored? Not at all. The Presi-

dent should be informed, but he should be informed not by weekly telegrams about the Axis, but by tens of thousands of citizens marching on Washington. Walter White and Philip Randolph bear a direct responsibility for the helpless situation the masses of the Negroes find themselves in today. When the people were ready to march on Washington, these perpetual cringers cringed before Roosevelt and LaGuardia and called off the march. Is it any wonder that the state has continued its contemptuous course? Only one thing will make it change, and that is when it sees that the Negro masses are not listening to those who continually present their behinds to be kicked, but are themselves undertaking their own defense, and are presenting their ills to the government in person.

Some of these cowards and hangers-on to the Roosevelt government whisper that "we Negroes cannot fight the whole white population." The statement is a gross slander against tens of millions of white people in America and, above all, a slander against the CIO. We ask the Negro people to note that during the last ten weeks the whole bungling, hypocritical administration set-up for placing the burdens of the war upon the masses has been exposed and made to totter by the magnificent action of the miners. These half-million men have trusted in their union, and not in the state which they have recognized for what it is—the executive committee of the ruling class. They have shown what well organized, determined men can do. *One hundred thousand of these are Negroes.* Yet nobody thinks of white miners and Negro miners. They are just "the miners." The reason is because the Negro miners are perfectly integrated into the labor movement. This is what the Negroes must aim at. They must integrate themselves as tightly as possible into the labor movement. It is true that even in the CIO some white workers are hostile to Negroes, such as those workers who struck at the Packard plant against the up-grading of Negroes. But the UAW of Detroit, for instance, has repeatedly demonstrated its sympathy with the Negroes against the comparatively small section of Detroit race-baiters. It has repeatedly condemned the Detroit Mayor for his criminal laxity. Let the Negroes note this, and where, as in Detroit, they are strongly represented in the unions, let them make direct appeal to the unions for help in the organization of the defense. There are difficulties in the way. But the Negroes can overcome them if they first depend upon themselves and then call for the direct support of labor.

Walter Reuther, vice-president of the UAW, has said: "As soon as they pull the troops out of here it will happen again. Our only hope is that some active committee is organized to arouse the decent people of this town so that this won't happen again." R. J. Thomas, president of the UAW, has stupidly complained that the auto manufacturers "have given us little coöperation in helping to smooth race relations." That remark is in its way as miserable as the telegrams of Walter White and Lester Granger to Roosevelt. But the union leaders are undoubtedly bitter about the whole savage business and know the danger which it represents for union solidarity. Let the Negro community and particularly the Negro workers in the unions, put the problem squarely up to the unions themselves. "We cannot trust the state, in Washington or here. You are the most powerful organized force in the community. We are, most of us, workers like yourselves. We are organizing for our own defense and we appeal to you." If only the workers see that the Negroes mean business, they are certain to respond. But the Negroes must first rid themselves

of the misleaders who are always looking to Roosevelt or to Pearl Buck, or to Willkie for help, and, incidentally, the publicity which it brings. *If the Negroes do not defend themselves, then it is certain nobody else will.*

There are, of course, many other aspects to this problem: Its fundamental economic and social causes, the problem of labor coöperation, seen at its best in the miners' strike and at its worst in the reactionary AFL; the attitude of political parties; perspectives of the future. These will be dealt with by future articles in *The New Internationalist* and are regularly

treated in the weekly, *Labor Action*. But the problem here emphasized is an urgent one and has been treated as such. One of the most important lessons a Marxist learns is that the state is the executive committee of the ruling class. Another is that the emancipation of the working class must be the work of the working class itself. As the Negroes search their minds for a way out, let them carefully think over the two principles illustrated above. If in their determination to protect themselves they should grasp these two ideas, they will have learned lessons which will take them far.

W. F. CARLTON.

After Two Years of War with Germany

Notes on Russia in the War

General Prince Alexander Vassilich Suvorov was a military figure of great renown who served throughout Europe under the Empress Catherine and, after her, under the Emperor Paul, in the latter half of the eighteenth century. He carried the banner of Czarist reaction to the Danube and threatened the power of the Turks. He fought the Napoleonic armies as far West and South as Italy, and learned Milanese remember that the day Suvorov's troops marched into their city marked the death of the Cisalpine Republic.

At the head of a greatly superior army of Russians and Cossacks, he defeated the Poles under Poniatowski and Thaddeus Kosciuszko in 1792, and opened the way for the second partition of Poland next year between Catherine and Frederick William of Prussia. In 1794, when Poland rose in insurrection under the banner of Kosciuszko, who had entered Cracow, proclaimed national independence, and then forced the besieging troops of the Prussian monarch to withdraw, Catherine again sent Suvorov into the field. He emerged triumphant with the capture of Warsaw, which inaugurated the third partition of Poland the following year and its effectual extinction as a nation.

Czarist Russia was the principal pillar of European reaction, the staunchest support of all the black forces that sought to stem the tide of revolutionary Jacobinism set in motion all over the continent by the Great French Revolution. Prince Suvorov was one of the ablest and most odious representatives of this reaction. He even came to be its symbol. The French counter-revolution in 1799 marched through Brittany and Normandy with the royalists shouting: "Long live Suvorov! Down with the Republic!" It was a name with a record and a meaning that it retains to the present day.

These recollections are evoked by the reports that the Order of Suvorov has now been established in Stalinist Russia, sometimes called, out of pure nostalgia (there is no other reason), the "workers' state." The Order of Suvorov, First Class, "may be awarded only to a commander of an army on the front, his chief of staff or departmental heads who have annihilated numerically superior enemy forces or accomplished break-throughs on major fronts. The Second Class of the Order is given to corps or divisional commanders and the Third Class to lower officers." There is now also an Order of

Kutuzov, contemporary of Suvorov, and no less devoted a servant of Czarist despotism. Both of them and others of their kind adorn the breasts of any number of Stalin's marshals and generals.

It is a sign of the times in Russia, and not the first one, and far from the most important one. The old Red Army, which triumphed over the forces of all the imperialist powers sent against it, is gone, and gone of course is the socialist democracy, the internationalism, and the revolutionary spirit with which it was imbued from the start. Only people who do not think twice about how they are insulting the memory of the great founder of that army can refer to the Bonapartist levies that replaced it as "Trotsky's Red Army."

All the old grades and ranks which the Bolshevik Revolution abolished have been restored and new ones added. The comradely relationship between commandant and rank-and-filer has been replaced by the hierarchical relationship between an officer corps and a disfranchised serf-in-uniform that prevails in all imperialist armies. Special guards, brigades and divisions have been created in direct imitation, not of the Red Guards of the revolution, but of the Praetorian Guards regiments set up by Czar Peter the Great. Officers are now prohibited from mingling with the ranks or maintaining an atmosphere of equality with them. Bristling with vulgar decorations, officers from the rank of platoon commander upward are now provided with flunkies, each one has an "orderly" who "takes his meals to his officer, makes tea for him and polishes his boots." A system of exclusive officers' clubs has been set up, thus formally acknowledging what was yesterday a thinly-disguised reality. Trotsky's Red Army knew no officers—the very name was done away with—and no permanent ranks, that is, no officers' corps.

The canonization of Suvorov in the Stalinist army is not altogether inappropriate. Suvorov and his army were the banner-bearers of the counter-revolution of their time. If Stalin harks back to the reaction of yesterday, it is because he represents the reaction of today. It is possible that under the name of Suvorov, the Stalinist army will win its battles; the proletariat will not. It is a class that differs from *all* others in history above all in the fact that it can conquer and rule only in its own name, and thereby put an end to all rule. In this statement there is not an ounce of sentimentality or abstract

idealism; it is a profound and profoundly important social truth.

The Counter-Revolutionary Revolutionists

It is now possible to see much more clearly and fully what we saw incompletely and unclearly at the beginning of the war when we first rejected the slogan of "unconditional defense of the Soviet Union." The analysis of the problem of Stalinist Russia made by Trotsky in his last years, an analysis in irreconcilable conflict with one he had made originally, collapsed under the test of events. The Cannonites, who are less interested in critical Marxian analysis and re-analysis than in iconology, deem it sufficient to say their beads over and over again. But Marxism is not and never was a fully completed dogma, but a developing science.

Trotsky assigned to Stalinism, to the Stalinist bureaucracy, the rôle of undermining the economic foundations of the workers' state. By gradually de-nationalizing the means of production and exchange, loosening the monopoly of foreign trade, Stalinism would pave the way for the restoration of private property and capitalism. Indeed, it would not even survive this restoration, for that social act would be carried out by the forces of the Right Wing toward which the Stalinist Center leaned and repeatedly capitulated, and by which it would be crushed.

Nothing of the sort occurred. It was the Right Wing that was crushed by the Stalinist bureaucracy, and not the other way around. State property was not de-nationalized but, contrariwise, was more securely concentrated in the hands of the state and vastly expanded.

A year before World War II broke out, Trotsky found it possible to assert that the Right Wing, which the old analysis had described as the wing of capitalist restoration, represented a *Left* danger to the bureaucracy. The assertion was altogether abrupt, never motivated, not prepared by anything Trotsky had written previously, and to this day remains unexplained by the bead-sayers. It is nevertheless an assertion of first-rate significance, which we have dealt with elsewhere.

As late as 1938, that is, in the same year, Trotsky not only saw an important fascist wing in the Stalinist bureaucracy (i.e., a *capitalist* wing), but declared that the political pendulum has swung more strongly "to the side of the right, the bourgeois wing of the bureaucracy and its allies throughout the land. From them, i.e., from the Right, we can expect ever more determined attempts in the next period to revise the socialist character of the USSR and bring it closer in pattern to 'Western civilization' in its fascist form." If by the "socialist character of the USSR" Trotsky was referring primarily to state-owned property—and he was—the last five years have not revealed a single sign of attempts by the bureaucracy or any important section to "revise" it, much less "ever more determined attempts," in the sense of restoring private property.

Again, it is the contrary that has happened. One can scrutinize most closely the serious political press, and even the often interesting summaries of the Russian press in the periodicals of the bead-sayers, but not a solitary concrete reference will be found to even the beginnings of a trend in the bureaucracy toward de-statification of property, toward the restoration of private property. A prediction which continues to be so completely refuted by events should be discarded, and if the analysis on which it was based is not discarded outright, it at least demands critical re-examination. That is what we have sought to do in these pages on several occasions, with-

out encountering any comment from the Cannonites. They continue to say their beads.

Upon the invasion of Poland, the Baltic countries and Finland, and the division of imperialist booty between Hitler and Stalin, we watched closely for the possibility, even the likelihood, that Stalin would maintain private property in the occupied territories. That attitude was based not only on the experience of the Spanish Civil War, in which the Stalinists were the most ardent defenders of private property, but on the old analysis, according to which the social rôle of the bureaucracy was to abolish, or to prepare the abolition, of nationalized property. We were profoundly wrong. After a slight delay, the bureaucracy established the same property relations in the occupied countries as in Russia itself. On this point, Trotsky was unmistakably right. But his statement that the bureaucracy would most probably nationalize property in the occupied territories only deepened the contradictions in his fundamental theory of Stalinist Russia as a workers' state.

In the course of the dispute which led to the split in the Fourth International as a result of the arbitrary expulsions by the SWP leadership, Trotsky developed his point of view on the "degenerated workers' state" to the stage of a "counter-revolutionary workers' state." We know, he said, of the existence of "two completely counter-revolutionary workers' internationals. These critics have apparently forgotten this 'category.' The trade unions of France, Great Britain, the United States and other countries support completely the counter-revolutionary politics of their bourgeoisie. This does not prevent us from labeling them trade unions, from supporting their progressive steps and from defending them against the bourgeoisie. Why is it impossible to employ the same method with the counter-revolutionary workers' state?"

But the difference, even from the standpoint of Trotsky's fundamental theory, or rather precisely from that standpoint, is irreconcilable. We are warranted in placing the label "counter-revolutionary" over the reformist organizations in the capitalist countries not because they are *for socialism* "by bureaucratic methods," but just because they are *against the socialist revolution*, and have given ample evidence of their opposition to it with rifle and machine gun in hand. They are counter-revolutionary because, at bottom, they base themselves upon and defend the capitalist social order and the capitalist property relations on which it stands.

That the Stalinist bureaucracy (and the state it completely dominates) is counter-revolutionary, needs no elaborate demonstration. That is, it opposes the proletarian socialist revolution, whose triumph would mean the end of Stalinism and its power. But its similarity with the bourgeois labor organizations in the capitalist countries goes no further. The Stalinist state is not only not a defender of bourgeois property and not based upon it, but has destroyed it with all the thoroughness at its command inside of Russia, and, as we now see, even outside of Russia, *provided it had the power to do so*. Its work in the occupied countries shows this sufficiently.

Just what was the nature and significance of this work? The Stalinist state, represented physically by its armed forces (the Russian army and the GPU) occupied a number of capitalist countries, and proceeded to expropriate the bourgeois proprietors, nationalize property under the control of the Stalinists, thus abolishing capitalist property and capitalist property relations. The transformation it effected in the occupied countries is not less than a social revolution. To say that

the masses of workers and peasants effected this social change is an exaggeration, to say the least. It was carried out, and in the most thorough manner, by the Stalinist bureaucracy.

Trotsky does not characterize the transformation any differently. He speaks of the Stalinist expropriations of the bourgeoisie as "social revolutionary measures, carried out via bureaucratic military means"; and elsewhere remarks: "This measure, revolutionary in character—the expropriation of the expropriators—is in this case achieved in a military-bureaucratic fashion."

What is the *class character* of this social revolution? By Trotsky's criterion, it must be characterized as a *proletarian, socialist revolution*, whether carried out "bureaucratically" or "militarily" or not.

We are able without difficulty to grasp the concept (it is more than that; it is a reality too often repeated in our time) of a counter-revolutionary labor organization, for example, the Second International, which fights to maintain capitalist society and fights against the inauguration of a socialist society. The concept of a counter-revolutionary workers' state which accomplishes a socialist revolution; which establishes thereby a workers' state without the working class and against the working class (Stalin converts the workers, wrote Trotsky, "into his own semi-slaves"); which makes the socialist revolution, establishes a workers' state and "degenerates" it all at the same time—there is a concept which, as Trotsky wrote, "did not disturb *our* dialectic," but which certainly destroys a number of fundamental teachings of Marxism, dialectical materialism included.

It would now be necessary to teach that there are not only counter-revolutionary *opponents* of the socialist revolution, but also counter-revolutionary *proponents* of the socialist (bureaucratic, to be sure, but from a class point of view, socialist) revolution. It would be necessary to modify the theory that the overthrow of capitalism and the laying of the foundations of socialism can be the work only of the proletariat, by adding that the same task can be accomplished, "via bureaucratic military means," without the proletariat and against it. The Marxian dialectic has often been abused in the revolutionary movement, as is known. But it has never been invoked in justification of a more fantastic theory than the one to which Trotsky was driven in presenting us with the counter-revolutionary socialist revolutionists.

The Stalinist bureaucracy did indeed carry through a social revolution in the occupied countries. A social revolution means a change in class rule. What class was put into power in the Baltic countries? The proletariat? If this is so, someone should bring it the good tidings to console it for the bitter memories of totalitarian enslavement it enjoyed while it "ruled" under Stalin. The new class that was really brought to power by the Russian army, the GPU, and its Bonapartist plebiscite, was the Russian bureaucracy, and the social régime it established, against capitalism but not less oppressive and exploitive of the masses than the latter, is best characterized as bureaucratic collectivism. Such a régime cannot exist without nationalized, or more accurately, state property; far from undermining it or weakening it, much less replacing it with private property, the new bureaucracy bases itself upon it, draws its sustenance and power from it, and employs it as the economic basis indispensable to the savage exploitation of the masses over whom it rules.

The Morale of the Russian Army

The bead-sayers demanded of us throughout the dispute in the SWP that we discuss the "fundamental question," the question of the class character of Russia. At that time such a discussion was not possible and could not be fruitful; moreover, the traditional position of the Trotskyist movement was not being challenged. However, they find that such a discussion is entirely superfluous right now, at a time when the traditional position is being challenged, and challenged in a thoroughgoing manner. More bluntly, having accustomed themselves during the original dispute to letting Trotsky do *all* their political fighting for them, and confining themselves exclusively to the internal organizational plane on which their talents show to best advantage, they are now at a loss to engage in serious theoretical debate on the question. Where they are compelled to deal with it at all, they prefer to do so indirectly and on a sufficiently vulgar plane.

What is a vulgar plane? Let us take an example.

The ex-socialist Max Eastman writes an article in *Readers' Digest* containing emphatic assurances of his desire for a Russian victory and for American collaboration with Stalin. But, as he suggests by the title of his article, "To Collaborate Successfully—We Must Face the Facts About Russia." Eastman is now a one hundred per cent imperialist patriot, but also an anti-Stalinist. We have nothing in common with his approach to the problem, with the purposes of his article, or with his political conclusions. That is not the point, however. The point is that on the whole the *facts* he gives about the régime and the vast concentration camp into which it has converted Russia, are commonplaces to the Marxist press and to informed people in general. The Stalin apologist, Professor Max Lerner, the new political writer of *PM*, sets out to answer Eastman, and he has one central refutation of the facts marshalled by the latter: "As I read Eastman on Russian poverty and the subjection of the people, I kept thinking: if these people are slaves, why do slaves fight so well?" (*PM*, July 1.)

There it is, the whole crushing reply, just as it was written by the learned Professor Lerner, who never heard in all of history, ancient or contemporary, of nations of slaves fighting well, at least for a certain time.

Germany is not a nation of free men but of slaves. What would Professor Lerner say about the state of its morale? Has the state of the morale of the Japanese army, which so often fights till the last soldier is dead, come to the attention of the Professor? Or doesn't he find time to read the public press?

As stated above, the SWP prudently refuses to argue the theory that Russia is a workers' state merely because the state, which is completely in the hands of a counter-revolutionary, totalitarian bureaucracy, owns the means of production and exchange, and utilizes that ownership exclusively for its own benefit and to the social and political detriment of the proletariat. It prefers to argue the theory indirectly, and essentially on the same plane as Lerner and other pro-Stalinist Liberals.

"Those who deny that the Soviet Union is a workers' state," says the resolution adopted by the last convention of the SWP, "cannot explain the unprecedented morale of the Soviet workers and peasants." The same pathetic thought was repeated at a public meeting by the distinguished Marxian scholar who leads the party.

If this has become the criterion, or at least important proof, of the proletarian character of the Russian state—or, lest we forget, of its "counter-revolutionary proletarian" character—then objectivity demands that Germany be included in

the category of workers' states of one kind or another, for there has thus far been no serious sign of a break in its "unprecedented morale." Nor would it be possible to exclude Japan, and one or two other countries.

The "deniers" may not be able to explain the "unprecedented morale." How do the "believers" explain it? We read: "Above all, the system of nationalized property provided the basis for the unprecedented morale of the Soviet workers and peasants. The Soviet masses have something to fight for. They fight for their factories, their land, their collective economy."

Such good tidings should not be kept from the people either. The "Soviet" masses should be informed that the factories, the land, the economy in general, is theirs, belongs to them. On second thought, it is not at all necessary for the Cannonites to bring the Russian people this news. The Stalinists have been feeding this treacherous falsehood to the masses for years. Trotsky, however, repeatedly denounced it as a falsehood. In 1936, for example, he wrote:

The new constitution—wholly founded as we shall see, upon an identification of the bureaucracy with the state, and the state with the people—says: "... the state property—that is, the possessions of the whole people." *This identification is the fundamental sophism of the official doctrine. (The Revolution Betrayed, page 236. Our emphasis.)*

More of the same may be found in the chapter of Trotsky's work devoted to social relations in Russia. But the quotation above will suffice to emphasize that Cannon's explanation of the "unprecedented morale" of the Russians is based directly upon what Trotsky rightly calls the "fundamental sophism" of the bureaucratic counter-revolution.

In the last issue of their magazine, the Cannonites strike a highly virtuous pose on the question of Russian morale. They compare their own writings and those of Souvarine to show that the predictions of the latter on the subject were wrong while their own were right. But that is not the only thing they "foresaw" and "forecast." In their voluminous and violently contradictory writings on the subject can be found all sorts of mutually-exclusive predictions, precisely on the question of Russian morale in wartime. They have a wide choice to draw upon. For example, in the May, 1941, issue of the *Fourth International*, John G. Wright, their specialist on Russian questions, quotes with evident approval from an article by Freda Utey as follows:

This method of [repressive] government can be successful only where there is no threat from abroad. A dictator who lacks popular support dare not risk a war in which weapons would be placed in the hands of the subjects who might be more anxious to use them against him than against the foreign enemy.

Miss Utey was expressing no more than the thoughts of Souvarine against which the June, 1943, issue of *Fourth International* fumes with such hypocritical piety and pretensions of superiority. In 1941, Wright did not find himself called upon to fume, but only to quote with approval. On the next page (125) of the same issue, Wright, commenting on another article in the bourgeoisie press, summarizes the situation as follows:

The factor of morale is worst of all. The workers and peasants are no better than serfs. The cost of living is going up and wages down. Youth are now deprived of education. According to the Soviet press itself, the new decrees cut short the studies of some 600,000 students. Pupils in secondary schools have to pay 200 rubles per year, in universities and technical schools 400 rubles. This rule was applied even to pupils and students in their last year. In some provincial universities and technical colleges, eighty per cent were obliged to quit and seek employment. Boys of fourteen to seventeen were conscripted for labor. After one year's

training they are obliged to work for four years anywhere they are sent. *In short, Russia is a volcano ready for revolt. (Our emphasis.)*

Before venturing upon another spree of pompous self-adulation, the editor of the *Fourth International* could do worse than read a file of his own periodical. It will help tighten a loose jaw.

The appraisal of morale in wartime is an exceedingly difficult and complicated matter. This is especially true in the totalitarian countries, where truth is an outlaw, statistics a court tool, and super-censorship is king. The Cannonite explanation says too little and too much at the same time. Yet it is possible to make an objective appraisal which approximates the truth as closely as that can now be done.

Wide sections of the Russian people entertain an active hatred of their régime. The rest are divided between those who tolerate it in one way or another, and those who are fanatically enthusiastic in support of it, either out of self-interest or out of persistent indoctrination (above all, this holds true of the youth). But the invader holds out no hope whatsoever for relief from tyranny. The masses are ready to resist him with whatever weapons are at their disposal, as is the case in so many other countries.

The Russian people have almost always fought well against a foreign invader, even when the odds against them were much greater than they are now. They are fighting better and with more conviction against the Germans now than they did during the adventure against Finland, when indifference and even cynicism was the rule. The feeling of attachment to the soil is very strong throughout Russia, even among the working class, which is not many years removed from the land. They do not want their country overrun and ruled by a foreign oppressor. And this is no ordinary foreigner, but a fascist. For long years, from Lenin's day through Stalin's, the Russian people have learned to feel a horror and hatred of fascism. The record of fascism's conquests in Europe has only deepened this feeling. Their feelings in this matter are more than justified, and corresponded with the interests and ideals of the international proletariat. So, also, do the feelings of those British workers who support the war against Germany because they fear a victory of fascism which would destroy their national independence and above all their democratic rights and working class institutions. The British worker has postponed, so to speak, his settlement of accounts with his own rulers until he has removed the threat of the Nazi knife at his throat. So has the Russian worker.

The task of the revolutionary Marxists can be fulfilled only by taking these progressive sentiments into full account, while continuing their "patient enlightenment" of the masses as to the imperialist and reactionary nature of the war itself, the harmfulness of political support of the war and the war régimes, the need of breaking with imperialism and the ruling classes, the urgency of an independent, internationalist road for the proletariat of all countries.

Are the Russian masses fighting "in defense of nationalized property"? Of course they are! The British workers are fighting will-nilly in defense of capitalist property. The Russian people have shown no sign of wanting the restoration of capitalism, with its bankers and industrial monopolists. That is all to the good, for otherwise they would be the poor dupes of world reaction. The road to freedom for Russia does not lead backward but forward.

Right now, the "defense of nationalized property" means the defense of the economic foundations of bureaucratic totali-

tarianism and imperialist expansion—that is the point. The bureaucracy is perfectly well aware of this fact, and that is why it keeps its economic base intact. That is why it fights for it with such tenacity, with such indifference as to what alliances it makes with what capitalist-imperialist powers at the expense of the working class, with such cruel disregard for the legions of cannon-fodder it hurls wastefully into the breach against the enemy. That is why it fights to extend its base—and thereby its social rule—to whatever other country, from Sinkiang to Poland, from Finland to Turkey, that it has the power to take from its enemy and to be granted as its share of imperialist booty by its allies.

The morale of the Russians is high. Meanwhile, however, they are paying heavily with their life's blood for the rule of

the bureaucracy and for the reactionary alliance with the capitalist imperialisms that were imposed upon them. The older generation, which knows something about the great proletarian revolution, is too exhausted, on the whole, to carry out the task of liberation from the new despotism. The younger generation, again, on the whole, is for the time being fanatized and blinded by the reactionary doctrines of the totalitarian régime. But it will learn, or re-learn. The war will teach it, and so will the social upheavals that the war accelerates. If proletarian revolution does not triumph, and thereby overturn the régime of the new autocrats, that is, if the rule of Stalin continues, it will make no difference to the masses whether Russia is victorious in the war or is defeated. Their work is as clearly cut out for them as is ours.—S.

The Philosophy of History and Necessity

A Few Words with Professor Hook

It would certainly be very pleasant if a really scientific socialist journal were to be published. It would provide an opportunity for criticisms or counter-criticisms in which we could discuss theoretical points, expose the ignorance of professors and lecturers and at the same time enlighten the minds of the general public, working class or bourgeois.—Marx to Engels, July 18, 1877.

The interpretation of history is a class question. When a worker joins the revolutionary movement he interprets history, acting instinctively on the basis of his class. When a professor joins the movement he often explains this on historical, sometimes on philosophical grounds. Usually, when he leaves, you discover that, except in the rarest instances, he has never really understood the fundamental method of Marxism. The failure is due always to the same cause—the inability to realize that the understanding of Marxist philosophy is a class question. Hook's recent book on history,* as was to be expected, shows not the slightest understanding of this basic fact. Instead he shows himself happy in the conviction that Marxism is a form of religion. In the very second paragraph (page xi) of this book, Hook lumps together "Providence, justice, reason, dialectic"—all are similar types of metaphysical abstraction. Hegel, Herbert Spencer and Marx were all bunglers in their philosophizing about history. Hook pontificates: "It is easy to establish that orthodox Marxism, particularly where it invokes the notions of dialectical necessity and historical inevitability, is shot through with metaphysical elements every whit as questionable as the views it criticized" (page 76). Exactly how easy it is, we shall soon see. Of the appearance of great men in history, he says: "For Engels, social need is not only a necessary condition for the appearance of a great man but also sufficient. But how does he know that, even when a great and urgent social need is present, a great man *must* arise to cope with it? Who or what guarantees this blessed event? Not the Providence of Augustine and Bossuet, not the Cunning of Reason of Hegel, not the Unknowable of Spencer, but 'the dialectical

contradiction between the forces of production and the relations of production.'

"This dynamic force works in a truly remarkable fashion..." (page 80). For Hook, Marx is a modern Moses, leading the proletariat out of capitalism into the inevitability of socialism on the same philosophical premises that Moses led the Israelites out of the house of bondage into the land of promise. Hook's point is that the great man does not appear of *necessity*. He comes from nobody knows where. The Marxists have made valuable contributions to historical theory, but as can be shown by their treatment of great men, they believe in an economic *necessity* expressing a historical *purpose* which is no more than a form of religious mania. As Mr. Joseph Ratner so eloquently described it in his essay on modern philosophy: "...the Marxian materialism goes along in ever more novel ways, developing itself and the universe (at the same time) in accordance with the magical antics of the Hegelian idealistic dialectic secreted in its vitals. Whatever one may think of the philosophical value of Idealistic Magic (even when covered up with materialistic sober sense),..."* Ratner is rough and tough. Hook prefers to snigger. But both of them, like the common run of American intellectuals, including most of the radicals, write and speak as if the question is not even worth discussing any more.

Hook and Historical Necessity

This religion of "social determinism," Hook treats of in one chapter on Hegel and Spencer; he devotes another chapter to the "social determinism" of Marx. These delusions being disposed of, Hook now faces the task of showing us his own conception of the movement of history. To do so he raises the question first posed by Meyer, the famous German historian of classical antiquity. What would have been the subsequent history of Europe if the Persians had conquered the Greeks? Says Hook: "Meyer maintains with justification that the political history as well as the cultural values of Greek and European civilization would have been profoundly different from the legacy that has come down to us." This is a miserable sentence. But its meaning can be divined. The political history

**The Hero in History*, John Day, 1948.

*In a contemptuous footnote. *John Dewey's Philosophy*, page 55 (Modern Library).

as well as the cultural values of Greek civilization would have been different. The legacy that would have come down to us would have been therefore different. The logic is impeccable. But to say that the political history and cultural values of Europe would have been "profoundly different," that, Mr. Philosopher, is a ripe and rosy carbuncle which invites the Marxist scalpel. After the ensuing operation, an easy one, and not worth doing for its own sake, we shall be nearer to Marxism and Hook's more serious philosophical crimes.

It is to Hegel and Marx that are due the modern practice of dividing world history into a sequence which shows some historical inevitability or necessity, or on which, according to the Hookites, that necessity is imposed. Marx, like Hegel, sought in history "the pervading thread of development" and he found it in the economic relations of the different social forms. Marx's divisions are therefore primitive communism, the classical slave society, feudalism, capitalism, and, tomorrow, communism. Marx saw each social system as flowing inevitably and of necessity from the other. Is this necessity "religious"? Let us see.

For a Marxist, the determining feature of the classical world taken as a whole was slavery. The distinguishing political feature was the city-state. The empirical proof of its vitality is Rome, which from the beginning to the end of the Roman Empire remained a city-state. The economic basis of the early city-state was the free peasant who lived on the territory adjoining the city which was his administrative, military and cultural center. By degrees more is produced and more consumed. As Rome expanded, the peasant economy declined and, aided by the great trade wars with Carthage, the inevitable concentration of production resulted in the creation of the wealthy landowners and financiers. This economic development enslaved the masses of the population and destroyed the old Roman Republic. What is the sense of attributing this or any part of it to the Greek legacy? The brothers Gracchi were educated by a Greek rhetorician and a Stoic philosopher. Does Hook really think that this made them lead one of the most famous agrarian and political revolutions in Roman history? Or that the wealthy Romans who murdered them did so because they had neglected to study Pericles on democracy?

The backward agricultural economy of Rome lacked the power to make economic connections with the outlying provinces. Hence Rome's relation with these was political. Rome was a city-state exploiting a continental hinterland. The plunder which is the reward of all empire-builders could be gained only by political means. Hence the intense political life of Rome. With the creation of the huge latifundia and the gigantic political bureaucracy in Rome, the Empire could go no further. It collapsed, and all the more easily because there was no unity in the production relations. What, pray, had the legacy of Greece to do with all this?

Now comes the question of inevitability in the change to feudalism. In 1859, discussing the barbarian invasions of the Empire, and the new distribution of property which resulted, Marx wrote: "Although the latter appears now as the prerequisite condition of the new period of production, it is itself but a product of production, not of production belonging to history in general, but of production relating to a definite historical period" (*Critique of Political Economy*, page 288). Marx laid the emphasis on the mode of production brought by the Germans, although he recognized the reciprocal and receptive character of the latifundia. A dozen years later oc-

curred one of the historical sensations of the nineteenth century.

Fustel de Coulanges was a Frenchman who in 1864 published a brilliant study of the ancient city-state, *La Cité Antique*. He was appointed to a post at Strasbourg, where Franco-German relations were very tense. (All this will teach Hook something about the rôle of the hero.) Fustel hated the German nationalistic historians and their boasting about German culture, and immediately after the Franco-German war he began the publication of his thesis that the invading German barbarians were Romanized Germans whose leaders simply took the place of the old ruling class while civilization went on much as before. According to de Coulanges: "All the agricultural characteristics of the manor existed under the Empire and were plainly apparent in Merovingian times. . . . The Franks were not the authors of the change, but they aided it and gave it some traits that it would not have had." What these traits were can be argued even among Marxists. We are stressing here the economic foundations. Invasions or no invasions, feudalism was the inevitable next stage rooted in the inner necessity of the Roman impasse. De Coulanges was no Marxist. He had interpreted the city-state in terms of religion, and the contemporary monarchists in France have drawn much ammunition from his work on that subject.

We know today, and chiefly owing to Marx and Engels, that the Middle Ages were no age of darkness. Yet there was a period which is hard to reconcile as progressive in comparison with Rome of the decline.

During another Franco-German war, 1914-18, another professor of the Latin-German civilization, this time a Belgian, wrote his views on the same period. Pirenne showed that there had been no destruction of the Roman civilization of Europe by the barbarians. Civilization continued to flourish on the basis of a wide exchange. Then in the seventh century the Moslem armies swept across North Africa, invaded Europe and remained in Spain for some seven hundred years. From the North the Norsemen did the same as far South as Sicily. Thus, directly and indirectly, these barbarians destroyed the internal economy and external trade of Europe. This was the cause of the darkest period in European civilization. Protection became an important factor in European society and on this economic and social basis the politics and cultural values of medieval Europe were founded. St. Thomas based his philosophy on Aristotle, but all the textbooks say that St. Thomas' Aristotle was not the Aristotle of Greece but a medieval philosopher. The church of Rome, which had inherited the prestige of the Roman Empire, became an international landowner and the political and spiritual leader of society. Hence religion and not, as in classical times, politics, was the main sphere of medieval life.

From the hard conditions of the countryside the serfs ran away and settled themselves in the towns to protect themselves from the feudal lords. The word bourgeoisie comes from the Latin *burgensis*, meaning an inhabitant of a walled town. But whereas the city-state had been a protection for the peasants of the countryside and an administrative center, the medieval city fought against the economic and political overlordship of the feudal barons. The two compromised in the national state, which was consolidated by the absolute monarchy. In the national state, agriculture and industry made a remarkable development, far surpassing the achievements of Rome or of the medieval manor. Ultimately the superior economy of the towns conquered the economy of agri-

culture and we have the modern economy, with its new values of bourgeois democracy and now, today, of socialism and the cultural values of the modern age.

The historical necessity is not a mathematical progression. Doubtless the Moslems threw Europe back. But it was their backward economy which was finally driven out of the continent by the national state of Spain. By degrees more is produced and more is consumed. But this necessity is geographically and otherwise conditioned. Marx pointed out that in the Oriental countries the geographical necessity of large irrigation works early gave the state an overwhelming authority which created a stagnation lasting for thousands of years. But just as the European economy conquered America and not *vice versa*, so we see the Orient adopting the economic forms of the developed capitalist civilization, and India, for example, becoming a modern nation, fundamentally different from the loose association of semi-feudal states under Aurungzebe. And with this economic development comes to India the modern values of nationalism, no taxation without representation, democracy, compulsory education and socialism. Hook thinks all this would have been different but for Plato and Aristotle.

In an article on Trotsky's place in history, J. R. Johnson writes as follows: "Rome fell . . . but when the Renaissance brought back the study of the classics, all the growing forces of liberalism in Europe nourished themselves on the vivid artistry and republican sentiments of Thucydides, Livy and Plutarch and cursed tyranny in the language of Tacitus. . . . The finer shades of European history are a closed book without an understanding of what the classics meant to all the educated classes." (The NEW INTERNATIONAL, September, 1941, page 163.) You can say more but not much more. Hook says that not only the values but the political history itself would have been "profoundly different" had it not been for the Greek legacy. But if the values and political history had been "profoundly different," the economic history would have been different too. We cannot imagine "profoundly different" politics and culture without "profoundly different" economics. So that in the end Boulder Dam, the Flying Fortress and the photo-electric cell are due not to the historical inevitability of Marxist necessity but to the lucky chance that the Persians were licked by the Greeks. Isn't it clear that this philosopher has no philosophy of history, the moment he deals with the concrete?

Necessity and Purpose

The foolishness of Hook does not prove the wisdom of Marx. Still less does it prove the philosophical validity of Marx's doctrine of historical necessity. Yet the above sketch, inadequate as it necessarily is, shows that the doctrine of stages developing inevitably from one another is one that can be empirically observed and empirically established. We have seen where Hook lands in his attempt to discredit the doctrine on purely historical grounds. There still remains, however, the question of all this taking place through some divine dialectic or otherwise phony purpose.

Dühring is Hook's grandfather, and Engels, exposing the parent, used some words which are particularly applicable to the "son." This nineteenth century Hook, in his exposition of his own philosophy, had introduced the idea of "purpose" in the transition from inorganic to organic life. Says Engels: "Once again, this is borrowed from Hegel, who in his *Logic—the Science of the Idea*, makes the transition from chemistry

to life by means of teleology or the science of purpose. . . . It would take us too long to examine here to what extent it is legitimate and appropriate to apply the ideas of end and means to the organic world. In any case the utilization of the Hegelian 'inner purpose'—*i.e.*, a purpose which is *not* [our emphasis] imported into Nature by some third party acting purposively, such as the wisdom of Providence but lies in the necessity of the thing itself, constantly leads with people who are not well versed in philosophy, to the unthinking interpolation of conscious and purposive activity." As W. C. Fields used to say: "How true!"

Note how carefully Engels differentiates the providential purpose of St. Augustine from the purpose of Hegel. Hook, who, as a professor of philosophy, should be "well versed" in it, jumbles them all together. But what about Engels' own idea of purpose? While defending Hegel against the philosophical barbarism of the Hook of his day, he himself shows what the concept is and how it should be used. Says Engels: "The inner purpose in the organism, according to Hegel (V, page 244) operates through *impulse. Pas trop fort*. [Go easy with that.]. Impulse is supposed to bring the single living being more or less into harmony with the idea of it. From this it is seen how much the whole *inner purpose* is itself an ideological determination. And yet Lamarck is contained in this." (*Dialectic of Nature*, page 226.) Maybe someone will explain to us how to explain to Hook that an ideological determination means a construction made by the mind. Note the completely non-metaphysical "instrumental" manner in which Marx and Engels dealt with such concepts as purpose and necessity in nature, not to mention history. This procedure Hook can attack if he likes. Then the debate would begin. But this philosopher of history and professional philosopher prefers to slander Marxism by writing "the purposive idealism of Hegel and the dialectical materialists . . ." (page 142).

Let us continue with "purpose," for if we do not understand this, only faith and not reason can save us. If I see that all rivers run to the sea, then I say that the "necessity" of a river, when placed in its habitual earthly relations, compels it to run to the sea. Hence that is its "purpose." It acts that way because that is its nature, and my business as a scientist is to examine that, and not look for the hand of God or any outside agency. On this use of "purpose," both Hegel and Engels, as we see, had common ground. But both Marx and Hegel understood quite clearly that you could never finally prove this purpose or any necessity purely by empirical observation. No logic in the world can prove that the sun must of inevitable necessity rise tomorrow morning. Hegel refused to accept this, and all that a human being could do to make empirically observed necessity logically and philosophically water-tight, Hegel did. That is why Engels writes of him in *Ludwig Feuerbach*: ". . . with Hegel, philosophy comes to an end: on the one hand because in his system he comprehended its whole development in the most splendid fashion; and on the other hand, because, even if unconsciously, he showed us the way out of the labyrinth of 'systems' to real positive knowledge of the world."

What Hegel refused to accept, Marx and Engels accepted and made their basis. As Engels says: "The empiricism of observation alone can never adequately prove necessity. . . . But the proof of necessity lies in human activity, in experiment, in work." (*Ibid.*, last page.) Could anything be simpler? Yet this is something which Hook with all his studies of Hegel

and Marx has never understood. Marx did not seek a philosophy based on the traditional philosophical methods. "The philosophers," he said, "have *interpreted* the world in various ways; the point, however, is to *change* it." The emphasis is his own. This was a complete break with the old philosophy in the now stagnant waters of which Hook still puffs and blows.

The Philosophy of the Proletariat

Marx, an educated German of the fifth decade of the nineteenth century, read history and, looking at the events around him, came to certain conclusions, summed up forty years later by Engels, as follows: "The new tendency . . . recognized that the key to the understanding of the whole history of society lies in the historical development of labor." Having recognized this, the new tendency "addressed itself by preference to the working class and here found the response which it neither sought nor expected from officially recognized science." This was a conscious action, undertaken "by preference," deliberately linking thought to the past, present and future of the proletariat. Having made the fundamental break, Marx and Engels then turned back consciously to the classical philosophy to organize their own according to the laws of logical thought which had been worked out by philosophers from Aristotle down and had been brought to a high pitch of development by the German philosophers culminating in Hegel. Hence the next sentence: "The German working class is the inheritor of German classical philosophy." Though they illustrated, Marx and Engels never tried to prove the necessity of their system by the Hegelian or any other logical or philosophical method, *because they knew that couldn't be done*. And that is a thing Hook, Eastman & Co. will never understand to their dying day.

Marx used the Hegelian method to discover the "necessity" of historical movement and its "purpose." Then, seeing the forces which comprised the "necessity," he elaborated a philosophy which was a guide to action for the working class. Practice, action, activity, work, there could be no other proof. Hook thinks in all probability that the Marxist insistence on activity is a bait to catch intellectuals and make them do political work. It is nothing of the kind. It is the deliberate, conscious repudiation of the traditional philosophy and its aims and methods in the way of proof. It is now one year short of a century since Marx first elaborated his philosophical position. The questions Hook should ask are as follows: Has society travelled in the direction Marx said it would travel? Does the future of society rest with the emancipation of the proletariat? Has the philosophy of Marx proved a useful guide to the action of the proletariat? If, reasonably interpreted, the answer is yes, then *there* lies the Marxian proof of historic "necessity" and historic "purpose." There can be no other proof. As Marx said roughly: All other questions are scholastic questions.

But there is more to it, and here the question becomes one of practical political importance. The interpretation of history or philosophy being a class question, the persistence in raising scholastic questions is itself a class question, and much of the confusion about Marx's philosophy arises from the justifiable sternness with which he refused to tolerate any fooling with his basic premises. In 1844, when he was settling accounts with Hegel, he made this very clear.

To a hypothetical person who asked him: "Who has produced the first man and nature in general?" Marx replies: "I

can only answer. Your question is the product of abstraction. Ask yourself how you arrive at this question. Ask yourself whether your question does not occur from a point of view which I cannot answer because it is an absurd one. Ask yourself whether that series exists as such for reasonable thought. Whenever you ask about the creation of nature and man, you abstract yourself from man and nature. You presuppose that you don't exist and yet you demand that I prove you exist. I now say to you: Abandon your abstraction and you will give up your question. Or if you hold fast to your abstraction, accept the consequences. Whenever you think of man and nature as non-existent, regard yourself as non-existent, since you are natural and human. Think not, ask me not, for as soon as you think and ask, your abstraction from the existence of nature and man makes no sense." (*Marx-Engels Gesamtausgabe*, Vol. III, Berlin, 1932.)

This philosophical approach is not for man in general. It is for a certain class of man, socialist man, the revolutionary proletariat. It is a philosophy of action for a class. Marx continues: "However, inasmuch as for the socialist man, the whole so-called history of the world is none other than the production of man through human labor, none other than the becoming of nature to men, he has the obvious irrefutable proof of its birth and genesis through himself. . . . [Socialism] begins from the theoretical and practical consciousness of men and nature as of the essence." In the same period he said in effect that the science of nature would become the science of man and the science of man the science of nature. Scientific investigation, yes. But he would have none of the attempts to solve these questions in the manner of Spinoza and Hegel.

Marx and Engels went to astonishing lengths in this attitude, and they could do this *only because they knew precisely what they were doing*. Thus in the *Dialectic of Nature* (page 25) Engels writes: ". . . we have the certainty that matter remains eternally the same in all its transformations, that none of its attributes can ever be lost, and therefore, also with the same iron necessity that it will exterminate on the earth its highest creation, the thinking mind, it must somewhere else and at another time again produce it." Pat and glib comes Hook's little snigger: "This is a certainty that dialectic (I had almost said religion) may give—science never" (*Marxist Quarterly*, April-June, 1937.) And yet it is precisely here that the non-religious earth-bound, class-based philosophy of Marx is being expressed. For Marx, life consisted of the relations between Nature (our particular Nature) and man. Nature created man and therefore that was Nature's "purpose" and that, *for the proletariat*, was philosophically sufficient. Nature's purpose might have been ten million things; it might have created a race of philosophical jackals whose successive generations would have spent their lives howling to the moon. Nature didn't. And the proletariat on whose shoulders fell the burden of changing society had no use for that purely scholastic philosophic doubt which perpetually wonders if after all something else could not have happened. To believe that Engels did not understand the philosophic implication and limitations of his phrase "iron necessity" would be a piece of impertinence on the part of Hook, if even the evidence did not exist that Engels was thoroughly aware of them. The same applies to history.

To conclude: Marxists, neither in history nor philosophy, have any theological certainty of anything. Their method is scientific. But it is a scientific method which knows what it wants to do, and, equally well, knows what it does not want

to do. A revolutionary worker acts in accordance with these ideas because his material circumstances compel him to. When masses of workers take revolutionary action they act in accordance with historical "necessity" and fulfill a historic "purpose." Let Hook walk into any circle of those who rule the world today and make a short speech about Marx, ending with "Workers of the world, unite." He will get a very practical demonstration of how seriously the educated classes take the Marxist doctrine of "dialectical necessity and historical inevitability."

In our next article, we shall show the logical distortions, the inability to comprehend, the political reaction and the philosophic mysticism into which Hook is again led by his refusal to accept the Marxist concept of historical necessity. The proof again is in practice, and if Hook is not much to practice on, yet political hygiene demands that periodically his pertinaciously piled heaps of rubbish be cleared from the path of the workers.

A. A. B.

Bolivia – Colony of the U. S. A.

Big finance capital in one country can always buy up competitors in another, politically independent country, and always does so. Economically this is quite feasible. Economic "annexation" is quite "feasible" without political annexation, and constantly occurs. In the literature on imperialism one meets at every step with information such as, for example, that Argentina is really England's "trade colony," that Portugal is really England's "vassal," etc. This is true: economic dependence upon English banks, indebtedness to England, England's buying up of the railroads, mines, lands, etc., in other countries, all this makes these countries England's "annexations" in the economic sense, although their political independence is not violated.—Lenin.

Were Lenin writing today, he might easily have pointed to the relationship between Bolivia and the United States as an example of the feasibility of "economic annexation." The conquest of the South American nation did not require the use of military force—or even the threat of such measures—but took place almost exclusively on the basis of Yankee "generosity." Investments, loans, bribery, technical advice—and not a little chicanery—these were the instruments whereby the American capitalists came into the possession and control of the decisive portion of Bolivia's major resources—tin and oil, the ownership of the railroads and control of the banks.

Early this year, as a result of the tin miners' strike, a furious inter-departmental tempest arose over Bolivia, a country that is seldom mentioned in our daily press. The dispute was touched off by the charge of the chief of the Division of Labor and Social Information of the Pan American Union, Ernesto Galarza, that, contrary to the Good Neighbor policy of non-intervention, Pierre Boal, American Ambassador to Bolivia had been interfering in the internal affairs of that nation. Boal was accused of having informed the Bolivian President that the enforcement of the labor code (which the Bolivian trade unions had been demanding for a long time, and which was included in the strike demands of the tin miners), would raise the price of tin beyond the financial capacity of the United States purchasers. This in spite of the fact that the Board of Economic Warfare, responsible for procuring vital war materials, had already guaranteed a higher price. President Peñaranda was advised by Boal to veto the minimum labor code, which included such elementary propositions as that the workers be paid every fifteen days. Boal cabled Hull that the miners "are now paid tardily deliberately in order to maintain them on the job, and to give them a stake in their next month's pay." Besides, he wrote, regular pay periods would

increase bookkeeping costs! Other articles to which the Ambassador took exception required the operators to sign collective contracts and one which prohibits utilizing the services of labor collectors and contractors.

The State Department issued a denial, although Hull had to admit that Boal had been instructed to "make inquiries" to the Bolivian President about the effect on prices of the proposed code. For a few days, charges and counter-charges were flying back and forth, with the upshot that Galarza lost his job and a Bolivian-American Investigating Commission was sent down to South America to make a first-hand inquiry into Bolivian labor conditions. The report of the commission, whose revelations regarding the extreme poverty of the Bolivian tin miners are in themselves a refutation of the cry of the Bolivian government that the strike was Nazi-inspired, has not been released for general distribution; only a single copy has been passed around to newspaper reporters. A sketchy, unofficial, individual report, written by one of the labor members of the commission, Martin C. Kyne, vice-president of the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Employees of America, is now available.

There are two things to bear in mind regarding the findings of the commission. In the first place, its main concern is with the raising of the productivity of Bolivian labor through improvements in the living conditions. After all, the undernourishment of the Bolivian worker and the universal practice of chewing the cocoa leaf to dull the pangs of hunger are old, old stories. But increased productivity is a vital war necessity, especially since the other two large tin-producing areas, Malaya and the Dutch East Indies, are in Japanese hands. Today, therefore, the commission finds what it describes as "little short of feudal serfdom" and an appalling death rate due to industrial disease (silicosis and tuberculosis are prevalent and there are in all of Bolivia not more than four hundred and twenty-five doctors) contributing to the low productivity of the workers.

Secondly, in all the protest against the brutal treatment of the Bolivian miners by the government and the mine operators, no mention has been made in the liberal and labor press of the fact that most of the mines are either owned or controlled by American corporations (they justly condemn Simon Patino, but they forget to mention his partner—a New York company) and that United States imperialism is, in the last analysis, responsible for the deplorable conditions of Bolivian labor.

Two factors—nature and time—seemed to conspire to force Bolivia onto the path of economic servitude to one of the big

imperialist powers. Geography is a key to Bolivia's backwardness. Here is a country with an area of 416,040 square miles and a population of some three and a half millions, cut off from the sea (Bolivia lost the Pacific port of Antofagasta in the war with Chile in 1883), with climatic conditions which range from wintry bleakness to tropical jungle heat, split into two sections by the high mountain system which runs down the center of the continent in a longitudinal direction. On the west of the Cordillera Real, stretching from Lake Titicaca to the Chilean and Argentine borders, is the high, desolate plateau, where life is an eternal struggle for the barest necessities. Buried beneath the mountains which rise out of the Alto is the wealth of Bolivia—the tin deposits, second only to those of the Malayan states—the old silver mines, gold, copper, lead, bismuth, antimony and tungsten. The absence of coal, however, creates all sorts of difficulties for the mining industry.

Bolivia's Backwardness

The Yungas mountain valleys lead down the Cordillera to the East, where lie the fertile plains capable of yielding enough food to feed a population several times that of Bolivia's. But, for the most part, agriculture remains as primitive and undeveloped as in the days before the Spanish conquest, except for the large estates held by absentee landlords, where Indian peons raise large quantities of cocoa and sugar cane. Foodstuffs like rice and flour are imported from Chile and the United States, although both could easily be raised in abundance in the Bolivian lowlands. Despite all the favorable conditions for cultivation, the plains have not attracted many settlers because they are cut off from the outside world. Except for the partially completed La Paz-Yungas Railway, long, hazardous mountain trails and passes traversed on mule-back or by foot are the only roads leading to eastern Bolivia. It still takes nearly forty days to go from Santa Cruz to Cochabamba, a distance of some two hundred and fifty miles! In the 1920's, a loan was made to construct a railroad between these two cities. In 1937, surveys were still being made for this railroad, and today it still remains a dream for the future.

Railroads, indispensable for industrial development, have for a long time been and still are Bolivia's most critical need. Railroads to unite eastern and western Bolivia; railroads leading out of the country—through Chile to the Pacific, through Argentina to the Atlantic. But railroads require large outlays of capital which are lacking within the country and have to be obtained abroad. Capitalism, however, will not make financial investments in backward areas out of altruistic considerations. Railroads in Bolivia, and loans for them, had to wait until they were profitable—not to the Bolivians—but to the money-lenders. It was not until the beginning of the current century that Bolivian tin began to play an important part in world economy, and it was this fact which provided the necessary impetus for investments in railroads. In line with this, however, only such railroads were constructed as were needed to carry machinery and fuel to the tin mines and to haul the tin concentrates westward to the Pacific Ocean. In 1937, of the 1,379 miles of railroad, none went further west than Potosi and Cochabamba, centers of the mining industry, and all but 271 miles were privately owned.

In 1908, Bolivia had no foreign debts; by 1927, her foreign obligations amounted to over \$40,000,000, all of which, with the exception of a small amount to England, was owed to the United States. In 1908, Bolivia borrowed 800,000 pounds sterling (roughly \$4,000,000) from J. P. Morgan & Co. at six per

cent, for the purpose of stabilizing exchange; in 1910, 1,500,000 pounds (roughly \$7,500,000) were borrowed from the Parisian Banco de la Nacion, and in 1913 the Crédit Mobilier lent to the Bolivian government 1,000,000 pounds at five per cent to build the Atocha-La Quiaca Railway. The Yungas Railway loan of 1917 in the amount of \$2,400,000, taken at six per cent from Chandler & Co. and the Equitable Trust Co. of New York, marks the beginning of long-term financing by North American banks and their economic infiltration and conquest of Bolivia. This loan was secured by a first mortgage on the electric railway built from La Paz to the Yungas, a lien on the government-owned branch of the Arica-La Paz Railway, and the first charge on the general revenues of the department of La Paz. The loan agreement also stipulated that the material used in the building of the railway and the rolling stock and equipment were to be purchased in the United States. The railroad itself was never completed; its abrupt termination on the other side of the Andes, in an uninhabited region, makes it practically worthless. The loan on this railway hangs like a dead weight on the neck of the Bolivian people.

In 1920, the government issued \$2,253,000 in six per cent bonds, the so-called Sanitation Bonds, which the Ulen Contracting Co. took in payment for the construction of sewer systems in La Paz and Cochabamba. The contract in this case too called for the use of American construction materials. These bonds were secured by a lien on fifteen different customs duties and internal revenues. Since sewers are not a source of income, the entire burden of this loan has fallen on the Bolivian government, to be met out of taxes—i.e., by an intense exploitation of the Bolivian masses.

The American Bankers Come In

It was in 1922, however, that Bolivia was really turned over to the United States bankers. The story of the 1922 Bolivian loan is worth retelling here because it is in many respects a classic illustration of the method by which American imperialism operates—through the employment of dollar investments whenever possible, rather than troops—an expensive and dangerous operation—in the building of the Yankee empire.

In 1920, the Liberal government was overthrown by the Republicans, whose leader, Bautista Saavedra, appointed himself president. Negotiations for a loan from Imbrie & Co. for the cancellation of the French debt were broken off as a result of the overturn. The new government, however, soon found itself in need of funds to meet the annual deficits in the budget, and in 1921 it turned to the St. Louis firm of Stifel-Nicolaus for a six-month loan of \$1,000,000 at six per cent. In the course of negotiating the terms of this loan, the American banking house extorted a preferential option for three years on any loan that the Bolivian government might contemplate. In 1922, the Saavedra government was again seeking a foreign loan to carry through a program of railroad construction, without which no party could remain in power in Bolivian politics. In accordance with the 1921 contract, this loan had to be taken from Stifel-Nicolaus, although more favorable terms were being offered by several other banks.

In 1922, therefore, Bolivia became saddled with a loan of \$29,000,000—a sum far in excess of the amount originally requested by the borrowers—which would run for twenty-five years, until 1947, at eight per cent. Associated with Stifel-Nicolaus were the Equitable Trust Co. of New York and the

Spencer Trask Co. The specific terms of the loan are so harsh that it came in for a great deal of criticism in Bolivia and numerous futile attempts were made to moderate them. During the recent controversy over Bolivia's situation, Roosevelt referred to the loan as unfortunate, not in keeping with the Good Neighbor policy, and so forth—but Bolivia still labors under it.

The bond issue became known as Bolivian Eights of 1947 and was secured by the national revenue as follows:

Not less than 114,000 government shares in the Banco de la Nacion. Since this number of shares was sufficient to control the bank, the American financiers obtained a stranglehold on Bolivian banking. Should the capital stock of the bank be increased at any time during the life of this loan, the government must acquire such proportion of the additional shares as to maintain its control, and such additional shares are to be immediately pledged for security on the loan.

In addition, the following revenues were pledged as security on the loan: All revenues representing dividends on the bank shares; all taxes on mining claims and concessions, taxes on all corporations, net profits of mining companies, revenues from alcohol and tobacco monopolies, all import and export duties, surcharge on import duties, tax on mortgage interests, and finally mortgages and liens upon the properties and earnings of railroads constructed and to be constructed. In the event of foreclosure sales of railroads, the purchasers shall have the right to operate them for a period of ninety-nine years from the date of purchase. In brief, all revenues except taxes and royalties from oil and oil developments were pledged to the bankers.

Moreover, to insure the actual collection of these taxes, it was stipulated that a permanent fiscal commission of three—two members of which should be chosen by bankers—should have charge of the collection of taxes for the quarter century life of the loan. One of the two commissioners chosen by the bankers also serves as director of the Banco de la Nacion Boliviana; the other is director-general of customs.

Starting with a request for a loan to build railroads, the loan grew to \$29,000,000—part of which was to be used to refund a certain amount of the outstanding debt. In most cases, however, the refunding loan carried a higher interest charge than the obligations it was supposed to repay, involving an additional loss to Bolivia. By the time advance interest charges, etc., were deducted, Bolivia obtained \$26,836,939, which was used in the following manner:

Refunding of old debts	\$14,175,570
Services and commissions	2,119,956
Railroad construction	10,541,412
(or a little better than a third of the total loan.)	

Bolivia now spends \$2,900,000 a year just to service this loan.

The Controllers of Bolivia's Wealth

Bolivia is one of the three large tin-producing countries and is responsible for about one-fourth of the world's output. With the Japanese occupation of the Malay peninsula and the Dutch East Indies, Bolivian tin has become extremely important to the Allied powers—the smelting industry in England and the manufacturers in the United States. The price of tin has been rising steadily since the beginning of the war and Bolivia shows a "favorable trade balance." Actually this is more apparent than real, since most of the tin mines are

owned or controlled by North Americans, who drain off the profits outside the country, and the taxes on mining profits are used to repay the notes held by the United States bankers.

The largest mining interests are organized in the Patino Mines & Enterprises Consolidated, incorporated in the state of Delaware, and owned jointly by Simon Patino, Bolivia's absentee tin king, and the National Lead Co. of New York. Organized in 1924, the company is capitalized at \$50,000,000, includes the richest mines, a private railroad, with interests overlapping in the Williams-Harvey tin smelting concern (British) which is one-third owned by Patino. In 1942, this enterprise produced nearly one-half of the tin exported from Bolivia.

Guggenheim Brothers own outright the second largest mines, the Caracoles Tin Co. in the Potosi region. They account for over twenty per cent of the total output, and the Aramayo Mines, British owned, contributed about seven per cent. The remainder is divided up among a number of small companies, which are owned fully or in part by United States interests.

The Bolivian oil fields, which stretch from the Argentine border northward along the Cordillera Real for some three hundred miles, fell to the possession of Standard Oil of New Jersey through a system of grants and concessions, which started in 1920, when the government turned over to the Richmond Levering Co. about one million hectares of oil lands. In 1916, all oil deposits had been nationalized by law and no oil grant was to be made in perpetuity. In 1921, the Bolivian government, profiting from the Mexican experience, sought to prevent the oil lands from falling to the permanent ownership of foreign companies, amplified the 1916 law by decreeing that no one company shall receive a grant of more than 100,000 hectares, and that oil concessions shall be limited to fifty-five years. Government royalties were set at eleven per cent. The Calvo clause stipulated that foreign concessionaires waive the right of appeal to their home governments in case of dispute and that transfer of holdings to foreign governments be prohibited.

Standard Oil, however, got around these legal restrictions through a system of subsidiaries. In 1921, it organized the Standard Oil Co. of Bolivia, which took over the properties held by William Braden, who had bought up \$2,500,000 worth of old Chilean titles. The new subsidiary was capitalized at \$5,000,000. Later that year, the Atlantic Refining Co., closely associated with Standard Oil, obtained a concession of 3,125,000 acres of oil lands in the Lake Titicaca region. In 1922, when the Saavedra government again reduced the royalty rates from the twelve and a half and fifteen per cent to which they had been raised by his predecessor, the Richmond Levering grants passed into the hands of Standard Oil.

Drilling began in 1923 under the most difficult conditions. The oil lands were accessible only by mule trail (the building of railroads was too costly) and it was in this manner that machinery and supplies had to be hauled to the wells. By 1928, Standard Oil had to its credit seventeen abandoned wells, five successful ones, with actual production of oil a thing of the future.

Tin, oil and the loan of 1922 combined to start the war of the Chaco. From 1926, the price of tin began a steady decline and by 1931 the Bolivian government, whose revenue depended so largely on tin profits, defaulted on its loan obligations. With every source of revenue mortgaged, the Bolivian government looked to the development of oil produc-

tion as a new source of income. But oil could be piped out of Bolivia only through the Chaco region to Paraguay and thence by boat down the Paraguay and Plata rivers to Buenos Aires on the Atlantic. Paraguay and Argentina, however, have oil of their own, controlled by British Dutch Shell, which was not too eager to have Standard Oil start competitive operations. In the summer of 1932, the two South American republics were at war, with Bolivia encouraged and aided by the United States and Chile, and Paraguay by England and Argentina. The struggle, in which 100,000 men were killed, lasted until July, 1938, when a commission of arbitration, composed of Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Peru, Uruguay and the United States, fixed the new boundary. As a result, Paraguay kept the Chaco region, but Bolivia won the right of transit and free port privileges at Port Casado. It was an empty victory, since there has been no Bolivian oil produced which needed to be shipped through the Chaco. In 1937, the Bolivian government expropriated the oil properties and after a dispute of five years, Standard Oil finally settled in 1942 for

\$1,729,375 in payment for the oil rights, interest and properties, together with the maps and geological studies.

This, then, is Bolivia—American-type colony. Its condition today reveals all the unevenness and disproportion common to a latercomer on the scene of world capitalism. Its economy has had a one-sided development, useful only to the foreign imperialists. Capable of raising any number of crops to feed its population well, Bolivia suffers from starvation because all the productive energy is put into tin, for which the enslaved Indians have precious little use. Railroads have been built to carry tin concentrates to the sea, but the ordinary Bolivian still travels on mule back or afoot. For this privilege the whole wealth of the country has been mortgaged to the bankers. Today tin is bringing a high price and Bolivia is meeting her foreign obligations. Tomorrow, when the market drops or the tin deposits are exhausted, her position will become even more precarious. Bolivia is doomed to remain an economic colony so long as imperialism continues to rule the world.

REVA CRAINE.

ARCHIVES OF THE REVOLUTION Documents Relating to the History and Doctrine of Revolutionary Marxism

Trotsky on Democracy and Fascism

Time is a great corrosive, but it has left intact the two articles on fascism, democracy and democratic slogans that we reprint below. Indeed, recent political developments recommend them to the special attention of the revolutionary movement. They are instructive, appropriate to the problems of the day, a wise guide to action.

The articles were written, and first appeared, after the catastrophe in Germany in 1933. In the two preceding, decisive years of preparation for the show-down, the Stalinists had carried on a noisy and extremely muddled agitation which covered up an impotence that was revealed to all when they capitulated to fascism without a struggle. Declamations for the "national liberation of Germany," plagiarized from the Nazis, were mingled with the cry "For a Soviet Germany." They demanded and advocated and did everything except the one, simple indicated thing that Trotsky tirelessly urged in a running series of brilliant political works, namely, a united front between the communist and social-democratic organizations to crush the fascist hordes before they became steeled by state power.

After the capitulation by both the Stalinist and reformist bureaucracies,

unprecedented in modern history, the former resumed its bluster in new words. "After fascism, we come," they said. "Fascism will not last long in power. Bourgeois democracy and social democracy have been proved bankrupt in the eyes of the whole working class, and fascism is destroying the last of labor's democratic illusions. Now it is ready to march to power under the banner of the Communist Party."

Trotsky found it necessary, after the advent of fascism to power, to try teaching a few more elementary lessons in working-class politics, a few of the ABC's of Marxism. These two articles were part of the attempt. So far as the Stalinists were concerned, they might just as well have not been written. They even denied that the German proletariat had been defeated, and continued to yawn about the imminence of the proletarian struggle for power and of socialism in Germany, just as they did for a time after the defeat of the German revolution in 1923. It should not be hard to imagine what they wrote in those days about Trotsky's criticism of their position. Two years later, with the signing of the Stalin-Laval pact, they made a violent turn-about-face, and adopted the position, not of struggle for democracy in the name of socialism, but of struggle

for imperialism in the name of democracy.

The present appropriateness of Trotsky's articles is clear to every thinking revolutionist for whom Marxian politics does not consist in uttering universally and perennially valid formulæ (there are none) or in substituting the abstract for the concrete, the wish for the reality, the experience of the vanguard for the experience of the masses.

The victory of fascism in Germany has become the victory of German fascism throughout Europe. Whole nations, viable nations, have been reduced to colonies or half-colonies of German imperialism. The working class and revolutionary movements have either been crushed, dispersed or atomized. Class oppression has fused with national oppression. Events have shown that Europe can no longer live economically or politically in conditions where it is chopped up into a score of tiny national parts—not even on a capitalist basis. But precisely because the "unification" of Europe took place under a totalitarian and reactionary tyranny, not only have none of the old problems been solved, but new ones have been added which seemed to have been solved long ago. Fascist reaction has not advanced Europe toward a rational union, but

hurled back the old continent and forced it to deal with *historically*-out-lived problems. One of these is now: the national independence of the nations under the German imperialist heel.

Modern society is so organized, however, that no matter how far it is thrown back by reaction, it is never thrown back to its starting point. No matter what old problems it is compelled to solve again, they never appear in quite the old way and, consequently, cannot be and need not be solved in the old way. The struggle for national liberation may once more have been forced to the top of the agenda for Europe, but it is not the Robespierres, Napoleons, Bismarcks, Cavour, Garibaldi, Kosciuszko and other leaders of the young bourgeoisie that will lead it. As a progressive—in contrast to a reactionary and imperialist—struggle, it can only be led by the socialist proletariat. In taking over the leadership of the struggle, the proletariat cannot halt at the boundaries of a restored bourgeois nation. Here, too, it must make the revolution in permanence. The victory of genuine national freedom, of the untrammelled right to cultural development, of economic abundance and of peace, can be assured only with the organization of a Socialist United States of Europe.

But this organization now lies over the road of struggle for national liberation of the oppressed and disfranchised countries. The revolutionary movement in Europe can take shape again and advance to the leadership of the working-class movement, only if it becomes the champion, in word and deed, of national freedom. On the side of the puppets or puppeteers of Allied imperialism? Of de Gaulle, Churchill, Roosevelt, Giraud, Wilhelmina, Mikhailovich, Stalin and their cohorts? Not for a moment! The revolutionist leading the fight for na-

tional liberation in Europe is irreconcilably distinguished from all these *exploiters* of the anguish of Nazi-held Europe by the simple fact that he is even more insistent in fighting for national liberation of those peoples and nations oppressed by his own bourgeoisie—the Negroes, the Arabs, the Indians, the Puerto Ricans, etc.—than he is in fighting for the freedom of the peoples under Hitler. There is the position against which democratic imperialism breaks its hypocritical neck!

The struggle for national liberation, which is summed up in the demand for the unrestricted right of self-determination, is a struggle for democracy. The demand is a democratic demand, part of the principles of formal, or bourgeois, democracy. Is not such a struggle, such a demand, incompatible with the struggle for socialism? The very question betrays a misunderstanding of revolutionary Marxism, that is, of proletarian politics. The struggle for consistent democracy is indispensable and not alien to the struggle for socialism. The victory of fascism in Europe makes the struggle for the democratic right of national freedom one of highest importance for Marxists. The fact that whatever popular mass movement of action there is on the continent today centers around this struggle, only underlines its importance for us.

Sectarians and phraselovers who cannot understand this today, and even see a species of backsliding or opportunism in our position today, were really answered adequately by Trotsky's criticism of the Stalinists in 1933. His articles had an ironical sequel, which is not without interest even today. The then Lovestonites, notoriously radical when it cost nothing, raised their hands in almost speechless horror. In the *Workers Age* (September 15, 1933), their specialist in "Marxism" and in

Trotsky-baiting, Will Herberg, took Trotsky most severely to task:

Whatever opposition to fascism there is [in Germany], is certainly not taking the channels of traditional bourgeois democracy...

That the fascist régime preserves democratic prejudices is a contention for which Trotsky cannot give the slightest theoretical argument or practical evidence...

The triumph of fascism in Germany marked the end of one epoch and the beginning of another; for one thing, it indicated the exhaustion of the Weimar Republic and of the whole ideological system built upon it, not only "theoretically" but in the social consciousness of the various classes...

What has driven Trotsky to take so completely a non-Marxian attitude, an attitude to a great degree indistinguishable from vulgar democracy? The answer is clear enough: Trotsky's "new" position on Germany (the demand for a "new" party, the advocacy of a return to the Weimar Republic as a "transition" program, etc.) is the political basis for his rapprochement with centrism, with Left Socialism, for the merging of the "Fourth International" and the "Second-and-a-Half International" tendencies...

It is really a pity that the whole article cannot be quoted, but enough is enough. Herberg challengingly chided Trotsky to give some practical evidence "that the fascist régime preserves democratic prejudices." There was ample evidence then; more has accumulated since. Included in the accumulation is the "practical evidence" of Herberg himself. Along with the other Lovestonites, he committed suicide in public when the United States entered the war, and announced that the "war against fascism" had renewed his faith in... democracy. If he did not start with democratic prejudices for fascism to "preserve," it at least generated them within him. His corpse now seeks to impart these prejudices to others, from the modest but not uncomfortable bureaucratic chair he occupies in a corner of a chauvinistic trade union. Trotsky, who was not superhuman, would have relished the revenge of events upon his so ruthless critic. We can learn from it.

Fascism and Democratic Slogans

1. Is It True That Hitler Has Destroyed "Democratic Prejudices"?

The April resolution of the Præsidium of the Executive Committee of the Communist International "on the present situation in Germany" will, we believe, go down in history as the final testimonial to the bankruptcy of the Comintern of the epigones. The resolution is crowned with a prognosis in which all the vices and prejudices of the Stalinist bureaucracy reach their culmination. "The establishment of an open fascist dictatorship," the reso-

lution proclaims in boldface type, "accelerates the tempo of the development of a proletarian revolution in Germany by destroying all democratic illusions of the masses and by freeing them from the influence of the Social-Democracy."

Fascism, it seems, has unexpectedly become the locomotive of history: *it* destroys democratic illusions, *it* frees the masses from the influence of the Social-Democracy, *it* accelerates the development of the proletarian revolution. The Stalinist bureaucracy assigns to fascism the accomplishment of those basic tasks which it proved itself utterly incapable of solving.

Theoretically, the victory of fascism is undoubtedly an evidence of the fact that democracy has exhausted itself; but politically, the fascist régime preserves democratic prejudices, recreates them, inculcates them into the youth, and is even capable of imparting to them, for a short time, the greatest strength. Precisely in this consists one of the most important manifestations of the *reactionary* historic rôle of fascism.

Doctrinaires think schematically. Masses think with facts. The working class perceives events not as experiments with this or that "thesis," but as living changes in the fate of the people. The victory of fascism adds a million times more to the scale of political development than the prognosis for the indefinite future which flows from it. Had a proletarian state grown out of the bankruptcy of democracy, the development of society, as well as the development of mass consciousness, would have taken a great leap forward. But inasmuch as it was actually the victory of fascism that grew out of the bankruptcy of democracy, the consciousness of the masses was set far back—of course, only temporarily. The smashing of the Weimar democracy by Hitler can no more put an end to the democratic illusions of the masses than Göring's setting the Reichstag on fire can burn out parliamentary cretinism.

2. The Example of Spain and Italy

For four years in succession we heard that democracy and fascism do not exclude but supplement each other. How then can the victory of fascism liquidate democracy once and for all? We would like to have some explanations on this score by Bukharin, Zinoviev, or by Manuilsky "himself."

The military-police dictatorship of Primo de Rivera was declared by the Comintern to be fascism. But if the victory of fascism signifies the final liquidation of democratic prejudices, how can it be explained that the dictatorship of Primo de Rivera gave way to a bourgeois republic? It is true that the régime of Rivera was far from being fascism. But it had, at all events, this much in common with fascism: it arose as a result of the bankruptcy of the parliamentary régime. This did not prevent it, however, after its own bankruptcy was revealed, from giving way to democratic parliamentarism.

One may attempt to say that the Spanish revolution is proletarian in its tendencies, and that the Social-Democracy in alliance with other republicans, has succeeded in arresting its development at the stage of bourgeois parliamentarism. But this objection, correct in itself, proves only more clearly our idea that if bourgeois democracy succeeded in paralyzing the revolution of the proletariat, this was only due to the fact that *under the yoke of the "fascist" dictatorship, the democratic illusions were not weakened but became stronger.*

Have "democratic illusions" disappeared in Italy during the ten years of Mussolini's despotism? This is how the fascists themselves are inclined to picture the state of affairs. In reality, however, democratic illusions are acquiring a new force. During this period a new generation has been raised up. Politically, it has not lived in the conditions of freedom, but it knows full well what fascism is: this is the raw material for vulgar democracy. The organization *Justizia e Libertà* (Justice and Freedom) is distributing illegal democratic literature in Italy, and not without success. The ideas of democracy are therefore finding adherents, who are ready to sacrifice themselves. Even the flabby generalizations of the liberal monarchist, Count Sforza, are spread in the form of illegal pamphlets. That's how far back Italy has been thrown during these years!

Why fascism in Germany is called upon to play a rôle en-

tirely opposite to that which it played in Italy remains incomprehensible. Because "Germany is not Italy"? Victorious fascism is in reality not a locomotive of history but its gigantic brake. Just as the policy of the social-democracy prepared the triumph of Hitler, so the régime of National Socialism inevitably leads to the warming up of democratic illusions.

3. Can the Social-Democracy Regenerate Itself?

German comrades testify that the social-democratic workers and even many of the social-democratic bureaucrats are "disillusioned" with democracy. We must extract all we can out of the critical moods of the reformist workers, in the interests of their revolutionary education. But at the same time the extent of the reformists' "disillusionment" must be clearly understood. The social-democratic high priests scold democracy so as to justify themselves. Unwilling to admit that they showed themselves as contemptible cowards, incapable of fighting for the democracy which they created and for their soft berths in it, these gentlemen shift the blame from themselves to intangible democracy. As we see, this radicalism is not only cheap but also spurious through and through! Let the bourgeoisie only beckon these "disillusioned" ones with its little finger and they will come running on all fours to a new coalition with it. It is true, in the masses of social-democratic workers a real disgust with the betrayals and mirages of democracy is being born. But to what extent? The larger half of seven to eight million social-democratic workers is in a state of the greatest confusion, glum passivity, and capitulation to the victors. At the same time, a new generation will be forming under the heel of fascism, a generation to which the Weimar Constitution will be an historic legend. What line then will the political crystallization within the working class follow? This depends upon many conditions, among them, of course, also upon our policy.

Historically, the direct replacement of the fascist régime by a workers' state is not excluded. But for the realization of this possibility it is necessary that a powerful illegal Community Party form itself in the process of struggle against fascism, under the leadership of which the proletariat could seize power. However, it must be said that the creation of a revolutionary party of this sort in illegality, is not very probable; at any rate, it is not assured by anything in advance. The discontentment, indignation, fermentation of the masses will, from a certain moment onward, grow much faster than the illegal formation of the party vanguard. And every lack of clarity in the consciousness of the masses will inevitably help democracy.

This does not at all mean that after the fall of fascism, Germany will again have to go through a long school of parliamentarism. Fascism will not eradicate the past political experience; it is even less capable of changing the social structure of the nation. It would be the greatest mistake to expect a new lengthy democratic epoch in the development of Germany. But in the revolutionary awakening of the masses, democratic slogans will inevitably constitute the first chapter. Even if the further progress of the struggle should in general not permit, even for a single day, the regeneration of a democratic state—and this is very possible—the struggle itself cannot develop by the circumvention of democratic slogans! A revolutionary party that would attempt to jump over this stage would break its neck.

The question of the social-democracy is closely connected with this general perspective. Will it reappear on the stage?

The old organization is irrevocably lost. But this does not at all mean that social-democracy cannot be regenerated under a new historic mask. Opportunist parties which fall and decompose so easily under the blows of reaction, come back to life just as easily at the first political revival. We observed this in Russia in the example of the Mensheviks and the Social-Revolutionists. German Social-Democracy can not only regenerate itself, but even acquire great influence, if the revolutionary proletarian party should set up a doctrinaire "negation" of the slogans of democracy against a dialectical attitude toward them. The Præsidium of the Comintern in this field, as in so many others, remains the gratuitous assistant of reformism.

4. The Brandlerites Improve on the Stalinists

The confusion in the question of democratic slogans has revealed itself most profoundly in the programmatic theses of the opportunist group of Brandler-Thalheimer on the question of the struggle against fascism. The Communist Party, the theses read, "should unite the manifestations of discontentment of all [!] classes against the fascist dictatorship" (*Gegen den Strom*, page 7. The word "all" is underlined in the original). At the same time, the theses insistently warn: "The partial slogan cannot be of a bourgeois-democratic nature." Between these two statements, each of which is erroneous, there is an irreconcilable contradiction. In the first place, the formula of the unification of the discontentment of "all classes" sounds absolutely incredible. The Russian Marxists did at one time abuse such a formulation in the struggle against *Czarism*. Out of this abuse grew the Menshevik conception of the revolution, later on adopted by Stalin for China. But in Russia, at least, it was a question of the collision of the bourgeois nation with the privileged monarchy. In what sense can one speak, in a bourgeois nation, of the struggle of "all classes" against fascism, which is the tool of the big bourgeoisie against the proletariat? It would be instructive to see how Thalheimer, the manufacturer of theoretic vulgarities, would unite the discontentment of Hugenberg—and he is also discontented—with the discontentment of the unemployed worker. How else can one unite a movement of "all classes" if not by putting oneself on the basis of bourgeois democracy? Verily, a classic combination of opportunism with an ultra-radicalism in words!

The movement of the proletariat against the fascist régime will acquire an ever greater mass character to the extent that the petty bourgeoisie becomes disappointed with fascism, isolating the possessing summits and the government apparatus. The task of a proletarian party would consist in utilizing the weakening of the yoke on the part of the petty bourgeois reaction for the purpose of arousing the activity of the proletariat onto the road of the conquest of the lower strata of the petty bourgeoisie.

It is true, the growth of the discontentment of the intermediary strata and the growth of the resistance of the workers will create a crack in the bloc of the possessing classes and will spur their "left flank" to seek contact with the petty bourgeoisie. The task of the proletarian party with relation to the "liberal" flank of the possessors will consist, however, not in including them both in a bloc of "all classes" against fascism, but, on the contrary, in immediately declaring a decisive struggle against it for influence on the lower strata of the petty bourgeoisie.

Under what political slogans will this struggle take place? The dictatorship of Hitler grew directly out of the Weimar

Constitution. The representatives of the petty bourgeoisie have, with their own hands, presented Hitler with the mandate for a dictatorship. If we should assume a very favorable and quick development of the fascist crisis, then the demand for the convocation of the Reichstag with the inclusion of all the banished deputies may, at a certain moment, unite the workers with the widest strata of the petty bourgeoisie. If the crisis should break out later and the memory of the Reichstag should have had time to obliterate itself, the slogan of new elections may acquire great popularity. It is sufficient that such a road is possible. To tie one's hands with relation to temporary democratic slogans which may be forced upon us by our petty-bourgeois allies and by the backward strata of the proletariat itself, would be fatal doctrinairism.

Brandler-Thalheimer believe, however, that we should only advocate "democratic rights for the laboring masses: the right of assembly, trade unions, freedom of the press, organization and strikes." In order to emphasize their radicalism more, they add: "these demands should be strictly [!] distinguished from bourgeois-democratic demands of *universal* democratic rights." There is no person more wretched than the opportunist who takes the knife of ultra-radicalism between his teeth!

Freedom of assembly and the press *only* for the laboring masses is conceivable solely under the dictatorship of the proletariat, that is, under the nationalization of buildings, printing establishments, etc. It is possible that the dictatorship of the proletariat in Germany will also have to employ exceptional laws against exploiters: that depends upon the historic moment, upon international conditions, upon the relation of internal forces. But it is not at all excluded that, having conquered power, the workers of Germany will find themselves sufficiently powerful to allow freedom of assembly and the press also to the exploiters of yesterday, of course, in accordance with their actual political influence, and not with the extent of their treasury; the treasury will have been expropriated. Thus, even for the period of the dictatorship there is in principle no basis for limiting beforehand the freedom of assembly and the press *only* to the laboring masses. The proletariat may be *forced* to such a limitation; but this is not a question of principle. It is doubly absurd to advocate such a demand under the conditions of present-day Germany, when freedom of the press and assembly exists for all but the proletariat. The arousing of the proletarian struggle against the fascist inferno will take place, at least in the first stages, under the slogans: give also to us, workers, the right of assembly and the press. The communists, of course, will at this stage also carry on a propaganda in favor of the Soviet régime, but they will at the same time support every real mass movement under democratic slogans, and wherever possible will take the initiative in such a movement.

Between the régime of bourgeois democracy and the régime of proletarian democracy there is no third régime, "the democracy of the laboring masses." True, the Spanish republic calls itself the "republic of the laboring classes," even in the text of its constitution. But this is a formula of political charlatanism. The Brandlerian formula of democracy "only for the laboring masses," particularly in combination with the "unity of all classes," seems to be especially designed to confuse and mislead the revolutionary vanguard in the most important question: "When and to what extent to adapt ourselves to the movement of the petty bourgeoisie and the back-

ward strata of the working masses, what concessions to make to them in the question of the tempo of the movement and the slogans on the order of the day, so as more successfully to rally the proletariat under the banner of its own revolutionary dictatorship?"

At the Seventh Congress of the Russian Communist Party, in March, 1918, during the discussion of the party program, Lenin carried on a decisive struggle against Bukharin, who considered that parliamentarism is done for, once and for all, that it is historically "exhausted." "We must," Lenin retorted, "write a new program of the Soviet power, without renouncing the use of bourgeois parliamentarism. To believe that we will not be thrown back is Utopian. . . . After every setback, if class forces inimical to us should push us to this old

position, we shall proceed to what has been conquered by experience—to the Soviet power. . . ."

Lenin objected to a doctrinaire anti-parliamentarism with regard to a country which had already gained the Soviet régime: We must not tie our hands beforehand, he taught Bukharin, for we may be pushed back to the once-abandoned positions. In Germany, there has not been and there is no proletarian dictatorship, but there is a dictatorship of fascism; Germany has been thrown back even from bourgeois democracy. Under these conditions, to renounce beforehand the use of democratic slogans and of bourgeois parliamentarism means to clear the field for a social-democracy of a new formation.

LEON TROTSKY.

Prinkipo, July 14, 1933.

Our Present Tasks

The victory of National Socialism in Germany has brought about in other countries not the strengthening of communist but of democratic tendencies. In an especially clear form we see this in the examples of England and Norway. But the same process is undoubtedly taking place in a series of other countries as well. It is very possible that the Social-Democracy in Belgium in particular will in the nearest future go through a period of a new political ascent. That reformism is the worst brake on historic development and that the Social-Democracy is doomed to failure—this is ABC to us. But the ABC alone does not suffice. In the general historic decline of reformism, just as in the decline of capitalism, periods of temporary rise are inevitable. The candle burns most brightly before it goes out. The formula: either fascism or communism, is absolutely correct, but only in the final historic analysis. The destructive policy of the Comintern, supported by the authority of the workers' state, has not only compromised revolutionary methods but has also given to the social democracy, defiled by crimes and treacheries, the opportunity of raising up again over the working class the banner of democracy as the banner of salvation.

Two Pairs of Alternatives

Tens of millions of workers are alarmed to the very depth of their hearts by the danger of fascism. Hitler showed them again what the destruction of working-class organizations and of elementary democratic rights means. The Stalinists kept on asserting for the last couple of years that there is no difference between fascism and democracy, that fascism and social-democracy are twins. On the tragic experience of Germany, the workers of the whole world convinced themselves of the criminal absurdity of such assertions. Hence, the further decline of the Stalinist parties, under conditions exceptionally favorable for the revolutionary wing. Hence, also, the desire of the workers to hold on to their mass organizations and to their democratic rights. Thanks to the ten-year criminal policy of the Stalinized Comintern, the political problem presents itself to the consciousness of the many-millioned working-class masses not in the form of a decisive alternative: *the dictatorship of fascism or the dictatorship of the proletariat*, but in the form of a more primitive and vague alternative: *fascism or democracy*.

We must take the resultant political situation as it is, without creating any illusions. Of course, we remain always

true to ourselves and to our banner; always and under all conditions we say openly who we are, what we want and where we are going. But we cannot force our program upon the masses mechanically. The experience of the Stalinists on this score is sufficiently eloquent. Instead of coupling their locomotive to the train of the working class and accelerating its movement forward, the Stalinists set their locomotive with a loud whistle toward the train of the proletariat and sometimes even collide with it, so that only scrap is left of the small locomotive. The consequences of such a policy are evident: in some countries the proletariat has fallen a defenseless victim of fascism; in others it has been thrown back to the positions of reformism.

There can be no thought, of course, of a serious and protracted regeneration of reformism. It is really not a question of reformism in the wide sense of the word but of the instinctive desire of the workers to safeguard their organizations and their "rights." From this purely defensive and purely conservative position, the working class, in the process of struggle, can and must, go over to a revolutionary offensive along the whole line. The offensive, in its turn, must make the masses more susceptible to great revolutionary tasks and consequently to our program. But to achieve this we must go through the period opening up before us together with the masses, in their first ranks, without dissolving in them but also without detaching ourselves from them.

The Stalinists (and their miserable imitators, the Brandlerites), declared democratic slogans under prohibition for all the countries of the world: for India, which did not as yet accomplish its liberating national revolution; for Spain, where the proletarian vanguard must yet find the ways for transforming the creeping bourgeois revolution into a socialist one; for Germany, where the crushed and atomized proletariat is deprived of all that it achieved during the last century; for Belgium, the proletariat of which does not take its eyes off its Eastern borders and, suppressing a deep mistrust, supports the party of democratic "pacifism" (Vandervelde & Co.). The Stalinists deduce the bare renunciation of democratic slogans in a purely abstract way from the general characteristic of our epoch, as an epoch of imperialism and of socialist revolution.

Thus presented, the question contains not even a grain of dialectics! Democratic slogans and illusions cannot be abolished by decree. It is necessary that the masses go through

them and outlive them in the experience of battles. The task of the proletariat consists in coupling its locomotive to the train of the masses. It is necessary to find the dynamic elements in the present defensive position of the working class; we must make the masses draw conclusions from their own democratic logic, we must widen and deepen the channels of the struggle. And on this road, quantity passes over into quality.

The Experience of 1917

Let us recall once more that in 1917, when the Bolsheviks were immeasurably stronger than any one of the present sections of the Comintern, they continued to demand the earliest convocation of the Constituent Assembly, the lowering of the voting age, the right of suffrage for soldiers, the election of officers, etc., etc. The main slogan of the Bolsheviks, "All Power to the Soviets," meant from the beginning of April up to September, 1917, all power to the Social-Democracy (Mensheviks and Social-Revolutionists). When the reformists entered into a governmental coalition with the bourgeoisie, the Bolsheviks put forth the slogan, "Down with the Capitalist Ministers." This signified again, Workers, force the Mensheviks and the Social-Revolutionists to take the whole power into their hands! The political experience of the only successful proletarian revolution is perverted and falsified by the Stalinists beyond recognition. Our task, here also, consists in reestablishing the facts and drawing from them the necessary conclusions for the present.

We, Bolsheviks, consider that the real salvation from fascism and war lies in the revolutionary conquest of power and the establishing of the proletarian dictatorship. You, socialist workers, do not agree to this road. You hope not only to save what has been gained, but also to move forward along the road of democracy. Good! As long as we have not convinced you and attracted you to our side, we are ready to follow this road with you to the end. But we demand that you carry on the struggle for democracy, not in words but in deeds. Everybody admits—each in his own way—that in the present conditions a "strong government" is necessary. Well, then, make your party open up a real struggle for a strong democratic government. For this is it necessary first of all to sweep away all the remnants of the feudal state. It is necessary to give the suffrage to all men and women who have reached their eighteenth birthday, also to the soldiers in the army. Full concen-

tration of legislative and executive power in the hands of one chamber! Let your party open up a serious campaign under these slogans, let it arouse millions of workers, let it conquer power through the drive of the masses. This, at any rate, would be a serious attempt of struggle against fascism and war. We, Bolsheviks, would retain the right to explain to the workers the insufficiency of democratic slogans; we could not take upon ourselves the political responsibility for the social-democratic government; but we would honestly help you in the struggle for such a government; together with you we would repel all attacks of bourgeois reaction. More than that, we would bind ourselves before you not to undertake any revolutionary actions which go beyond the limits of democracy (*real* democracy) so long as the majority of the workers has not consciously placed itself on the side of revolutionary dictatorship.

For the coming period this should be our attitude toward socialist and non-party workers. Having taken, together with them, the initial positions of democratic defense, we must immediately impart to this defense a serious proletarian character. We must firmly say to ourselves, we shall not allow that which occurred in Germany! It is necessary that every class-conscious worker imbue himself through and through with the thought of not allowing fascism to raise its head. It is necessary systematically and persistently to encircle the hearths of fascism (newspapers, clubs, fascist barracks) with a proletarian blockade. We must make fighting agreements with political, trade union, cultural, sport, coöperative and other working class organizations for common actions in defense of the institutions of proletarian democracy. The more serious and thoughtful, the less noisy and boastful the character of the work, the sooner will we gain the confidence of the proletariat, beginning with the youth, and the surer will it lead to victory.

That is the way I picture the basic characteristics of a truly Marxian policy for the coming period. In different countries of Europe this policy will, of course, assume a different form, depending on national circumstances. To follow attentively all the changes in the situation and all the shifts in the consciousness of the masses, and to put forth at every new stage slogans flowing from the whole situation—in this consists the task of revolutionary leadership.

LEON TROTSKY.

November 7, 1933.

What Are the Prospects for Socialism?

Forces at Work for Revolution

[Continued from Last Issue]

1) *Starvation, hunger, disease—the depths of privation in the midst of unprecedented destruction of wealth—the cry for "Food!"* More than any other single reason, this was why the peoples of Europe turned to the revolution as the way out. Conditions today are approaching a state substantially *worse* than they were in the darkest days then, in Germany; in the occupied countries where starvation is aggravated by the knowledge that the food is being taken away by the conqueror; even now the food situation is far more stringent in the richest country of the world, in the United States, than it

was at any time during the eighteen months that this country was at war in 1917-18.

2) *The slaughter.* The First World War was predominantly a war of *attrition*—a technical-military term which means that each side settled down to see who could kill more men and destroy more wealth, like a swapping game in checkers. This war began differently, but it too has settled down to this basic pattern—a war of attrition on a larger scale. The "war of movement," replacing the old trench warfare, has changed the game of attrition from a localized sector strategy to a world strategy. The "war of movement," no longer a

two-weeks' blitzkrieg, has only quickened the tempo of death.

The reaction of the masses to the war slaughter is not merely a pacifistic or humanitarian revulsion against blood-letting. It becomes bound up with the question: "Why?" And to this is now added the question: "How long?"

For we have stressed before that an outstanding fact about this war is that military victory for either side is a distant hope rather than a present expectation. People can continue fighting and sacrificing as long as by doing so the hope of victory and with it peace are brought measurably nearer. An indefinite perspective of a war of governments *must* inspire the masses to put an end to the war themselves.

3) *Class distinctions in sacrifice.* Over twenty years of anti-war movements and pacifist movies, books and talk have not been totally without positive result. Where *then* the hypocrisy of the equal-sacrifice talk slowly dawned on the masses of people as the war went on, *now* it was *looked for* as soon as the war broke. It is impossible to overemphasize the tremendously greater awareness *today* that one class is living off the blood and tears and another class is shedding them—the greater suspicion and sensitiveness to the gigantic fakery of "equal sacrifice." The outcry against war profiteering in the United States, for example, was mainly a post-1918 phenomenon. The investigation and exposure of the profiteers started with the Armistice. Today, it started with the outbreak of hostilities.

The bourgeoisie cannot help but emphasize the class lines in the "national effort." Human nature is capable of sacrifice to a greater extent than some skeptics think, but not without powerful stimulus. Such a stimulus comes only from:

4) *The war aims.* The question is the conviction of the people that they know what they are fighting and sacrificing for, and that it is worth it. In 1914 and on, the slogan of War for Democracy was not only accepted, it was accepted for a substantial while naïvely, uncritically, enthusiastically and unquestionedly. There was then a powerful slogan which read "War to End War," which furthermore was widely believed. It is not heard today, because no one believes it. Wilson's fourteen-point "charter" was a dynamic bombshell in the world of 1917; the Roosevelt-Churchill Atlantic Charter was as bedraggled a wet firecracker as ever popped off; the song about "There'll be white wings over the white cliffs of Dover" was a more influential statement of war aims to most people. The people have only a *negative* war aim: the desire not to be defeated; and a *negative* faith: fascism is worse. Unexampled sacrifices cannot stand up to the test on the hollow prop of negations.

So much for the revolutionary factors of 1914-18. They deserve more elaboration—for the fact is that they *were* the mainsprings of the greatest revolutionary movement the world has yet seen—but it is necessary to go on to the *new* revolutionary elements, which played little or no part in the first world conflict but which today are superimposed upon the old. We summarize them:

5) *The ideological propaganda by the imperialists in terms of revolution.* We have said that wars bring the psychology of change. The official war leaders and propagandists are making this specific and pointed.

"The world will not and cannot remain the same after this war," say Churchill, Roosevelt, Willkie (above all), Wallace, down to Dorothy Thompson and pettier columnists like Samuel Grafton, not to speak of Goebbels and Hitler. (Stalin is one of the few who promises no more than the world *status*

quo.) Those not in responsible office are not even at all chary of using the horrid word "revolution." Even the *Saturday Evening Post* devoted pages to an article on the "World Revolution" which, it assured us, is practically going on now. It is true that the "revolution" they talk about so freely turns out to be as empty mouthing as the 1914 slogan of "A Country Fit for Heroes to Live in," where indeed it is not the counter-revolution of fascism. But here is the fact: the war propaganda of 1914 was in terms of the status quo; the war propaganda of today is heavily tinged with revolutionary demagoguery. This is both a symptom of the mass state of mind and a cause of it.

The result is not only that the people become accustomed to the idea that revolution is to be the outcome of the war, that it is "only natural." The Italian government was forced into this line when it entered the war in 1915 for the simple reason that every bootblack knew that it had shopped between Berlin and Paris for the biggest bribe before it cast its lot with the "War for Democracy." Prime Minister Salandra promised revolutionary changes as the reward of victory, land to the peasants, etc. And behold, when "victory" came, and with it starvation, the peasants proceeded to carry out the government's promises; they seized the lands. It is instructive to read the historians who rebuke the Prime Minister for carrying grist to the revolutionary mill. The promises of some kind of revolutionary change are a double-edged sword for the imperialists; the people will be only too ready to take their empty words seriously.

6) *The occupied countries of Europe,* ground under the Nazi heel, where *national-revolutionary* aspirations are added to the workers' *class* struggle to feed the flames of revolt. There is an essential difference between the Nazi occupation in Europe today, and the overrunning of France and Belgium by Germany in 1914. Then, the official state still existed and fought on; the only foe appeared as Germany, and the concept of national defense rallied the French people only more vigorously around the bourgeois state, in greater national unity. The hypnosis of national unity wore off far more slowly in France and Belgium than in any other country precisely for this reason. The masses of people not in uniform stood by and cheered the French army on to victory; the workers in uniform fought under the military discipline of the capitalist state and its officers' corps.

Today, the struggle against the German occupation is primarily a *people's* movement, a movement surging up from *below*, an *underground* movement, with the relative independence that this implies; it is furthermore necessarily directed not only against Germany, the foreign foe, but also against the official leaders of France, the Vichy government, and the native capitalist class which has allied itself with the Nazis. These facts are more important than the temporary distortions in the movement arising from hopes in the Allied second front or de Gaulle. *For it means that the masses are driven into motion outside the straitjacket of the bourgeois state apparatus.* It is true that de Gaulle would like to apply his own straitjacket, but he is not in the position of Poincaré and Clemenceau.

Victories scored against Germany by the regular army of the state lead the masses to repose greater confidence in that army and to themselves sink back into approving passivity. *Victories scored against Germany and blows struck in the name of a self-mobilized mass upsurge lead to the attainment of greater confidence by the masses in THEMSELVES.* That

is why de Gaulle sought to restrain the anti-Hitler strike movement of the French workers, and why Churchill steadfastly refuses, in the face of tearful pleas by liberals, to appeal to the French workers and peasants to strike out behind the back of Hitler and Vichy. For once the masses of labor get into motion in the direction of independence, they will not stop where the imperialists draw the line.

7) *The internationalism of the struggle for national liberation in Europe.* The capitalist-imperialists, who live on the poisons of nationalism, are in actuality destroying and overriding national boundaries, as Hitler has done in the European Nazi empire, or they are talking of doing so ("Federation Now," and the various projects for a capitalist "United States of Europe," etc.). We revolutionary socialists, on the other hand, internationalist to the core, are once more pushing to the fore the slogans of national liberation, of the national movement, in occupied Europe.

The contradiction is superficial. The fascist supra-nationalism is a means of throttling the revolution which alone can really lead to the international fraternization of the peoples. The revolutionary national aspirations and struggles are means of furthering on an international scale that revolution which alone can really give the national peoples the right to freely decide their national fate.

More important, the German occupation has in several ways broken down a tremendous barrier to a successful Europe-wide revolution. *It is teaching the masses of the European countries that their fates are interlinked.* It has, in fact, interlinked them by supplying them with a common oppressor. The Achilles' heel of the First World Revolution of 1917-21 was the fact that the widespread uprisings and revolutions took place without sufficient understandings on the part of the masses that they could not achieve their goal even in their own country by relying solely on the forces of their own country, that their revolutions had significance mainly as parts of a world revolution and as a stimulus to it. The gulf between the national movements in Europe today and the national movements of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries is sufficiently shown by this fact, that both in political logic and in the orientation of the peoples, the present-day national struggles against German occupation tend to succeed only as an international revolution and to endure only as a proletarian socialist revolution.

8) Germany has become the new "prison of the peoples," not only in its European empire, but *within Germany itself.* The importation of armies of foreign workers into Germany is not a charge of dynamite but a shrapnel shell. A blow-up inside Germany means that hundreds of thousands of uprooted foreign workers stream back to their own countries, each one bearing with him the German revolution, coming back to chaos and unleashed revolutionary ferment. Thus after 1917 did the German and Austro-Hungarian prisoners stream back to their own countries from the Russian prisons from which the Bolsheviks had released them, to become focal points and organizers of the young, revolutionary communist parties.

9) The disintegrating effect of the foreign workers imported into Germany has been highlighted in the press, but even aside from them it is not true that Hitler Germany is a quiet prison. Two recent books (*Will Germany Crack?*, by Paul Hagen, and *The Silent War*) have offered up the meager facts available about the development of the internal struggle against the fascist régime; it is not my purpose to trespass on

this territory, but to point to the new revolutionary elements in this war, as compared to 1914.

A basic fact is that Hitler's war began, as did Hitler's régime itself, as an answer to the hostility of the workers *who did not want it.* Here is the contrast: the Imperial German Government of the Kaiser (its statesmen have since told us in memoirs) did not swing into the war drive until they were certain that the German workers would support "defense of the fatherland." The Third Reich was pushed into its war policy, in part as noted above, *for fear* that the continuation of the *status quo*, bringing the inevitable intensification of Germany's economic difficulties and disillusionment with Hitler's promises of a new German redemption, would lead to a crack-up. *For the Kaiser, civil peace was a precondition for war. For Hitler, civil peace was a hoped-for consequence of war.* In this contrast appears the different levels from which the German workers started in 1914 and in 1939.

The consolidation of Nazi totalitarianism in Germany from 1933 to 1939 and its success in rooting out focal points of revolution convinced many faint-hearted people that the imposition of fascist controls was practically a guarantee against successful revolt. Once the fascists "coördinate" a nation, they argued, their modern techniques of repression are adequate to postpone revolution indefinitely. With 1939, this dark view merged into the belief that once Germany occupied a country and imported its "modern techniques of repression" into it, that country very soon became coördinated like pre-war Naziland.

Nothing could be farther than the truth. Germany has stretched itself over Europe. Has it been strengthened thereby? It would appear at first glance that this question is ridiculous; of course it has. But this extension has taken place at the cost of a tremendous inner weakening. At bottom this is true of every capitalist power. In time of war the power of the state appears greater than ever, frightfully swollen and overawing. In point of fact, the capitalist statesmen realize only too sharply that the more the balloon swells, the more the fibers weaken.

This is many times more true of Nazi Germany. Before 1939 there was one Gestapo watchdog for every five German workers; today there are ten times more to watch in Europe and a tenth of the forces to be spared for the job. The "modern techniques of repression" thin out. *The stretching of Nazism over Europe has tended to "uncoördinate" the totalitarian controls of fascism, not only in the occupied countries, but within Germany itself.* The stretched fibers are weakened. The forces of the revolution will burst through them and explode with a repercussion that will rock the world.

(10) So far we have been reckoning only with Europe. The sweep of the First World Revolution was confined to Europe, too. There were echoes in Africa and Asia—uprisings, strike movements, etc.—but only echoes.

But the picture in the colonial world has changed radically since the other war. In the first place, the war itself—its destruction and slaughter—is taking place in that arena. Where are the battle fronts? Outside of the Russian front, they have extended over the backyards and fields of the oppressed colonial peoples themselves—in China, Burma, Malaysia, Thailand, the Philippines, Polynesia, Iran, Tunisia, Libya, Madagascar, the Dutch East Indies. . . . *These are the battle fronts; they are also the places of the earth where imperialism is felt and hated, not merely by advanced and class-conscious workers, but by a unanimous mass of colonial slaves.* The com-

bination of these two facts is itself the guarantee that the coming world revolution will not be a mere repetition of 1917-21. Already India, still untouched by actual warfare, is at a level of revolutionary ferment which then it scarcely reached till after the war in 1919.

The "loss of face" by British imperialism in Singapore, Burma, etc., is more than a psychological fact. It destroys a tradition of invincibility and bolsters the confidence of the oppressed. It breaks the continuity of rule and introduces a political shake-up and a condition of *instability* which is fatal to the British system of rule over a mass of millions by a handful of whip-wielders. The theory behind British colonial domination is the same as behind lion-taming. But now the man with the whip has stumbled, his blood has been drawn, the storm is close about his ears, and the lions are roaring.

The Japanese pretenders to the British Empire, regardless of any military success they have had or may have in ousting Britain from the colonies, cannot step into its shoes. They have neither the economic resources to do it nor the training in colonial domination to carry it off. A vacuum is created and high-pressure areas are built up.

Whether the Second World Revolution first breaks out in Nazi Europe or in the colonial world is an immaterial speculation for our present purposes. It will not remain where it starts; the lightning will jump between cloud and cloud.

(11) The heaviest swell of the First World Revolution of 1917-21 occurred *after* the cessation of hostilities, when the masses of people, having just pulled through four years of suffering and slaughter, found what the "world fit for heroes to live in" actually looked like. It was the pay-off; but nothing like the pay-off that is slated for this conflict.

This war will leave the whole of the "civilized world" an economic shambles. This need scarcely be proved since it is *hardly denied*. The objective of the various post-war planners in and out of the government (there are a few hundreds of such agencies in this country alone, all expensively getting nowhere) is not Henry Wallace's "quart of milk for everyone." That was a nice speech. The British Beveridge Plan was franker. The sought-for "plan" is to provide a dry crust of bread for the millions—for the millions whom unemployment, hunger and disillusionment will drive into collision with a social system which can no longer feed its wage slaves.

The expected post-war crisis will not merely be a repetition of the breadline era which followed the 1929 crash. The 1929 crash of capitalism followed a period of unexampled prosperity, with the national wealth of the country at its height. The fears expressed at that time by Charles M. Schwab that the revolution was just around the corner were unduly pessimistic. American capitalism lived for a decade on its fat. The "Europeanization" of the American social scene—breadlines, government doles, state intervention, the rise of a new class-consciousness in the American working class—changed the whole temper of the nation and its classes tremendously, but was held within the limits of reform by the resources of the richest country in the history of the world.

The coming post-war collapse of capitalism will be a vegetable of another season. It succeeds, not a pork-barrel era of unprecedented *creation* of wealth, but years of unprecedented *destruction* of wealth. The declaration of peace means in short order the removal of the war-economy props under whole industries, corporations, plants, government activities. The capitalist "planners" whistle in the dark with talk of converting industry back to a peacetime basis with a minimum of

dislocation, just as they were converted to war production. This is a fantasy. The relative speed with which American industry put itself on a war footing was determined first and last by the fact that it was guaranteed a market for its new products—the government; it was assured, above all, a handsome and extraordinary profit—by the government; conversion itself was even directly financed by the government. None of this will be true when the temporary war producers have to go back to putting out refrigerators, cameras, safety pins and typewriters—and selling them to millions of post-war unemployed. The economic machine powered by private profit grinds to a jarring halt in the midst of a social chaos of unemployment, inflation, economic dislocation and world ruin.

Everyone knows, of course, that on a certain scale this happened after the other World War, but the greater magnitude of the capitalist crash this time will be determined not only by the greater scale of the economic destruction and dislocation now going on. In 1918, capitalism had three safety valves: the resources of American wealth, untouched by the few months of participation in the war, which went to plug up widening cracks in the social structure of revolution-torn Europe; the reparations which France extorted from beaten Germany, and which went for important economic sustenance of France against the tide of revolution; and third, the refurbishing of the capitalist coffers through the exploitation of the colonies. None of these three can be operative to anywhere near the same extent again, even assuming Allied victory. The resources of the United States are being drained by this war, as are all other countries'; the German turnip will not yield as much blood as it did before; and intensified colonial exploitation under conditions of colonial revolt would be a step the statesmen would be wise to avoid.

Nothing can stop it: out of the greatest mass misery in history will come the revolt of the millions of the earth, shaken out of dumb apathy by the war and its aftermath, and ready to fight because they have nothing to lose. Let no one think that the capitalist powers are going to stop it by using war-weary troops as an "international police force" against the people. When the British, American and French imperialists tried that in 1919 and 1920 against the Russian Revolution, they had to stop short before mutiny and general strikes—they found that they were in fact *siphoning* the Russian Revolution back into their own bailiwicks! Let them try it again: it will be one of the surest guarantees of the spread of the revolution back home through armies crying for demobilization.

We have very hastily sketched, in some cases barely mentioned, major forces making for revolution out of this war. One of the lessons of history is that it is so hard for us, even for socialists, to realize the tremendous impact of each of these forces, and the terrific potential which is being built up in the world working masses. But no one who wrenches his eyes away from his footsteps before him can doubt that the statesmen and political leaders of capitalism are fully justified in *their* fears of world-wide revolution.

It is not a possibility. The inevitability of an international revolutionary wave sweeping the globe is the only certain and fixed point in an otherwise mad world. It is not that—whether the socialist revolution will come—which we need speculate about. It is whether we, and everyone else who says in his heart that he lives to see a socialist workers' world, will be prepared to meet it, no matter what night we pass through on the way.

PAUL TEMPLE.