
April 1944

Fourth International

NINE MONTHS OF ALLIED RULE IN ITALY

By E. R. Frank

Review of the Month *By The Editors*

Trotskyists and the Strike Wave in Britain

Steel Workers and the Wage Freeze

A New Stage in the War

The Drive to Conscript U.S. Labor

Japan Faces The Abyss-III

By Li Fu-jen

The National Question in Ireland

Twenty Cents

Manager's Column

A man came into our office during the month and asked if we had "the magazine available in which Leon Trotsky's military material appears." He became quite excited when he looked over the articles in the December, January, February and March issues. He mentioned that some of his friends had seen the material in the original and that he couldn't miss getting "any of the Old Man's stuff . . ."

A letter from our Los Angeles agent also expresses appreciation for the timely articles by Leon Trotsky:

"The March FI is almost sold out so please send us another ten and put them on our bill. The sequence of articles by the Old Man on Marxism and militarism is an extremely good one and I don't doubt that in a few months you will be experiencing a mad scramble for those back issues in which they are contained."

* * *

Our friends eagerly await the publication of James P. Cannon's new book, "The History of American Trotskyism," as shown by the letter received from our Boston agent:

"Our contacts seem to enjoy the FI and often comment on the articles. The best in comments on the March FI was, 'I enjoyed Cannon's article so much I wish the book was published.'"

This book is scheduled for publication early this spring by Pioneer Publishers.

* * *

Our agent in Seattle reports that "the magazine is very well received by all the members and I do not recall one bit of criticism about it. We all believe that its contents are well balanced. Our bundle usually is not sold out. But, as you know, our order was all sold out for February and we had to order an additional five. This is unusual but we sure are hoping that it will continue."

* * *

Milwaukee writes: "We would like to increase our FOURTH INTERNATIONAL bundle. In this connection, please send another copy of the February FI as I sold my personal copy."

* * *

Two more libraries have

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asked that they be placed on the mailing list of FOURTH INTERNATIONAL and that we send files of the magazine to become a part of their permanent record: Broadman Library of the World War and

Post-War in New York City and Western Reserve University Library in Cleveland. They Write:

"The Western Reserve University Library is initiating a collection of representative

publications of the American labor press. This material will be used for instructional purposes and original investigations in the fields of labor relations, labor problems, personnel management, and related subjects. It is our intention to establish a comprehensive and outstanding collection of source material."

* * *

Our English friends express appreciation of FOURTH INTERNATIONAL:

"We find your publications invaluable, and are anxious to receive them as regularly as war time conditions permit.

"We feel optimistic of the British situation, the pending unification is a great historical event, which we are sure will result in the more rapid growth of the British Section and the more extensive education of its members.

"We would express our solidarity with those comrades who are now in jail and wish success to those who have undertaken the difficult task of filling the breach."

* * *

Readers of FOURTH INTERNATIONAL who have not yet subscribed to THE MILITANT will be interested in the Militant Subscription Campaign launched April 1. This campaign was made possible through the victorious struggle of THE MILITANT, supported by its readers and militant unionists, in gaining back its second-class mailing rights, which were revoked by the Post Office Department in March, 1943.

For a brief period THE MILITANT is offering 13 issues for only 25c.

If you are not already a subscriber to THE MILITANT, this is an excellent opportunity to become acquainted with the only weekly newspaper in the country that tells the truth about labor's struggle for a better world. If you are a subscriber to THE MILITANT, then you can take advantage of this opportunity to introduce your friends to the paper by sending in a trial sub for them.

You read FOURTH INTERNATIONAL because of its accurate Marxist interpretation and monthly summary of political events; you will want to read THE MILITANT for its accurate up-to-date reportage of world events vital to the interests of the working class.

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FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

VOLUME 5

APRIL 1944

NUMBER 4

The Month in Review

The Strike Wave in Britain and the English Trotskyists

THE FAMILIAR PATTERN OF JURIDICAL FRAMEUP is being raised against Trotskyism and the Trotskyists. This time, in England, where our co-thinkers have recently taken a great forward step through the fusion of all the Trotskyist forces into a unified organization, the Revolutionary Communist Party. On April 5 agents of Scotland Yard raided Trotskyist headquarters and meeting places simultaneously in London, Glasgow, Newcastle, Nottingham, Wallsend and other industrial centers, confiscating bundles of *The Socialist Appeal*, official organ of the English Trotskyists, carting away Marxist books, pamphlets, leaflets—all of which material has been publicly sold and distributed. No arrests have as yet been reported. The case, so far, is only “being prepared.”

The pattern is quite familiar. When Roosevelt-Biddle initiated their juridical frameup of the leaders of the Socialist Workers Party in June 1941, the FBI likewise began with raids on headquarters of the American Trotskyists.

Our English co-thinkers are now suffering persecution as in the case of the 18 American Trotskyist leaders who were railroaded to federal penitentiaries essentially for remaining loyal in wartime as in peace to the cause of the working class; for fighting against further continuation of capitalist greed, profits, plunder and misrule; for refusing to suspend the struggle for socialism.

THE STRIKE WAVE IN GREAT BRITAIN “Blood, toil, sweat and tears” for almost five years is impelling the English workers to seek with increasing insistence a way out of their inhuman degradation. Despite the entire coercive machinery of the capitalist state, despite its press, pulpit, and radio arrayed against them, despite the betrayals of their own official leaders, the English workers are exhibiting their inherent colossal power.

During the first week of April, 100,000 Yorkshire miners were on strike; 50,000 shipyard, aircraft, munitions workers were out in England, Scotland, and North Ireland. The British empire is now in the throes of the greatest working class ferment since the 1926 General Strike.

According to the April 7 *Associated Press* dispatch:

“The whole volcanic situation which Britain held in check through . . . the machinery of arbitration is erupting in this fifth year of the war with every indication that 1944 will be the worst strike year since the paralyzing 1926 general walkout.”

Home Minister Herbert Morrison (Laborite), on orders from his master, Churchill, has set the special political police of

Scotland Yard the task of unearthing “sinister influences”, “political mischief makers” and other such demoniac forces. (*New York Times*, April 3.)

THE REAL SOURCE OF ‘SINISTER INFLUENCE’ These cynical and calculating demagogues pretend that mass discontent and indignation are caused by a handful of “agitators,” “troublemakers,” “subversive elements.” They cannot permit the truth to reach the people. Yet they cannot prevent it. The same American correspondents who obligingly cabled the stereotyped slanders against the English Trotskyists were at the same time compelled to report the terrible plight of the English workers. An *Associated Press* dispatch from London on April 7 supplied the following data:

“The miners now are in the middle range of wage earners . . . the basic minimum weekly pay is \$20 for underground workers and \$18 for surface workers . . .

“Here is how miners’ wages compare with other workers: The average of all classes of unskilled labor is now \$18.75 a week. The average of male factory workers is \$22.78; the average for women factory workers \$11.72. *On this they pay an income tax of roughly 50 percent.*” (Our emphasis.)

On April 8 E. C. Daniel cabled to the *New York Times* that the *Daily Herald*, organ of the British Labor Party, itself admitted that the miners’ revolt “is the consequences of a long experience of bad conditions; plus considerable distrust of the aims of the privileged class . . .”

Drew Middleton, London correspondent of the *New York Times*, cabled on April 9:

“Labor, that is the man who does his day’s work in a mine or a factory, is not satisfied with the explanation that the present strikes are the result of a ‘Trotskyite’ group of a few thousands . . .”

Helen Kirkpatrick, London correspondent of the *New York Post* and *Chicago Daily News* reported on April 5 that “the miners have a decided lack of confidence in their leaders and are demanding nationalization of the mines . . .”

LESSONS ASSIMILATED IN CLASS STRUGGLES Even the suffocating and rigidly maintained censorship of Churchill and Company cannot keep the truths of the class struggle from breaking into the open. The living standards of the English workers have been driven down to barest subsistence levels, and lower. The responsibility for this rests squarely on the shoulders of Churchill and the capitalist class he so zealously serves.

The masses are filled with more than justifiable mistrust of this most corrupt and destructive ruling minority in the history of mankind. Bitter experience has taught the masses this mistrust. However small, at the present stage, may be the share of the English Trotskyists in inculcating this mistrust

among the masses, it is to their everlasting credit. For the gravest crime today, the crime of sowing illusions of trust and confidence in the gangrenous system of capitalism is the first crime that must be exposed by those with the interests of the working class at heart. This mistrust is now extending to include the official British labor leaders . . . And what in the conduct of these cowardly wretches merits anything except the stigmatizing label of treachery?

Churchill is now persecuting the English Trotskyists because they support the strikers in their just struggle; because they tell the workers the truth; because they are correctly generalizing the experience of the English workers, translating this experience into political terms and teaching the workers to think and act politically.

**PERSECUTIONS WILL
AVAIL THEM NOTHING** According to an April 6 *Associated Press* dispatch from London, Jock Haston, the national organizer of the Trotskyist Revolutionary Communist Party is reported to have issued the following statement to the British Press Association:

"If the government imagines that by closing us down and suppressing our publications they are going to stop the wave of strikes, they are mad."

He went on to add:

"If the government nationalized the mines and operated them under committees of workers and technicians, they would settle the problem in twenty-four hours."

These words ring genuine.

The vanguard of the English working class is on the move. Pressing behind the vanguard detachments now out on strike are the great masses, the millions of oppressed and disinherited. Today the struggle still occurs over economic issues. Tomorrow it will include the political discontent of the war-weary masses. The present sinister political truce between the conservatives and labor's official leadership will be broken, unleashing a force that will sweep away the corrupt coalition of Tories and labor traitors.

It is this impending political explosion that has aroused the fury and fear of the ruling class of Britain and all its flunkies, including the contemptible Stalinists who deny the justice of the strikers' demands. It is this that impells the whole pack of labor's enemies to lash out at the extreme left wing of the labor movement, the most conscious, consistent and incorruptible proletarian fighters, the Trotskyists.

But all their repressions will avail them exactly nothing. Churchill can no more halt the march of British labor to power than could his predecessor King Canute halt the advance of the tide upon the shores of England.

The Steel Workers and the Wage Freeze

**PHILIP MURRAY'S 'FIGHT'
AGAINST THE WAGE FREEZE** Last November Philip Murray mounted the rostrum at the Philadelphia CIO Convention and bombastically denounced the Little Steel formula. A month later he proclaimed at the Special Steel Workers Conference that the union was demanding wage increases of 17 cents an hour in addition to a number of other important demands. Four months have since elapsed, but nothing of any consequence has

happened. Now we learn that the farcical hearings before the WLB is what Murray had in mind when he spoke of waging a fight against the Little Steel formula.

The WLB public members made clear to Murray that they had no power to grant any wage increases beyond the Little Steel formula; they were merely an administrative agency for the purpose of maintaining the wage freeze. But Murray, that "doughty warrior of labor" was not to be denied. He blustered, he threatened, he insisted that they hear the steel workers' demands for wage increases. Finally, under this furious onslaught the WLB public members "capitulated." They capitulated so utterly, so unconditionally, that not only did they set up one panel to permit Murray to bury all of labor's foes under an avalanche of statistics; they also set up another panel to allow that other "embattled fighter of labor," Matthew Woll, Vice President of AFL, to lay down his barrage of statistics. Is there any question, after this irresistible offensive on the statistical front, that the steel barons, the auto kings, the war lords are quaking in their boots with fear and consternation? Small wonder that the *New York Times*, organ of the big money bags, now sarcastically inquires of the WLB why it is not also holding hearings on "selective service or gasoline rationing."

**ROOSEVELT'S STRATEGY
AGAINST THE WORKERS** The strategy of Roosevelt is so obvious, even a five-year-old child could see through it.

Roosevelt simply intends to stall the steel workers and the other unions for a few months—until the long-expected invasion of Europe begins. He is proceeding on the basis that the rise in chauvinism attendant upon the invasion will isolate and weaken the labor movement. Who will dare in the face of the slaughter to insist that the steel workers be paid a living wage? All such demands, Roosevelt hopes, will be trampled underfoot in the confusion, the noise and the hysteria of onrushing war developments. Murray sees the enemies of labor sharpening their long knives against the steel workers—but unperturbed, he continues with his fifth-rate act before the WLB, spouting statistics, declaiming like a Shakespearean ham actor, stalling and wasting time. All this dovetails 100 percent with Roosevelt's own anti-labor plans.

As a matter of fact, Roosevelt is so contemptuous of his labor lackeys, he is so certain of their abject loyalty, regardless of what he does, that he has his "four horsemen," Davis, Vinson, Marvin Jones and Bowles, rudely interrupt the statistical gab fest right in the middle with an announcement that the Little Steel formula is OK; that everybody is satisfied with it; that far from requiring wage increases, everybody's "pocketbooks are bulging with money," and that the wage freeze must be continued.

How is it that Murray and the other top trade union leaders have permitted and continue to permit themselves to be maneuvered into such a hopeless position? How is it that the proud movement which represents 13 million American workers can be thus pushed around, insulted and humiliated by this crew of government bureaucrats and flunkies?

**HOW LABOR ARRIVED
IN A BLIND ALLEY** The labor movement has not been maneuvered into a dead end street through Roosevelt's supreme generalship. Quite the contrary. During the coal strike Roosevelt performed like a second-rater. Roosevelt's ability to push this powerful labor movement

around derives from the fact that the class struggle is taking place under conditions where the labor leadership has gone over lock, stock and barrel to the opponent trenches and is conspiring with the capitalist foe against its own side. Roosevelt can always count on his Murrays and Greens to carry out his anti-labor assignments.

During the great coal strikes, when the WLB was tottering, and the whole Rooseveltian labor structure hung by a hair, the Murrays and Greens did not throw the powerful support of the AFL and CIO behind the miners, but stabbed them in the back. After the miners won their fight—single-handed—in the fourth coal strike, Murray and Green did not jump in to take advantage of the miners' victory and to smash the wage freeze once and for all. No, they allowed precious months to pass, giving the WLB the opportunity to reestablish its authority, enabling Roosevelt to strengthen again his policy of the wage freeze.

Then came the rail crisis, culminating in the winning of wage increases by a million rail workers. Again the Little Steel formula was breached, again a great opportunity presented itself for labor to join forces and smash the Little Steel formula. But although Murray had already presented his steel wage demands at the time and was on record against the Little Steel formula, he kept silent, permitting Roosevelt to isolate the rail workers from the rest of organized labor and choose his own time and place when he would attempt to beat down the steel workers.

THE IMPENDING LABOR CRISIS Today another major labor crisis impends. The steel workers are angry. They know they are being stalled; that they are being given a run-around. When they come to the full realization that they are not going to receive any wage increase, the ensuing discontent will be profound indeed. The oncoming labor crisis will be far more deep-going and widespread than either of the previous crises precipitated by the coal and rail struggles. The discontent of the steel workers once it flames into action will sweep like a prairie fire to the auto and rubber workers.

Will Roosevelt, with the aid of his labor watchdogs—the Murrays and Greens—succeed in heading off for a time a new labor crisis? Will he put over his scheme to use the coming military invasion of Europe and the casualty lists that are sure to follow against labor? That is, of course, his intention; but the answer does not lie entirely in his hands or even in the hands of the Murrays and Greens. The workers will also have their say.

THE POLICY FOR THE MILITANTS In any case, the growing ranks of militant, class-conscious workers have a clear duty to organize on broader and stronger lines the movement to smash the Little Steel formula. They must not permit the top labor bureaucracy to smother labor independence by isolating and pouncing on individual groups of militants; they must not permit labor's militancy to spend itself in isolated, sporadic little departmental strikes. If this were permitted it would only play into the hands of the treacherous bureaucrats and enable them to hound and expel the best union fighters, the most courageous militants.

The fight against the Little Steel formula must be organized on broad lines, in a spirit of the greatest mistrust of the Greens and Murrays and Thomases. It must be spread out from

the departments into the local unions, from the locals through the Internationals. Once the militants of the auto, steel and rubber unions join hands in an organized fight for the calling of a conference of all organized labor in order to smash the Little Steel formula; once they demand the revocation of the no-strike pledge, then labor will have finally found its way onto the open highway. The long, disgraceful labor retreat will have been finally halted and the forward march can begin again.

A New Stage in the Second World War

THE BREAK IN THE MOODS OF THE EUROPEAN MASSES It is becoming increasingly clear that a major turning point has been reached in the second World War—not in the sense of any alteration of the grand strategy of the principal imperialist contenders, nor a definitive change in their relative positions, but in the much more portentous sense that large masses of the workers in a number of important countries are taking the first steps along the road of conscious opposition to the imperialists and their war after years of more or less passive acquiescence. We are witnessing today the first mass upsurges of the tortured peoples, the first movement toward a revolutionary solution of those fundamental social problems which the war has accentuated to a point where even mere survival has ceased to be compatible with the present order of things for millions of the earth's inhabitants. The masses, regarded as just so much cannon fodder by the "democrats" and fascists alike, have begun to intervene actively and independently.

The overthrow of Mussolini by the Italian people, with the proletariat in the van of the movement, proved to be the starting point of the upsurge. The war-weary masses of Italy wanted peace and an end to the gangster capitalist regime which had brought them so much woe. But the ouster of Mussolini's government has proved to be but a single step along the road to peace. Italy has been truncated and torn apart by the rival imperialist camps and converted into a major battlefield. In the North, the workers struggle with the highest courage and determination against the Nazi oppressors. Those in the South find themselves in opposition to the "democrats," who are bent on fostering the hated rule of Badoglio and his King, in which the masses rightly see a continuation of the old intolerable order thinly disguised by a slight shift at the top.

Events themselves are posing for the Italian workers the urgent question of the next step. The overthrow of Mussolini, although an event of the greatest progressive significance, has solved none of the burning problems confronting the workers and peasants of Italy. There is no peace and very little bread. While the workers in the North give battle to the military juggernaut of the Nazi imperialists, those in the South have already learnt that neither peace nor bread can be secured through attachment to London and Washington. In both North and South the invading armies are advertised as "liberators." Yet both are in league with the Italian bourgeoisie, intent upon stifling the popular will and preventing any fundamental social change. Realization of this important fact will hasten the formation of a revolutionary party which, at the head of the aroused masses, will project Italy along the path of the struggle for socialism.

HARBINGERS OF THE APPROACHING STORM Throughout Europe the rumblings of the coming revolutionary storm can be heard—above all in France, where the clouds of civil war have long been gathering. Little is needed now to explode the rotted structure of bourgeois rule. Foremost among the worries of the “democracies” is the fear, amounting almost to certainty, that their invasion of the Continent will touch off an explosion in France and elsewhere and that they may be unable to quench the resulting revolutionary conflagration.

Nor are things going so well for the ruling class within the “democracies” themselves. In Britain last month more than 100,000 coal miners went out on strike and succeeded in winning concessions from their employers. The fact that they tied up a large section of a vital industry in determined disregard of government warnings that such a strike might have disastrous effects on maturing plans for the invasion of Europe, is of the highest significance. It means that at least a very large section of the British working class is no longer subject to the hypnosis of war propaganda and is prepared resolutely to fight for labor’s rights in the very course of the war. The misleaders of British labor, the hardened and cynical labor lieutenants of the capitalist class, remain united in coalition with the Tories, but the rank-and-file of the workers are breaking away and taking to the road of independent struggle.

The same phenomenon is to be observed in Australia, where thousands of coal miners struck in defiance of the conservative union leaders and the government. Even when the government attempted grand intimidation by drafting some 500 miners into the armed forces, the strikers held firm until they had gained most of their demands.

DEVELOPMENTS IN CANADA AND USA In Canada, large masses of workers and farmers who previously have followed the capitalist political parties are streaming into the Canadian Commonwealth Federation at a remarkable rate. The CCF is led by a reformist, wishy-washy, middle-of-the-road coterie not one whit more advanced than the conservative leadership of the British and Australian labor parties. But the mass movement in its direction is nonetheless very significant. It means that the Canadian masses are breaking definitively with the avowed capitalist parties and embarking on the road of independent working class political action. The extent of the movement may be gauged by the fact that as early as last August, in the Ontario elections, the CCF secured 34 of the 85 seats in the provincial legislature. It was the first time in the history of eastern Canada that the workers turned so sharply against the capitalist parties. At the same time, the Canadian Congress of Labor (CIO) has increased its membership from 55,000 in 1940 to more than 250,000 at the present time.

In this country the launching of a labor party in Michigan, heart of the industrial Midwest, under the auspices of CIO unions representing 225,000 workers, holds the promise for the commencement of a general breakaway by American labor from capitalist politics.

STRIKES, HUNGER RIOTS IN JAPAN Even in imperialist Japan the monolithic war structure is beginning to crack. Reports by Japanese prisoners of war in Chungking tell of strikes by workers and hunger riots by peasants in the very shadow of the imperial palace in Tokyo. The strike movement got under way even before the extension of the war to the

Pacific area, but the workers, without benefit of organization, were driven back to work literally at the point of the bayonet. That was early in 1941. Toward the end of 1942 there were more strikes, including walkouts from armament plants in the Tokyo district. And now, only recently, the strike movement has risen to a new high. For this information we are indebted to Japanese newspapers which somehow got out from behind the wall of the Japanese censorship. Among other things, they tell of a big demonstration in Tokyo’s Ueno Park attended by some 40,000 people. Police and gendarmes fired on the demonstrators, who were demanding increased food rations, wounding 37, of whom eight later died. A fact of the greatest significance is that this demonstration—according to the Japanese press—was organized by the “Workers Party.” Thus, in the teeth of the military dictatorship and in defiance of a government ban on all political parties, the Japanese workers have once more created a party of their own. Also, the same sources reveal, the Japanese Farmers’ Union, long emasculated by government control, has been revived as a fighting organization of the peasants and has figured in recent food riots in Kagoshima and other districts of Japan.

These developments in far-separated parts of the globe, occurring simultaneously, are symptomatic of the growing war-weariness of the masses, of a desire to find a way out of the bloody morass. The further piling up of horrors and tragedies, acceleration of the mass murder of the peoples, the increasing devastation, deepening privation and misery—all inevitable as long as capitalism is permitted to live—will serve to translate what is now largely a mass mood of discontent into the positive coin of conscious mass opposition to the capitalist war-makers and their criminal plans. As has happened so often in history, war and revolution will become intertwined in the not far distant future.

On the Seventeenth Anniversary of the Chinese Revolution

CHIANG KAI-SHEK’S COUP AT SHANGHAI This month marks the seventeenth anniversary of the bloody crushing of the Chinese revolution by Chiang Kai-shek. It was on April 12, 1927 that Chiang, aided by every element of native reaction and by the imperialists whose servant he aspired to become, staged a savage coup d’etat in Shanghai. This event, which signaled the triumph of the bourgeois counter-revolution over the insurrectionary masses, was important not only because it represented a turning point in China’s history, but also because of the consequences to which it led in the much wider field of international politics.

Without the crushing of the Chinese revolution, the subsequent invasion of Manchuria by imperialist Japan, followed by the attack on China proper, and then by the imperialist war in the Pacific, would in all probability never have taken place.

Flanked by a revolutionary China across the Yellow Sea, Japanese imperialism, suffering from incurable maladies, might well have collapsed. Taking fresh courage from the revolutionary example of China, as previously they had drawn on Bolshevik Russia for inspiration, the fearfully oppressed masses of Japan, would have settled accounts with their capitalist exploiters. A revolutionary Japan, allied with a revolutionary China, would have set the whole colonial world aflame. India

most certainly would have been wrenched from the greedy, cruel grasp of British colonial despots. The fire of revolution would have spread rapidly to the Middle East, to Africa and to Latin America.

Finally, the liberating struggle of the colonial slaves of imperialism would have caused the profoundest repercussions in the imperialist metropoli. With the bases of imperialist power in the colonies destroyed or seriously undermined, the working class in the great capitalist countries could have moved forward to the offensive against their exploiters. Imperialism on a world scale could have been forced into retreat and finally vanquished by the revolutionary forces of the proletariat. Humanity would now be moving along the path of socialist reconstruction.

HOW THE KREMLIN AIDED THE COUNTER-REVOLUTION

But the Chinese revolution was not successful. Despite the tremendous organized strength of the Chinese workers and peasants, their will to struggle, their indomitable courage and capacity for sacrifice, the revolution went down in tragic defeat. The false and suicidal policy of the Stalinist leadership, which set false goals for the masses (limiting the purpose of the revolution to a simple struggle against imperialism in alliance with the bourgeoisie) and which acted as a brake on the revolution (restraining the masses in the interest of maintaining a "national united front" with the bourgeoisie), derailed the whole mass movement and facilitated Chiang Kai-shek's counter-revolutionary plans.

Japan's invasion of Manchuria occurred less than four years after the defeat of the Chinese revolution and was followed a few years later by the attack on China as a whole. It occurred, Trotsky pointed out, as a direct consequence of the bloody suppression in China and was speeded by the Japanese imperialists out of their mortal fear of an impending revolution in Japan.

THE CONSEQUENCES OF 1927 DEFEAT

It is impossible to compute the cost to the peoples of China, the masses of Japan, the proletariat of all the world, of the debacle of the Chinese revolution. For China and Japan it has meant, to date, almost 13 years of destructive war, leading finally to the involvement of the entire Pacific area in the mad holocaust.

For China, the urgent problems which gave rise to the revolution in 1927 have been accentuated a hundred-fold. Freedom from imperialist domination has still to be achieved. Apart from the struggle for national liberation and without its achievement, there can be no fundamental reorganization of Chinese society in the interests of the masses. The two goals naturally combine, for the native bourgeoisie are repositories, perpetuators and defenders of every form of reaction and economic backwardness, while the imperialists are their allies.

In a recent speech at Chungking, Chiang Kai-shek admitted that the Japanese imperialists had not been driven from any part of China's territory which they had occupied. This, he asserted, was a "disgrace to the entire nation." The real reason for China's failure to expel the invaders, however, is to be found in the rotten policies of Chiang and the bourgeoisie. At the beginning of the Japanese invasion they discouraged and stamped upon every independent movement of the masses. They have loaded the entire cost of the war on to the already overstrained backs of the workers and peasants. "Free China," the China of Chiang Kai-shek, is as much a prison house as

the parts occupied by the Japanese army. The prisons are packed with workers, peasants, intellectuals who have dared to criticize Chiang's reactionary policies.

China's failure to expel the invaders is due precisely to these policies—the attempt to conduct the war on a pure military plane against a better-equipped foe, to hold the broad masses back from the struggle, while making them pay all the bills.

To the extent that Chiang suppresses the masses and denies them any independent initiative in the struggle against Japanese imperialism—to that extent he is forced into dependence upon the "democratic" imperialists who are also, for their own reasons, fighting against Japan. The influence of the Anglo-American combination in Chungking grows from day to day, especially that of the Americans. There is also a constant increase in American armed forces in the country. Washington openly proclaims its intention of using China as the main base of operations against Japan. Financially, Chiang's regime falls more and more into servitude to Wall Street's monopoly capitalists who see in China prospects of lush post-war profits.

Should this tendency continue, and should Chiang succeed in holding down China's masses, there will exist the very real prospect of China being converted into a colony of the "democratic" imperialists once the Japanese have been driven out. Independent action by the masses under a revolutionary leadership, their active intervention in the national struggle, with a program and aims which reflect their own interests, represents the only hope for this betrayed and downtrodden people. Without such a revolutionary development, which can take place only under the banner of the Fourth International, all their sufferings and sacrifices will ultimately redound to the benefit of the exploiters and oppressors, both native and foreign.

At this very time, Chiang Kai-shek is keeping large forces stationed in northwest China to blockade the areas held by the Stalinist-controlled 8th Group Army. Chiang shows quite clearly that he is much more concerned about keeping the masses in check, holding them completely under the rule of their exploiters, than he is about waging war against the Japanese imperialists. Here we have the explanation for the prolonged stalemate in China's war against Japan. The stalemate can be ended, with real benefit to the Chinese masses, only if the latter take their destinies into their own hands. Or it can be ended by the "democracies" gaining the upper hand—both over their Japanese antagonists and the masses of China. This is the alternative which history poses, and it is well to remember it on this, the seventeenth anniversary of the defeat of the great Chinese revolution.

Roosevelt's Drive to Conscript US Labor

When Roosevelt advocated the adoption of a national service act in his message to Congress last January, he made this proposal part of an "indivisible" five-point program which included: (1) "A realistic tax law—which will tax all unreasonable profits, both individual and corporate, and reduce the ultimate

cost of the war to our sons and daughters." (2) "A continuation of the law for the renegotiation of war contracts—which will prevent exorbitant profits and assure fair prices to the government." ("For two long years," Roosevelt added, "I have pleaded with the Congress to take undue profits out of war.") (3) "A cost of food law" (food subsidies). (4) "Early reenactment of the stabilization statute of October 1942." (5) "A national service law—which, for the duration of the war, will prevent strikes and, with certain appropriate exceptions, will make available for war production or for any other essential services every able-bodied adult in this nation."

"These five measures," Roosevelt contended, "together form a just and equitable whole. I would not recommend a service law unless the other laws were passed to keep down the cost of living, to share equitably the burdens of taxation, to hold the stabilization line and to prevent undue profits." Once before, on April 27, 1942, Roosevelt had submitted an "indivisible" seven-point "economic stabilization program" which was to be applied as a "just and equitable whole." Just as this seven-point program was sheer demagoguery designed to cover up the imposition of the wage freeze in 1942, so Roosevelt's five-point program serves up in 1944 essentially the same demagoguery in order to shackle workers to their jobs at frozen wages under a forced labor law.

By his own admission, after a lapse of two years in which wages have been frozen tight by executive decree, Roosevelt is still "pleading with the Congress to take the undue profits out of war." Profits have risen higher than ever before; the new tax law adopted by Congress is, in the words of Roosevelt himself, a measure granting "relief to the greedy and not to the needy"; wages remain fixed while the cost of living has mounted, resulting in a decrease in real wages and a constant lowering of the standard of living of the workers. This has been the net result of Roosevelt's "stabilization" programs of the past two years.

WHY BIG BUSINESS WANTS LABOR DRAFT

The growing opposition of the workers to the wage freeze has compelled Roosevelt to unmask himself and to come out openly for repressive legislation designed to chain the workers to jobs and frozen wages by means of forced labor legislation. That this is the real meaning of Roosevelt's proposal is made abundantly clear by one of the most authoritative spokesmen for Wall Street, Walter Lippmann, who has a direct pipeline into the innermost sanctums of the real rulers of this country. Mr. Lippmann writes:

"The reason why a war labor policy cannot be had without a universal service act is this: when the demand for labor far exceeds the supply, you cannot stabilize wages while every civilian is free to work or quit. When you cannot compel men to work in the war industries which need them, you have to bid for their services. Otherwise, you may not get them. This is what pushes up wage rates. This is what makes it impossible to refuse wage demands in essential industries like coal mining and the railroads."

Lippmann lets the cat out of the bag! In order to safeguard the profits of Big Business, freezing wages is not enough—the workers must also be frozen to their jobs under a compulsory service act. Otherwise, it would become "impossible to refuse wage demands" to workers who follow the example of the coal miners and railroad workers. That is precisely what Roosevelt's proposal for a forced labor law intends to do.

Having failed in his initial attempt to put over a national service act under cover of a carefully staged anti-strike hysteria following the wage dispute of the railroad workers, Roosevelt is now executing a flank attack. The contention that a national service act is needed to "prevent strikes" has been dropped.

THE PRETEXT OF THE MANPOWER SHORTAGE being waged under the pretext of a manpower shortage, the second motivation given in Roosevelt's original proposal. In his testimony before the Senate Military Affairs Committee, Robert P. Patterson, Under-Secretary of War, shed some light on this question:

"When asked by Senator Warren F. Austin of Vermont if there had ever been a genuine shortage of manpower, the Under-Secretary, who has been a key organizer of munitions production since the start of the war program, replied: Of course not. We have no manpower shortage. There is plenty of manpower, both for the armed forces and for war production. If we were hard pressed we could put an armed force of 16,000,000 men in the field if we did it on the scale the Germans and Russians have done it." (*New York Times*, January 27.) (The present goal of the army is 11,300,000.)

Paul V. McNutt, chairman of the War Manpower Commission, testifying recently before the House Military Affairs subcommittee on the draft, stated there was no manpower shortage that would justify a forced labor law, and added: "The job has been done on a voluntary basis. It has been done." In addition, it is a known fact that cutbacks in war production are releasing thousands of men every day. If any more evidence is required of the spurious nature of the "manpower shortage" it is provided by the magazine *Business Week*, authentic spokesmen for Big Business which predicted in its December 11 issue (page 15) that there would be a "manpower crisis in March." In the issue of April 1, the magazine, boasting of the prediction made four months previous, says: "Army and Navy have precipitated the crisis right on schedule."

HOW THE PLAN HAS BEEN 'MODIFIED'

The present plan to conscript labor for private industry is being advanced as a modified version of the universal labor draft proposal made by Roosevelt. It has become known as the 4-F plan in that it proposes to utilize the apparatus of Selective Service in conscripting labor for work in private industry. By this flank attack, Roosevelt is seeking to impose by administrative measures what he previously tried by appealing for legislation. This was revealed by Col. Francis V. Keesling, Jr., legislative representative of Selective Service who announced that measures had already been taken to put the plan into effect. Those men unqualified for military duty (4-F) as well as those fit only for limited service (1-AL) will be "permitted to remain in civilian life as long as they hold jobs deemed important by Selective Service," but will be subject to induction in military labor battalions, "if they leave such jobs without permission of their draft boards." The plan has been "modified" but the aim remains the same—to freeze workers to their jobs at frozen wages under penalty of induction into labor battalions.

While the labor bureaucrats were compelled to voice their opposition to Roosevelt's proposal for universal labor conscription, they have thus far maintained silence on the 4-F plan. The press has announced that the "top labor leaders" have been engaged in a series of conferences with proponents of the labor draft. According to the reports, they have indicated their support for a "modified version" of a national service law.

There can be no compromise on a question which involves the fate of the labor movement. The militants in the unions can halt such a treacherous compromise by arousing the ranks to the danger of labor conscription and its inevitable effect in undermining the organizations of labor. Every local union

should adopt resolutions demanding that the "top leaders" speak out against any and all forms of labor conscription. The labor movement must take the lead in the struggle against totalitarian regimentation of the American people.

Nine Months of Allied Rule in Italy

By E. R. FRANK

The developments in Italy are deserving of the closest study. The unfolding Italian events provide an important preview of the revolutionary temper and power of the European working class, the status and role of the capitalist class and a virtual blueprint of Anglo-American war aims, methods and plans.

This war is of course a continuation of the first World War, but as the experience of Italy has already made amply clear, the developments arising from this war are by no means mere replicas of the last one. All the contradictions of European capitalism that reached supreme acuteness after the last war twenty-five years ago, are now at a breaking point. New contradictions have piled up in the interim. Economic devastation has reached unheard of proportions. Political decay has followed suit. Internally, no serious force remains to guard capitalism in Europe except the scum of the upper class society—the decrepit monarchs with their coterie of stark reactionary militarist aristocracy, the Vatican, the cliques of the monopolists, the bankers and their retinue. The reserves of capitalism in Europe are indeed lower than they have ever been before. The field for capitalist class maneuvers is far narrower than was the case a quarter of a century ago.

After the catastrophic defeats of the Italian army in Greece, North Africa and Sicily, mass strikes swept over North Italy and the army itself began disintegrating. The Allies were sure that Italy would soon be knocked out of the war. They were prepared for a capitulation and had plans in readiness for the occupation of Italy.

The Secret Plans

Kingsbury Smith, semi-official spokesman of the US State Department, in an article written just before Mussolini's downfall and published in the *American Mercury* of August 1943, "Our Government's Plan for a Defeated Italy," reveals in somewhat guarded language the plans and perspectives of the US State Department:

"We will help the Italian Army, Navy, or the people to overthrow Mussolini's regime, but we will nevertheless demand that the country be handed over without any strings attached . . . High Italian army officers known to have the respect of the people will be the group from which the United States and Great Britain will demand the surrender of the nation . . . Establishment of an allied military government in Italy under American command is planned following occupation of the country. *Some United States Army Civil Affairs officers who are slated for occupational administrative work in Italy already have arrived in North Africa.* Others are being trained as Italian Administrators at the Army School of Military Government at Charlottesville, Virginia . . . Strict control will be exercised over the Italian press and radio during the period of allied military rule . . ."

Gaetano Salvemini, a forthright analyst of Italian policy, bluntly stated as early as December 1942, on the basis of a study of Allied policies, that:

"The royal House of Savoy, the army and the Pope are being kept on ice by Mr. Churchill and President Roosevelt as the legitimate authorities entitled to speak for Italy . . ."

In their book, *What To Do With Italy*, Gaetano Salvemini and George LaPiana, predicted before the fall of Mussolini:

"As far as the American public can judge from what has leaked out about the plans being secretly and discreetly concocted in high circles, our diplomats in Washington are determined to supplant Mussolini with an Italian Darlan or Petain . . . If such a plan is carried out, the Savoy monarchy will remain as a guarantee against any radical revolution. A coalition of former leaders, the big business men and clericals supported by the Vatican, would take up the government of the country under the protection of the American and English armies of occupation . . . Every road leads to Rome, they say in Italy. And everything we gather about British and American plans concerning Italy leads us to the same conclusion. What the British foreign office and the American State Department want to set up in Italy is a fascist regime without Mussolini . . ."

The Anglo-American imperialists, it is obvious, did not blunder into the Italian situation, did not improvise their policies, nor leave the important political decisions to be made by military field commanders on the spot. As Kingsbury Smith makes clear, and as has been since corroborated by scores of correspondents and observers, the Allies had a carefully worked out plan, a definite strategy and policy and had prepared a trained personnel to execute their program.

But there is a gap between plans and reality. Events did not proceed as smoothly as the State Department may have envisaged. The Allied imperialist leaders expected a capitulation on the part of Italy. They even anticipated local outbursts of the Italian people against the Fascists. But they did not anticipate the great revolutionary conflagration that actually swept Italy after the removal of Mussolini. There was the specter of the Russian revolution and of the Italian events of 1920 reappearing again! A feeling of anxiety and apprehension swept through the government bureaus at Washington and London. Churchill immediately warned Parliament that

"We certainly do not wish to reduce Italian life to a condition of chaos and anarchy, and find ourselves without any authority with whom to deal."

For Churchill, the Russian revolution, it must be remembered, was the rule of "chaos and anarchy."

A few hours after Churchill's speech, Roosevelt, in a press conference, demonstratively denounced the OWI broadcast which attacked Badoglio and King Victor Emmanuel. Several days later, on July 30, Roosevelt told newspapermen at his press conference that he "did not care with whom we deal so long as he was not a member of the Fascist government and could get the Italian troops to lay down their arms and could prevent anarchy. It might be the King or a Prime Minister or a Mayor who serve these ends."

Mr. Kingsbury Smith, in his foregoing semi-official article, after citing the Anglo-American propaganda of urging the Italian people to revolt against Mussolini, patronizingly wrote:

"We are not opposed [how magnanimous!] to the Italian people carrying out a blood purge of the fascists who have terrorized and oppressed them for the past twenty years. But we believe they should have the courage to do so *before* and not *after* the Allied armies have occupied the country."

The leaders of the two great "democracies" however greeted the Italian revolution once it actually started with fear, with a gnashing of teeth and with frenzied attempts to bolster the makeshift, reactionary Badoglio government and to aid it in its attempts to throttle the heroic struggle of the Italian workers who were engaged in extirpating the Black Shirts, and fighting for freedom and a workers' government of their own choosing.

All through August, the Anglo-American propaganda machine was inundating the world with propaganda which all added up to a political build-up for the government of Badoglio and the King. The Anglo-American forces were already in control of Sicily, and their armies stood poised ready to invade the mainland. The invasion was, however, delayed for weeks, in deference to Badoglio and the King, in an attempt to give the new military dictatorship an opportunity to put down the popular revolt. So cynical and unabashed did Allied propaganda become that Amgot openly announced that Italian officials would be permitted to remain at their posts,—while the Italian people were warned that no political activity would be tolerated. The Anglo-American program of reaction was revealed with such a lack of ambiguity or disguise that even the thoroughly housebroken liberals were embarrassed. They began whimpering, in the general vein of I. F. Stone's article in the August 7 *Nation*:

"I am beginning to feel that while we are ready to make deals with any crooks at the top except full-fledged, fully labeled Nazis and Fascists, we are out to demand 'unconditional surrender' of the peoples of Europe to what must begin to seem to them Anglo-American imperialism. The Europe that Amgot would restore is not a Europe in which the Four Freedoms could be achieved."

But the Badoglio government was being torn apart by its unsolvable crisis. Threats, repressions, martial law, promises of reform, and concessions had availed nothing in the face of the rising revolutionary tide. The Badoglio government was obviously impotent to hold back the revolutionary advance. Its resources were dwindling by the hour and its regime hung by a hair. The Italian army meanwhile was fast melting away; discipline was breaking down, the authority of the officers was on the wane and in the North, the Nazi armies were preparing to advance and in the South the Allies stood in Sicily, poised for the invasion of the mainland.

The Italian capitalists, behind Badoglio and the King, decided their best chances for survival lay in throwing in their fate with the Allies.

"All legitimate hope—I do not say of victory, but even of resistance—had vanished," Badoglio truthfully stated in his declaration to Hitler, announcing his government's capitulation to the Allies.

At this point occurred one of the most brazen betrayals of a people: between Badoglio and the Anglo-American imperialists a conspiracy was hatched to betray the Italian proletariat in the North to the Nazi beasts, to drown the revolution in blood while foisting in the allied-occupied territory in Southern Italy the Quisling government of Victor Emmanuel and Badoglio.

Secret conferences between the Allied imperialists and Badoglio were in progress all through the latter end of August and beginning of September. While the terms of the armistice and Italy's "unconditional surrender" were being drafted, the Italian workers of the industrial north were clamoring for arms to defend themselves against the Nazi hordes. But neither Badoglio nor the Anglo-American "democrats" were interested in defending Northern Italy against the Nazis. They were not interested in organizing the workers and the revolutionary soldiers to fight the Nazis: they had already reconciled their plans to the Nazis' marching in and subduing the revolutionary proletariat.

The Secret Conferences

On September 3, the armistice between the Badoglio government and the Allies was signed. It was made public only a week later on September 11. Discerning commentators had no difficulty in establishing the fact that another, more cynical "Darlan deal" had been contrived, that the Allies were preparing to prop up a reactionary clique of monarchists and capitalist politicians whose hands dripped with the 20-year crimes of the Fascist regime.

The September 4 dispatch of Herbert L. Matthews, *New York Times* correspondent, stated that:

"The AMG experience in Sicily would seem to strengthen Marshal Badoglio's chances of continuing in power after the Allies enter Rome. He could prove highly useful and that was the criterion in the case of Admiral Jean Francois Darlan."

Libera Stampa, Italian anti-fascist newspaper, published in Lausanne, Switzerland, revealed the whole treacherous conspiracy in its October 1 report. According to *Libera Stampa* as soon as Turin learned the news of the Armistice:

"The workers through their leaders suspended work in the big factories . . . to assume . . . the armed defense of their city (against the Nazi troops). But they needed arms. Representatives of the Turin workers therefore called in the Commander of the Turin garrison, General Adamirossi, (one of Badoglio's appointees) and asked for arms to repel an eventual attack on the part of German armored troops which they knew were advancing on Turin.

"The workers' representatives assumed full responsibility for the distribution of arms to their organized supporters, promising not to give them to suspicious elements.

"General Adamirossi courteously asked them to be patient during the few hours necessary for transportation and delivery of the arms.

"However, a tragic betrayal was being prepared: the workers' leaders were handed over to the Germans who had arrived in the meantime. The time which General Adamirossi had demanded for the delivery of the arms was used by him to conclude an agreement with the Germans for the surrender to them of Turin.

"General Adamirossi apparently has already paid with his life, at the hand of a worker, for this treachery."

So it was throughout the northern cities. Like the workers of Turin, the workers of Bergamo demanded arms. The Associated Press reported on September 12 that the military commander stalled them off with the pretext "that only a few out-moded rifles were available."

In Milan, the betrayal took a different form. The workers and soldiers, by their own actions, succeeded in wiping out the Nazi forces stationed in the city. General Reggiero, Badoglio's commanding officer, frightened to death by this success, hastened to proclaim the city as surrendered to the Nazis at a time when the Nazi army had not even reached the outskirts of the

city. He reached an agreement with the Nazi commanders and proceeded to maintain "order" in the Milan area for the Nazis! The workers continued their resistance; two days later the Nazis took over the counter-revolutionary work themselves.

The Anglo-American imperialists did not limit themselves to mere moral encouragement of Badoglio and his generals in this butcher's work. They made no attempt to impede Nazi forces from pouring into Italy. As a matter of fact, they facilitated their entrance through the use of the Allied air force. Gaetano Salvemini voiced his indignation at their brutal counter-revolutionary work in a special interview published in *PM* on October 10, 1943:

"America sent bombers to bomb the people of Milan, Genoa, Turin in August to smash the revolution. There were demonstrations in the streets, but instead of bombing the Brenner Pass, through which the German army was pouring in, America bombed the Italians. Badoglio's soldiers wouldn't shoot Italian demonstrators: So we sent bombers—American liberators."

This saturation bombing of the revolutionary centers was so scandalous, it showed so unmistakably that the political war of the Allies, the war to destroy the European revolution took precedence over the imperialist war with Germany, that even some of the British laborites like Anuerin Bevan protested in the British Parliament, bluntly accusing the Churchill government of being counter-revolutionary.

Thus, in the very midst of the imperialist slaughter, the imperialist leaders reached out across the battle lines, to establish collaboration, and each in his own way and in the manner available, rained blows on the first large-scale attempt of the European workers in the second World War to throw off the yoke of despotism, to break out of the bloody ring, and to take their destinies into their own hands.

It was only towards the middle of September, only after the Nazis had occupied most of Italy, only after the Black Shirts dared show their faces in the streets again, only after the workers were hurled back to the defensive, that the Allies breathed freely again. The crisis, they thought, was over. The revolution had been crushed, they thought, with the timely and blessed assistance of the Nazis, through their conspiracy with Badoglio.

Today, thousands of American and British soldiers are dying in savage battles in Italy. For what? In an attempt to win back the territories that Churchill and Roosevelt helped Badoglio hand over to the Nazis last September.

Only after the Anglo-American imperialists were convinced that the situation was beginning to stabilize along "normal" lines and felt that they could manipulate the political situation in their own imperialist interests, did they proceed to launch the military campaign against the Nazis.

The military strategy was obviously aligned in every detail with their political aims and purposes. The Allies moved at a measured, leisurely, and phlegmatic pace, solidifying each new position before proceeding further not only from a military point of view, but what was even more important from the political point of view. Even though Italy is a secondary military battlefield of the second World War, and the number of troops engaged is relatively small, the whole Italian campaign provides a clear and instructive example of how military strategy is subordinated and, as a matter of fact, determined by the basic political aims of the ruling class waging the war.

Just as Salvemini had predicted, the Anglo-American imperialists now proceeded to put into effect, step by step, their

whole counter-revolutionary program of converting Italy into a semi-colony and imposing on its people a military dictatorship based on the monarchy, the Vatican and the capitalist and landlord cliques.

Every upper class organization in Italy, the brass hats, the Vatican, the church hierarchy, the monarchy, the big capitalists and landlords had all thoroughly discredited themselves with the *whole* of the Italian people, through 20 years association, support and participation in the Fascist regime. Their hands were soaked with the people's blood. The only forces which could possibly enjoy a certain credit, a certain support among masses of the population were the Allies themselves. Unquestionably, in the first days, considerable sections of the Italian people were fooled by Roosevelt's and Churchill's professed aims of "liberation" and "democracy" and really welcomed the Allied armies.

The Allies manipulated these illusions of the Italian people to wage against them, as soon as they had cleared a given territory of the Nazi forces, a virtual war, now masked, now open, to violate their wishes, and to impose upon them a government of the self-same elements that made up the warp and woof of the Mussolini regime.

"Democracies" and Sicily

The Allies had already acquired a certain experience in this dastardly work. In Sicily, the Amgot first went into action under the chairmanship of Lord Rennell of Rodd, British millionaire banker, partner of Morgan Grenfell, London affiliate of J. P. Morgan and Co., and bosom friend of Volpi, one of Mussolini's financial backers.

Rennell and his gang of dyed-in-the-wool reactionaries proceeded to install what Salvemini has designated as "fascism minus Mussolini." On July 18, a week before the fall of Mussolini, General Alexander, then Allied Military Governor of Sicily issued a proclamation ordering the dissolution of the Fascist party. The decree outlined the new government in the following manner:

"All administrative and judicial officials of provinces and communities and all other government municipal functionaries and employes, and all officers and employes of the state, municipal or other public services except such officials and political leaders as are removed by me are required to continue in performance of their duties subject to my direction."

This of course meant that the Black Shirt set-up was preserved virtually intact.

Herbert L. Matthews, *New York Times* correspondent, described how this policy operated in practice. In the reorganized government apparatus of Palermo, Sicily's largest city, every official included was a fascist and appointed by the fascists. Matthews explains:

"There must be a great degree of leniency, because every post, however insignificant, had been filled under Premier Mussolini, by a fascist. To eliminate all the fascists would completely paralyze every function of the government. The real anti-fascists here do not like that so much. Apparently they had expected the whole fascist set-up to be swept away, but that is impossible and will be so throughout Italy . . . Naturally the primary consideration was the swift restoration of law and order. That could be accomplished only with the help of the Italian police."

Amgot also announced that they were ready to bring the blessings of democracy to the Sicilians and that "within the limits of military necessity a free press and free speech is to be allowed, but that no political activity of any kind will be

allowed." Salvemini correctly demanded to know: "How can free speech and a free press exist if no political activity of any kind is allowed?"

Matthews summed up the Amgot method several weeks later in an article in the August 22 *New York Times Magazine*. There was first fear among the Fascists, Matthews explains, "that the Allies would prosecute them because they were Fascists." He then adds:

"In Sicily we have demonstrated that we have no such intention, for the obvious reason that something like 90 percent of the administration in every walk of life is Fascist and to eliminate all Fascists would mean complete paralysis and chaos . . ."

Matthews sums up: "Fascism is being destroyed—at least on paper."

All the old, moth-eaten, cynical imperialist formulas were dragged out once again to alibi this act of betrayal—"Military necessity," humanitarian considerations ("saving human lives"), "no politics until the Nazis are driven out," etc., etc.—all the hollow phrases that had been employed before in North Africa in the case of the Darlan Deal. But here even the pretext that allegedly existed in North Africa was lacking, inasmuch as all military activities had ceased. Upon the signing of the Armistice, the Allies had complete undisputed control of the Mediterranean.

Once the full meaning of Amgot policy was understood, its effect on the Sicilian population can easily be imagined. The disillusionment must have been especially sweeping, after the revolutionary upsurge in the mainland and the open Allied support of Badoglio and the King. An article signed "A Combatant" printed in the British *Observer* at the end of October 1943 depicted the disillusionment and despair engendered by the cold blooded Amgot policy even among the Allied soldiers themselves. This article stated:

"The writer has personal knowledge of a case in which two members of the OVRA—the Fascist secret police—were arrested, sent off to the local Amgot headquarters, and returned twenty-four hours later as qualified Amgot officials to the same town which they had bossed for the Fascists.

"Military expediency may provide a sound reason for decisions taken in certain cases, but there is an unmistakable worried feeling among the troops that something has gone wrong—even that they have been misled."

Toward the end of October, four months after the military occupation of Sicily and one month after the signing of the Armistice, the Allied Military Government first issued its decree restoring the *Camera del Lavoro*, the trade union Center in Palermo.

This decree was at first hailed by several British and American trade union bureaucrats as a restoration of the pre-fascist trade unions. Once the actual decree was published, it was obvious that the Allies were attempting to perpetuate Mussolini's system of government—sponsored company unions.

The decree provided for:

(1) The director and staff of the Center are to be appointed under AMG supervision instead of elected by the union members.

(2) Present wage contracts—negotiated by Fascist officials and employers—remain in force.

(3) All public meetings remain banned by AMG.

(4) If any disagreements arise on wages or working conditions, they are subject to compulsory arbitration. Strikes and lockouts are strictly forbidden and will be punished.

This new trade union restoration was on a par with the

previous "restoration" of freedom of press and speech. It fully tallied with Mark Twain's aphorism that freedom of speech is something you've got provided you don't use it. Even the *Sicilia Liberata*, the only newspaper permitted to appear in Sicily (Mussolini, too, permitted that kind of freedom of press) came out with sharp criticisms of the new decree.

In an editorial entitled "Cards on the Table" the newspaper stated:

"All positions of responsibility must be held by proven anti-fascists. This is the appeal we made to the Allied authorities. This is no time to take a middle course. To entrust positions of authority to those who tomorrow would become our executioners would be a grave and unforgivable error. The time has come to assume the responsibilities for our own future."

It is easy to imagine the reaction of the Sicilians to Allied occupation and Amgot policy when the *only* paper permitted to appear speaks in terms of bitter complaint.

The vile hypocrisy with which the Allies carry through their dictatorial reactionary policies is well illustrated by an incident reported in the pro-Allied, pro-Roosevelt, pro-war, *Daily Worker* of January 13, 1944. Charles Poletti, then military Governor of Palermo, opened the new City Hall in the latter part of November and hailed in his address the "rebirth of Italian democracy." He elaborated on the "new era of dignity—the dignity of free men—begins for the people of Palermo." But it turned out that the new mayor and city council had all been hand-picked by Poletti himself; they were all either dukes, lawyers and men of wealth who had for 20 years supported Mussolini. "Not a single anti-fascist was among them," says the *Daily Worker*.

Such is the democracy which the Allied military occupation authorities have devised in Sicily. Freedom of press—with only one newspaper permitted to appear; freedom of speech—with all public meetings banned; freedom of trade unions—with all union officials appointed by Amgot, and with the old contracts imposed during Mussolini's regime remaining in full force, with all grievances subject to compulsory arbitration, with all strikes banned and severely punished; the "rebirth of Italian democracy"—with all public officials appointed by Amgot, from among the wealthy landlords and capitalists, the bulwark of Mussolini's Fascist regime.

This was the type of regime that the Allies aimed to impose on the whole of Italy. But a regime of this type proved far more difficult to force on all Italy than on small, predominantly agricultural and backward Sicily. And what is more, much to Allied chagrin, a revolution, not called for in their schedule, erupted on the mainland; it was checked only with the greatest difficulty and only by turning over the bulk of Italy to the Nazi butchers. The Allies could not proceed on the mainland in the same crude manner as in Sicily, lest they provoke armed clashes between their military forces and the native population of every village, hamlet and city. They had watched Hitler's occupation methods and learned how difficult it is to subdue a hostile population, by naked military force alone. Far more expedient is to rule through a subservient native government, which bears the onus of imposing "law and order" on the sullen and rebellious populace.

Churchill himself had made this thoroughly clear in his eloquent speech to Parliament when the Italian masses first took to the streets. On July 27, Churchill said:

"Now that Mussolini has gone and the Fascist power has certainly been irretrievably broken, we would be foolish to

deprive ourselves of any means of coming to a general conclusion with the Italian nation . . . Past experience shows that in cases of great change of heart and character in government of a nation very often one stage is rapidly succeeded by another . . . It would be a grave mistake when Italian affairs are in this flexible, fluid and formative condition for the rescuing power of Britain and the United States so to act as to break down the whole structure and expression of the Italian state. We certainly do not wish to reduce Italian life to a condition of chaos and anarchy, and find ourselves without any authority with whom to deal . . ."

Churchill and Roosevelt after the signing of the Armistice on September 3 were fully embarked on their campaign against "chaos and anarchy" and for the restoration of "law and order." They began to impose their counter-revolutionary regime step by step on the Italian people by strengthening and buttressing the authority of Badoglio and the decrepit monarchy, by strengthening the authority of the Vatican and the church hierarchy, by attempting to provide the discredited upper class scum with a reconstituted military force.

On September 21, ten days after the Armistice had been made public, Churchill came out flat-footedly for the government of Badoglio and King Victor Emmanuel. In his report to the House of Commons, Churchill stated:

"It is necessary . . . that all the surviving forces in Italy's national life should be rallied together around their government and that the King and Marshal Badoglio should be supported by liberal and left-wing elements . . ."

Roosevelt sent Adolph A. Berle, Assistant Secretary of State to the Columbus Day meeting of the Italian-American Committee in Boston, with a personal message calling upon labor to throw its support behind the Badoglio government. Badoglio and Victor Emmanuel were afforded the facilities of the Allied radio to broadcast their propaganda to the Italian people, while everybody else was gagged and anyone attempting to speak thrown into jail.

On September 22, Badoglio, feeling more confident, with the Anglo-American bayonets propping his government, told the Italian people over the Allied radio that "The King, the royal family are the expression of the will of the Italian people." On October 2 the King ordered the people to obey Badoglio as "the interpreter of my will." The King apparently had plans of staying on for a while to come: "Yesterday, as always, your King is with you, indissolubly linked with the destiny of the immortal fatherland."

On October 1 the Allied armies entered Naples. There was no military encounter with the Nazis. The Italian anti-Fascists had just finished a savage four-day battle with the Nazi invaders; the Nazis facing an Allied attack in the midst of this hostile and aggressive population, decided the better part of valor was to retire. Hal Boyle, the Associated Press correspondent received the following description of the events from Umberto Franco, a local glass manufacturer:

"Street fighting broke out after the Germans ordered the citizens to give up their guns and told 30,000 Italian men to report for labor conscription on September 24."

Mme. Maleville, Secretary to the Naples Hospital, reported that:

"The civil war started last Saturday while the Germans were burning and looting the city of everything they could take. The people took up guns, knives and anything they could and fought the Germans and the Fascists who still supported them. There have been hundreds and hundreds of persons wounded."

Hal Boyle who entered Naples with the Allied troops de-

scribed the anti-fascists as "young Italian guerrillas, fighting with collars open and no helmets, looked like something out of the French Revolution." Boyle states that "the whole (Naples) Battle was fought without a single American casualty." Herbert L. Matthews in his cable to the *New York Times* on the Naples battle spoke of the conduct of the Italian anti-fascists in rapturous terms: "an episode of genuine heroism."

In a later dispatch Matthews reported:

"When Badoglio's government announced its armistice on September 8, the people rose joyously. All that night and all the following day they had the Germans on the run. The Germans were surrendering their arms to Italians . . . Had Naples been properly organized . . . it would have made all the difference. However, there was no anti-fascist organization . . . So the Germans quickly regained control, but they did it with the help of fascist hierarchs and above all many fascist Black Shirts. Those Black Shirts became marked men . . . When those days of reckoning came, everyone of those Black Shirts . . . met death at the hands of the citizens. They were willing to take the Germans alive . . . because after all they were doing only what they had been ordered to do. But when the Italians caught a Black Shirt, he died."

The Events in Naples

The Naples proletariat showed again that the Italian revolution had not been crushed; it had been merely delayed. The Naples proletariat revealed those traits that the workers have displayed again and again in every real people's revolution: their genius for organization and their contempt for death. Unfortunately, they had not had the time to organize themselves politically and build a leadership that expressed their revolutionary aspirations and aims.

Matthews correctly states that the Neapolitan masses could have been organized to drive out the Nazis when the armistice was announced. The Allies were interested in just the opposite. They were determined that the Italian proletariat remain disorganized and unarmed, and if necessary they were willing to turn them over temporarily to the tender mercies of the Nazi wolves.

What the Nazis were unable to accomplish, the Allies quickly achieved: they disarmed the Neapolitan masses (after all, were they not "liberators"?) and proceeded to restore "law and order." They now proceeded to carry through their perfidious program with the greatest possible energy. Naples had been occupied militarily. It was now indispensable to conquer it *politically* and convert it into a solid bastion of reaction.

On October 13, one month after Italy's "unconditional surrender" and the imposition of armistice terms, reported by the correspondents as harsher than those Hitler imposed on France, the Allies suddenly announced that Italy was recognized as a "co-belligerent" and would be a partner of the Allies, albeit a minor one. This time, Roosevelt and Churchill had succeeded in having their counter-revolutionary schemes underwritten by Stalin. The Mediterranean Commission, composed of representatives of the United States, Britain and the Soviet Union, was set up. From now on, the counter-revolutionary program in Italy was to have the full endorsement of the Kremlin bureaucracy. Stalin fittingly appointed Alexander Vyshinski, prosecutor in the infamous Moscow frame-up trials, as his representative.

All correspondents freely admitted that the new Allied stratagem was devoid of military significance. Its purpose was exclusively political—to bolster the shadow Badoglio govern-

ment and to provide it with an ostensible military purpose for creating a new army.

Badoglio took the occasion to inform the Italian people that he was going to stay on indefinitely as their minister:

"The present government has clearly defined the task of leading the country until peace has been won. With that its mandate will cease."

From the day of the recognition of the Badoglio regime as a co-belligerent in the Allied camp, dates a whole series of incidents, suppressions, arrests, etc., in the systematic war of the Allies and their Badoglio shadow government against the Italian people.

On October 21, Herbert L. Matthews suddenly revealed that three prominent liberals of Apulia were jailed for printing and disseminating an "unauthorized newspaper." Matthews apologetically explains that he is recording the incident "because it has created such a sensation and such unhappy bewilderment in liberal circles here." We learn that in Southern Italy, as in Sicily, only *one* newspaper is permitted, in this case the *Gazetta del Mezzogiorno*. "A group of important liberals who had suffered imprisonment under Fascism say that they tried to get their ideas published in the *Gazetta* but failed." Matthews further revealed that on the same day, "A communist named Senisi also was arrested for disseminating a sheet called *Civilta Communista*."

In his next day's dispatch Matthews reported that Count Sforza who had just arrived from the United States was "saddened" by the "vestiges of Fascism that cling to official life in Allied-occupied Italy and the machinations of the court circle."

For an old monarchist politician to oppose the Badoglio regime so demonstratively upon his arrival in Italy, to so sharply change his tone from the statement he issued on leaving the United States when he told newspapermen that it would be "almost an act of treason" to oppose the Badoglio government and that loyal support should be given Badoglio as long as he enjoys the confidence of the Anglo-American leaders—this change of front shows eloquently enough what the political temper of Naples must be.

But in spite of the mounting dissatisfaction and indignation of the masses, the Badoglio regime for the first time began to breathe freely. The Italian capitalists were finally resting on Anglo-American bayonets. On November 3, King Victor Emmanuel, for the first time since the downfall of Mussolini, dared show himself in public. The King rode through the streets of Naples in what was intended to be a monarchist demonstration. Matthews explained:

"At present, as long as the Allied Military Mission sits at the King's side, he is immune . . . Since the Allies are preventing political agitation, whatever Marshal Badoglio and the King decide will stand up."

A week later, Badoglio demonstratively announced that the new political government to be set up in Rome would be "formed by the King."

On November 9, it was reported that the units of anti-Fascist volunteers, which had been set up in Naples, since the October days, had been ordered disbanded, and that the men would be drafted into the regular Italian army under General Basso, "one of the King's generals." Basso is a reactionary monarchist officer who served as director general of Artillery under Mussolini.

It was further decreed that "the cross of Savoy over the left breast pocket" was to be placed on every soldier's uniform

and that "all vehicles are also marked with the cross of King Victor Emmanuel's house."

On November 22, Sir Harold R. L. G. Alexander, announced that he had named General Basso as head of the new Italian Military Command "over all Italian armed forces in Campania." The appointment comes from "the Royal Italian government with my approval," General Alexander's order stated.

The drive to reimpose on the Italian people a naked military dictatorship became so sustained, all-sided, energetic and brazen that by November 22, only a month after he arrived in Italy, Sforza was already loudly accusing the Badoglio government of striving to build a "royalist-clerical-neo-Fascist movement."

The "Blue Party"

While anti-fascists were being clapped into jail, while all anti-fascist activity was prohibited, the upper class scum highlighted their activity by attempts to organize again "punitive expeditions" as during Mussolini's regime and by a new ambitious venture to reconstitute themselves as a political force. On November 26, the Associated Press carried the following information:

"The Monarchist 'Blue Party', newest group to enter Italy's political arena, opened a high-pressure campaign today to rally support to the shaky cause of the Royal House of Savoy . . . Placards calling on the people to rally to the monarch . . . were posted on buildings in the city. Pamphlets reminding the people of the services of the House of Savoy to Italy were disseminated throughout towns and villages in that part of the country liberated from the Germans . . . The leaders are not prominent Italians, but a number of aristocrats and highly placed army and navy officers are reported to be members . . ."

The November 26 dispatch to the *New York Times* stated that Professor Omadeo, rector of Naples University, related:

"That much of the poster-erecting is being done by Carabinieri, sometimes in civilian clothes, at the orders of the military . . . Other reliable quarters have given further evidence of what used to be called Squadristism—which is now being practiced by elements that must be considered the equivalent of Fascists—such as threats to burn houses, or to beat, and in one notable case, to kill known anti-fascists."

The Monarchist "Blue Party" has its genesis in the Nationalist Party which was organized in Florence in 1910, with a program in American terms similar to a combination of the programs of the Navy League, the NAM and the American Legion. By 1921, the Nationalist Movement was accepted by Mussolini as a "parallel movement" in a common struggle. After the march on Rome, the Fascists having adopted all the tenets of Nationalism, the two parties merged.

Salvemini described the Nationalist Party as monarchist, militarist, aristocratic, anti-parliamentarian, protectionist, and favoring an alliance between the church and state:

"It was the party of the general staff of the army and navy and big business . . . Now that the Fascist Party has been discredited by all kinds of disasters, the old Nationalist Party renamed the Blue Party, has been revived under the wings of the AMG."

This all-out campaign of reaction reached a climax when a unit of Italian soldiers was thrown into an attack on the Nazi lines. The *New York Herald Tribune* correspondent described the action as "little short of suicide . . . The first wave of attackers was virtually destroyed. The second, shoved in frantically from the reserve suffered grave casualties . . . It might as well be admitted that no one was very much surprised."

But the battle had a political, not a military purpose. It was widely advertised that the Crown Prince had flown over the enemy lines, "a trip which takes courage and demonstrates a general desire to rehabilitate himself in the eyes of the people." Salvemini correctly appraised the significance of this military action of December 8:

"Mussolini attacked France in June 1940 because he needed a few thousand dead in order to get a seat at the impending peace conference. In December 1943, Badoglio needed a few hundred Italian dead to enhance the prestige of the royal house."

Wooing the Vatican

Parallel with the attempt to recreate the old Monarchist party, to build up a military force at the disposal of the Big Business clique around Badoglio and the House of Savoy, and to suppress every manifestation of democracy, democratic rights and the independent organization and activity of the masses, went the attempt to build up the power of the Vatican and to increase its hold over the Italian people.

Shortly after the conquest of Sicily, General Alexander, the then military governor of Sicily, held a conference with Cardinal Laritano, Archbishop of Palermo, and proposed that the public schools be reopened and proceed with their educational work "under the direction of the ecclesiastical authorities." The reactionary depth of this proposal can be appreciated when we recall that the Italian public schools, even during Mussolini's regime, have never been surrendered to the supervision of the clergy. The AMG thus tried to put over the program long cherished and advocated by the Vatican, of destroying the separation of church and state and putting all education under the control of the Catholic church—the powerhouse of reaction and obscurantism.

The *New York Herald Tribune* carried information on October 8 from Naples that:

"All schools remained closed, but the AMG will permit Catholic schools to reopen soon. The religious schools have received priority because the AMG feels that Catholic textbooks and teachers are less imbued with fascist doctrines."

What lying scoundrels! Salvemini has demonstrated long ago that "books sent to this country for use in Italian-language parochial schools are stuffed with Fascist propaganda, and the Church has never objected." As a matter of fact, why should the Catholic church object? The Pope considers the ruthless dictatorship of Salazar in Portugal as the "model Christian state," the regime of the butcher Franco as ordained by God.

The October 11 *New York Times* carried the following information:

"Mass was celebrated today at the Cathedral of San Gennaro in the presence of Alessio Cardinal Ascalesi, with Lieut. General Mark W. Clark and other high American officers in attendance."

Salvemini correctly pointed out:

". . . Attending mass officially with one's retinue to the presence of a cardinal is not a religious observance. It is a political act. Cardinal Ascalesi is a man who has been discredited throughout Italy by his unbridled greed for money and his consistent servility to Fascism . . . To Italians such a gesture could only imply that General Clark had been instructed to encourage some brand of clerical Fascism in Italy."

The AMG is trying to restore the political power of the Vatican, not as it existed even under the Mussolini regime, but as it existed a century ago, before the Italian Risorgimento.

United States imperialism, brash and arrogant, even ven-

tures at times to flaunt its imperial aims and boast of its imperial power. We must go back to the writings in Britain of Disraeli's day to find a suitable counterpart. Demaree Bess, on numerous occasions a semi-official spokesman of the State Department, afforded special privileges and confidential data by the State Department officials in North Africa and elsewhere, wrote an article printed in the October 30 issue of the *Saturday Evening Post*, under the self-confident title: "Power Politics Succeeded in Italy." He discards all pretense, all diplomatic double talk, he casts aside all the apologetics and alibis and not only reveals but defends American imperialism and its quest for power. He writes:

"Most Americans have an ingrained distrust of power politics—those maneuvers through which clever statesmen get what they want from foreign countries by reinforcing their political negotiations with military pressure. And yet the American people have three times elected as our President a man who takes the keenest interest in power politics, and who is one of its most resourceful and successful practitioners.

". . . The two allied statesmen were indeed negotiating with conservative Italians who had collaborated with Fascism and with Germany; they were trying to make 'another Darlan deal' in Italy. Where the critics made themselves appear ludicrous was in asserting that power politics wouldn't work . . . It is a cold-blood game, having nothing whatever to do with ideologies or crusades. It is the kind of game which Hitler and Stalin played when they struck a bargain with each other in 1939.

". . . The men whom the Allied governments selected to abolish Fascism in Sicily were not the type to be rash in interpreting this directive. Most of them are conservative or moderate in their political views and this is particularly true of the higher ranks. Our soldiers thus invaded Italian territory with the effective slogan: 'Abolish Fascism!' but with such a conservative policy otherwise that it amounted to the freezing of the status quo in Sicily, once Mussolini's personal party machine had been destroyed. The decks were thus cleared for negotiations with any group inside Italy which could get rid of Mussolini . . . those hostile critics who complained that Allied statesmen were making another Darlan deal were, therefore, not unjustified in their contention, because our deal with Marshal Badoglio was indeed the same kind of deal . . . This time, however, allied statesmen arranged to obtain in advance Marshal Stalin's approval of their agreement with Italian military leaders . . ."

With what results have the Anglo-American imperialists labored in the vineyard? What successes have they achieved in their program of counter-revolution, political suppression, the recreation of a military dictatorship and clerical and monarchical restoration? The results are very tenuous; their hold very uneasy. The waging of war upon the Italian population has produced a political crisis of the greatest tension and explosive power. Every political observer, regardless of his political beliefs, has asserted that once the Allied military are withdrawn, the Badoglio government will be blown skyhigh. It does not enjoy the slightest semblance of popular support. It faces instead the hostility of *all* classes of Italian society, except for the thin layer of the very wealthy. This is proved by every public manifestation, where the masses have had an opportunity to voice their feelings and demands and by the fact that prior to the Kremlin's latest betrayal not *one* political figure, including a conservative monarchist like Senator Croce, could be found to associate himself or join with the Badoglio government and the House of Savoy.

"To find an exponent of the Royalist viewpoint," wrote the *New York Times* correspondent, "it was necessary to go to

the military ranks, for there is no civilian among the politically active elements who is not against Victor Emmanuel."

* * *

(EDITOR'S NOTE: The above analysis of the counter-revolutionary alligments in Italy comprises the first section of E. R.

Frank's review of the events in Italy since the downfall of Mussolini. The struggle of the Italian masses against the Nazis in the North and the Badoglio regime in the South, together with other aspects of the Italian political scene, in particular the new Stalinist policy toward Badoglio and the King will be discussed in a subsequent article.)

Japan Faces the Abyss

III. The Revolutionary Perspectives*

By LI FU-JEN

The low productivity of agriculture and of household and artisan industry means that, low as is the standard of life of the Japanese people, the surplus which they produce beyond their own consumption minimum is very small. Hence Japan's shortage of capital, the survival of handicrafts, the low wages paid in industry. The standard of life of the peasants drags down the wage level of the industrial workers; the low productivity of handicraft industry, and the low wages paid in the small workshops and domestic industry, keep down the wages of the factory workers. Hence large-scale, modern industry, where it exists (particularly textiles) enjoys a tremendous advantage over that of other countries. The Japanese cotton and rayon industries, whilst utilizing the most modern technique, draw their labor force from among the daughters of the poverty-stricken peasantry with their medieval standard of life. As a writer in a Japanese newspaper, the *Jiji*, expressed it:

"The farming population constitutes the reservoir of industrial labor and its size serves to keep the wages of industrial workers from rising."

The cotton spinners and textile manufacturers are able to benefit both from the maximum productivity of labor arising from the use of modern power-driven machinery, and from the maximum degree of exploitation of the labor force, made possible by the extreme poverty of the peasants. So long as this supply of cheap labor is forthcoming—and of late years it has become more and more abundant as conditions in the villages have gone from bad to worse—industrial capital is content to leave undisturbed the feudal survivals and the wasteful small-scale production of the countryside. It does not want a large class of landless laborers such as furnished Britain's early industries with their labor, since it is assured of a much safer and more easily manageable labor force from amongst the daughters of the peasantry. Nor, since the large-scale industries work for export, are they concerned with the narrowness of the home market which is a natural consequence of the backwardness and poverty of Japanese agriculture.

Japan's textile capitalists, representing the country's largest single industry, benefit not alone from the poverty of the village which supplies them with the cheapest possible labor, but also from the peculiarly medieval status of women which renders the latter docile and defenceless. It is above all in the matter of treatment of women that Japan has retained her Asiatic-feudal *mores*. Both social custom and law keep women in subjection and give her a status but one degree removed from slavery.

The Japanese woman has no legal personality, no social or political rights. She can be sold to a factory or a brothel by a legal contract signed by her father or husband or other male guardian, and she can be divorced without cause at the will of her husband. A married woman has no property rights and no rights over her children. Women are forbidden by law to join a political party, and by social custom from going to places of entertainment with their husbands; from dancing (unless they are paid cafe entertainers or taxi-dancers) or from any other social intercourse with the other sex. Yet while women remain subject to a medieval or patriarchal code which virtually deprives them of all liberty, they are exposed to all the brutality of the earliest forms of capitalist exploitation. They may not enjoy such social or political rights as men have (limited though these are), but they must earn their living side by side with men in offices and factories and on the farms.

In the feudal era, daughters could only be sold to the houses of prostitution, or as *geishas* (entertainers), and the superfluous female children were to a large extent got rid of by infanticide. With the development of silk filatures and cotton mills, daughters became a profitable investment for their parents. The houses of prostitution buy the girl outright for a cash sum, whilst in the case of silk filatures or small weaving sheds the girl's labor is usually contracted for by the year, the contract being renewed from year to year if her work is still required and her health has not broken down. In the case of the big factories, two or three years is the usual contract period, but only a small sum is paid in advance. Of recent years, the big millowners have not needed to employ recruiting agents for their labor. Agrarian distress has been so acute and the indebtedness of the peasantry has grown to such fearful proportions, that the landlord or usurer-trader of the village can be counted on to see that the peasants contract their daughters into industry in order to obtain the money to pay rent and interest. Girls and their parents naturally prefer industrial employment to the brothels, since the former is temporary whereas the latter means slavery for life because the resulting debt can never be paid off. However, in certain districts far from any industrial center, such as Aomori and other northern prefectures, it is not always easy to arrange for contracts with factories. The latter can get plenty of labor nearer at hand without paying for a long railroad journey, and so in these districts a higher percentage of girls go to the brothels.

Neither as regards the brothels or the factories does the girl herself play any part in the transaction except as a commodity. The father or other male head of the family signs a contract with the factory agent, for example, which provides that his daughter shall work for a stated period and either the whole

* This is the third and final article in the series. The previous two articles will be found in the February and March issues of *Fourth International*—Ed.

or a part of a year's wages is paid to him in advance. When the advance is small, it is stipulated that a part of the girl's monthly wage shall be sent to her parents. In the case of the brothels, a much larger sum is paid to the father and the girl cannot leave her "employment" until it is worked off. Since in addition to this sum bills are charged against her for expensive clothing, and since each day's illness makes another charge, she can only in exceptional cases ever work off the debt. Commander Gumpei Yamamuro of the Japanese Salvation Army investigated this type of slavery and found that at the rate at which girls in brothels are able to repay their debts during the first two or three years, it would take them about 189 years to regain their freedom.

If the girl runs away from either brothel or factory, her father's goods, or his guarantor's goods, are liable to distraint, so that she dare not return home, even if she escapes, for she knows that her father or his creditors will send her back again. In any case, escape is very difficult, since if the girl manages to evade the guards of factory or licensed quarter she may be caught by the police and returned to her "owners." Moreover, since she has no money (her wages are "saved" for her by the management if she is contracted to a factory, that is, if there is anything left over after the cost of her food and the sums sent to her father have been deducted) she cannot even pay her fare home. The girls who do manage to escape can only get work in another factory where conditions may be even worse, or become cafe waitresses or unlicensed prostitutes. A police investigation in Tokyo revealed that 70 percent of the unlicensed prostitutes in the city's suburbs were ex-factory workers.

Peasants who sell their daughters into this kind of debt slavery are in most cases driven by direst necessity. Even if it were thought more natural that the men of the family, in times of acute distress, should leave their farms and seek industrial employment, there is no demand for their labor as there is for that of young girls. All that is open to them is coolie labor or casual work in industry or transportation. But it is *not* thought more natural for the men to make any sacrifice. The whole tradition of Japan insists that it is the women who must be sacrificed.

The family system and all it entails, the patriarchal ideology which has survived in spite of the decay of patriarchal economic forms, places women in a lower category than men and treats them as inferiors who should be glad to sacrifice life or liberty for their masters, whether fathers or husbands. The whole force of tradition and custom, dating from the feudal period and assiduously fostered, praised and preserved by those who profit from it most—landowners and factory owners and the whole bureaucratic apparatus of government—keeps large-scale industry run on indentured female labor and prevents the breakdown of the patriarchal-feudal village system and the creation of a working class divorced from agriculture and able to combine to improve conditions of labor. It is not always poverty or famine, or a crushing burden of debt, which causes the peasant to contract his daughter to a factory or brothel. So ingrained and natural, and admittedly praiseworthy, is the power of the head of the household over the female members, that peasants sometimes sell their children in order to acquire some capital to advance themselves in the world, or even just in order to go on a spree. A peasant may sell his daughter to a brothel, or contract her to a silk filature or factory, taking all her wages for a year or two in advance, in order to acquire

more land, or in order to buy a loom or two to set up as a small village manufacturer, or to start a tiny silk-reeling establishment—in a word, to acquire capital and become a small capitalist. When a man has thus, by means of the most ruthless exploitation of his own kith and kin, acquired his own "means of production," in the shape of a few looms and perhaps a small motor, he is nevertheless little more than an agent for the merchant-manufacturer who supplies him with yarn and takes the woven cloth from him.

The merchant-manufacturer finds it more profitable to give out yarn to be woven in these household establishments at a fixed charge, than to employ labor himself in a factory of his own. Here one sees how the large merchants and industrialists profit from the poverty of the peasants and from the subjection of women. The peasant can be relied upon to work his wife and children and any hired labor he employs 14, 15 or 16 hours a day in the frantic effort to become a small capitalist, or to keep his land free of mortgage, or to hold his creditors at bay; whereas the merchant who profits most from this exploitation could not keep labor employed directly working such long hours for so paltry a return. To some extent the law would restrain him, and sooner or later workers in a factory always combine to improve their conditions. Herein lies the secret of the survival and extension of domestic industry in Japan.

Working Conditions

What are conditions like in the large textile mills? The girls are kept without money. Anything left over from their earnings after deductions for food, monthly repayment of debt, health insurance, and a small sum of pocket money, is "saved" for them by the management and handed over only upon completion of the contract. Many of these girls are not yet 14 years old. The majority are around 15-16. Brought in from the country, with no knowledge of even such laws as do exist for their protection, they are almost defenceless in their relations with the employer. Although their contracts are not strictly binding in law, they do not realize this. Even if they did, the letter of the law and the practice of the authorities are not at all the same thing. The police, in fact, assist the employers and ignore the law by always capturing and returning to their owners girls who run away from brothels or factories. The practice is less avowed than it used to be and if an escapee stands firm, and is not kidnapped by *soshi* (hired bullies), she can keep her freedom. But even then she dare not return home even if she could find money for the fare, for she knows her father will send her back again, either because, having already received a sum of money from brothel or factory, his small property will be distrained on, or because without the monthly remittance from her earnings the rest of the family would starve.

As regards employment in the larger factories, little was heard in more recent years of girls trying to escape. Economic pressure is sufficient to keep them at work, conditions are somewhat better than in the small factories, and the crude methods of compulsion used in the past are no longer necessary, although they survive in the brothels and in small enterprises and domestic industry. The improvement should have meant that these workers, realizing that their life for some years at least must be spent in a factory, would combine to force better conditions. Such combination, however, has been made most difficult, first by the training of these girls, secondly by the living-in system. It takes some time for the girls to throw off the ideas of inferiority and submissiveness to authority

inculcated in them from babyhood. And by the time that the conditions of their new life, and the conceptions of labor solidarity taught them by the men workers in the factory, have prepared them to throw off the patriarchal ideas of the village and to realize their common interests with other workers, their contract is up, or their health ruined, and it is time for a fresh batch of juvenile serfs to take their places in the factory. Then, too, there is the almost insurmountable obstacle of the dormitory system. Strikes do sometimes occur in Japanese mills, but the employers then simply lock the girls into the dormitories, thus separating them from the striking men outside and preventing any communication. Even if they can get out they are almost helpless, since their wages are held by the company, or taken in repayment of their fathers' debts, and they have nowhere to go but the streets. These girls, whose wages are often the mainstay of their homes, cannot seek the protection of their homes when on strike. Yet despite all the difficulties strikes do occur, being invariably started by the men, with the girls joining in. It is the men who are mostly feared by the factory management, for it is they who encourage the girls to revolt and who begin strikes. Accordingly, every effort is made to dispense with men's labor as far as possible, and in the textile industry today only a very small percentage of the labor force is represented by men.

The "ideal" life of Japanese contract labor as depicted by apologists for the system in the textile industry, is in reality a bird of quite different hue, as we have already seen. But there is still more to it. Much is made of the fact that the girls receive full board and accommodation provided by the owners at half cost price. Accommodation consists merely of 1½ mats' space on a floor (a mat being 6 ft. by 3 ft.) in dormitories which are heated during the cold winter months only by a bowl full of ashes with some glowing lumps of charcoal in the center. Food consists of rice and barley with a little vegetable and pickle, a small piece of fish three times a week, and very occasionally a little meat. As for the so-called cultural work carried on in the factories by the benevolent employers, it is designed either to make the girls better workers or to keep them submissive. Those who can hardly read or write are taught enough to enable them to understand the instructions given at work. Then there are classes in "flower arrangement" and the "tea ceremony." These are arts taught to girls of middle and upper class families, and the instruction in them received by factory girls is designed both to give them the hope of "marrying well" and to preserve their docile feminine outlook. Similarly with the classes in "ethics" held in all the large factories. "Ethics" here means the rules of good conduct, obedience and loyalty to parents, employers and the Emperor, hard work, meekness and submissiveness as the supreme feminine virtues.

What of wages? By 1934, the general level of wages in the cotton industry, never very high, had sunk below 70 *sen* a day. Since then the government has suppressed all the trade unions and the present-day wage, even if it has not dropped below that figure, is certainly not very far above it. As American workers have discovered, wages never keep pace with currency inflation and rising prices. But compared with American workers, the Japanese workers of recent years have been almost completely defenceless in their relations with the employers. Their unions were disbanded and their leaders jailed or killed. As a result, the gap between wages and prices has grown wider and at a faster pace than in the USA.

What does 70 *sen* signify in terms of American currency? It means a wage of something less than 20 cents for 8½ hours of the most intensive labor. Similarly pitiful wages characterize all the industries of Japan producing consumers' goods. Some are a little higher than those of the cotton industry operatives, some even lower. Only in the branches of heavy industry, where production rose to record heights after the invasion of Manchuria in 1931, and where an acute shortage of skilled labor was felt, did appreciably better wages prevail. Thus blacksmiths in 1934, according to figures of the Tokyo Chamber of Commerce and Industry, were earning the equivalent of \$1.25 a day and foundrymen only slightly less, while lathe men topped the list with a wage equal to almost \$1.50 daily. As compared with wages in either America or England, these rates are inordinately low, but they are very high in comparison not only with those of women textile workers, but also with those of men in all other industries. The wages of engineers in Japan in 1941 were nearly three times as large as those of potters or carpenters or workers in the chemical industry, and nearly seven times as high as those of cotton weavers. In considering these wages in terms of American or British equivalents, one should not be led away by the argument of the Japanese exploiters that, low as they are, they are adequate to maintain the workers in comfort. The cost of living has never been cheap in Japan—except for foreign tourists and the representatives of foreign business houses who had good foreign money jingling in their pockets and were astonished at the "cheapness" of Japanese servants. The retail price of rice, for example, was always higher than in London. Cotton goods are little if at all cheaper, and rents are very high owing to high interest rates and the large profits made by landlords, who normally recover the cost of building in seven or eight years. Moreover, the majority of working class families occupy extremely small quarters. In the poorest districts of Kobe and Osaka workers live in tiny three or four-mat rooms (a mat is 6 ft. by 3 ft.); and in some cases there is insufficient floor space for the whole family to lie down and sleep at the same time. Indoor cooking is impossible and takes place on charcoal braziers set up in the narrow alleys that run between the rows of miserable cabins.

In general, the argument that the Japanese enjoy their old-style mode of living in unheated wood and paper houses, devoid of any furniture, and that wages are adequate for this traditional mode of life, does not bear close examination. The wealthier Japanese are glad to live in stone houses or apartments with modern heating arrangements, and to eat European-style foods. Furthermore, the wages of most workers are not sufficient to maintain life decently even in the old manner. Superficially, this would be more evident than it is if not for the incredible industry of the poor Japanese housewife who somehow manages in face of the most fearful handicaps to keep her children clean and her humble abode in similar condition. During all the years of falling exchange, mounting prices and unprecedented expansion of exports, the textile manufacturers and others went on reducing wages, thus making the lives of the workers still more unendurable. They were able to do this simply on account of the agrarian distress which represented a bottomless reservoir of cheap labor, and the defenceless position of the unorganized workers. As the bourgeois economist Kamekichi Takahashi once remarked: "The national standard of wages in Japan is based on the income of the peasant." He calculated that the wages of two women in cotton spinning were

equivalent to the income of an agricultural family of three adult persons.

There is not another leading capitalist country which displays such a primitive, disproportionate and gravely decayed economic structure as that of contemporary Japan. Nowhere is there a country so burdened with relics of its past; a country of such deep and widespread poverty alongside colossal wealth; a country in which class antagonisms have accumulated a social tension so great that the breaking point is always near.

We have already seen the immediate reasons for the diseased condition of Japan's national life. The fundamental explanations, however, are to be found in the peculiarities of her development. Where the capitalist class in the Western world grew up and came to power as an independent social formation, with interests apart from and antagonistic to the feudal nobility and aristocracy, in Japan the capitalist class represents an organic offshoot of the feudal ruling classes. The bourgeoisie of the West established its power and freed the productive forces from the fetters of feudalism by civil war and violent revolution against the defenders of the old society, sweeping away in the process a great deal of the accumulated rubbish which hindered the advancement of society to a new and higher level under a system of capitalist relationships. In contrast, Japan's merchant-capitalists, embryo of the modern bourgeoisie, allied and later merged themselves with a section of the old feudal rulers instead of overthrowing them, and preserved all they could of feudal institutions and customs that could in any way be fitted into the new system of capitalist exploitation.

This brings forward another question: Why did this occur? The answer is that the development of capitalism in Japan, in contradistinction to the countries of the West, arose not from an accumulation within the womb of the old feudal society of economic and social factors which imperatively demanded a clean break from the old system, but from fear of foreign conquest and domination. And the "new" ruling class which came to power with the Restoration of 1868 embarked on a course of imperialist conquest without adequate economic resources to sustain it. The infant capitalist economy was burdened with heavy military expenditures before it could stand on its own feet. This stunted and distorted it from the very beginning.

Toward the end of the feudal era, the rulers of society, at whose head stood the *Shogun*, did all in their power to hinder the natural development of the productive forces. This was no arbitrary policy but a measure of self-protection at a time when feudal society was falling apart from decay.

Until 1868 Japan was a collection of separate feudal principalities or fiefs—260 of them, to be exact—under the overlordship of the *Shogun* (literally, the "hereditary commander-in-chief of the armies"). The *Daimyo*, or nobles, were his vassals or fief-holders, and the *Samurai* were in turn the military retainers of the *Daimyo*. During the last period of feudalism the Emperors languished in virtual exile in Kyoto, frequently in conditions of severe poverty. The royal house was resuscitated and refurbished in the Restoration of 1868 by the new ruling combination of feudal aristocratic elements and merchant-traders. We are concerned here, however, with the historic causes which, in this last period of feudalism, prevented that development of new productive forces which in the countries of the West gave rise to an independent capitalist class, strong enough to make itself the undisputed master of society, as contrasted with Japan's very feeble bourgeoisie.

The last of the Shoguns, the line of Tokugawa, were hostile

to new ideas and suspicious of foreigners carrying them. They expelled all foreigners (including missionaries) from the country and forbade foreign trade of any kind under pain of death. Moreover, they hindered internal trade by prohibiting construction of roads and bridges. Even on the few highways that there were, as from Yedo (now Tokyo) to Kyoto, no bridges were allowed and the rivers had to be crossed by ferry or forded. The root of this internal policy was the *Shogun's* fear of the *Daimyo* revolting against him as the old feudal society tended more and more to break apart. The policy itself was in striking contrast to that of the English monarchs who developed the "King's Highway" as a means of keeping the feudal lords in check and which contributed materially to the development of trade in England.

The period when Japan was practically cut off from all contact with the outside world, known as the Tokugawa Seclusion, lasted from 1641 until 1853—more than two centuries. It came to an end in the latter year when Commodore Perry, under orders of the United States President Fillmore, arrived in Yedo Bay with a naval squadron to demand and to secure the opening of certain Japanese ports to American shipping. During all that lengthy period Japanese society had stagnated. A class of merchants had developed, but the forced seclusion of the country made it impossible for them to use their wealth in foreign trade, while the rigid maintenance of serfdom and a rice economy in the village, together with the artificial division of the country and other hindrances to the free interchange of commodities, prevented their using it to develop industry and internal trade. Capital accumulated in trade went into the land in the shape of usurious loans and mortgages.

The Feudal-Capitalist Alliance

The merchants finally united with the anti-Tokugawa clans—the Satsuma and Choshu, Hizen and Tosa—and with the hordes of discontented *Samurai* and *Ronin* (*Samurai* without a lord) to overthrow the Shogunate and to unify the country under the Emperor. In the civil war of that period, it is important to note, the rebellious clans were financed almost exclusively by the merchant class. It was principally the merchants of Osaka, which had become the country's greatest trading center, who were the financial backers of the "revolution."

This strange alliance of feudals and capitalists has persisted to this day, for after the Restoration the merchants did not cast aside their feudal allies, but proceeded to merge with them. There were several reasons for this development. On the one hand, the interests of the merchants and the feudal ruling class were too intermixed. There was no large independent middle-class, and so the aristocracy was able to retain political control even after the Restoration and eventually transform a section of itself into industrialists and bankers. On the other hand, the danger of foreign invasion, the fear that Japan would become a colony of the Western powers (they had already compelled Japan to grant extra-territorial privileges to their nationals, as in China), forced the country along the road of militarism and thus gave strength and power to the military caste formed out of the feudal nobility. After the Restoration, it was the new national state, run by and in the interests of the leading *Samurai* of the victorious clans, which undertook the financing of industrial development, and it was the feudal aristocracy, to some extent fused with the merchants and usurers, which eventually became the new ruling class of big business, bankers and bureaucrats—allied with the landowners.

Without going into more detail, it can be said that the transformation of one section of the feudal aristocracy into a capitalist class in the space of a generation, and the use of the State power—which remained in the hands of the victorious group of the aristocracy, namely, the *Samurai* of Satsuma and Choshu—directly to further industrial development for the benefit of a small group consisting of themselves and those of the merchant class who had allied themselves with the clans, which in large part accounts for the ill-proportioned nature of Japan's national economy today and for the weighty feudal survivals. At the same time, since the transition to a modern state came as a result of the fear of foreign invasion (the Western imperialists were already dividing neighboring China at that time), and since the *Samurai* retained their influence and were firmly entrenched in the army and navy where they directly molded national policy, the state fostered industrial development with military requirements always as the first objective. In other words, because the transition to modern industrialism came as the result of an outward stimulus, and not as a natural development over many generations, and because the development of the country had previously been artificially stunted, there was no possibility of a sharp break with the past. Feudalism was left almost intact below to poison and warp Japan's future growth.

At the time of the Restoration, as has been shown, the embryonic bourgeoisie was too feeble to establish its own undivided rule and to sweep society clean of all the accumulated feudal rubbish. Today, grown to maturity, it cannot do so without sweeping itself away. The task of cleansing Japanese society therefore falls upon another class, the working class, in alliance with all the exploited elements of the village. In fact, so decayed and rotten is the entire economic and social structure that the Japanese masses can continue to survive only if they rise up and destroy the present order of things. The proletarian revolution, in cleansing the country of every last vestige of feudalism, and thus discharging a historic task which the bourgeoisie has been incapable of discharging, will be obliged to overpower and expropriate the bourgeoisie, prop and mainstay of all forms of backwardness and reaction, and proceed to reconstruct society along socialist lines. The "democratic" tasks of the Japanese revolution are thus intertwined with the socialist tasks of the proletariat, as they were in Russia. This is Japan's future road.

One final question remains to be briefly investigated: Did the ruling class, in the few years of intensive war preparations which led up to the Pacific outbreak, succeed in so altering the economic structure of Japan and the accompanying system of social relationships as to bring about a qualitative change and thus invalidate the analysis we have made? Is it, or is it not, still true that Japan is the weakest link in the imperialist chain?

Under the strong impression of Japan's smashing blow at Pearl Harbor, and the comparative ease with which her armed forces conquered Hongkong, Malaya, Burma, the Netherlands East Indies and the Philippines, bourgeois publicists united in a frantic chorus of self-criticism, the refrain of which was: "We underestimated Japan's strength!" And with the rather unseemly haste which seems to characterize them in such matters, the "Workers Party" joined in among the others. The fever of revisionism consumes the theoreticians of this camp. Under the impact of the Red Army's invasion of Finland, Poland and the Baltic States, they abandoned the Marxist definition of the Soviet Union as a "degenerated workers' state," discovering

that it was, after all, nothing but a "bureaucratic collectivist state." With the fever continuing and giving them no rest, they deserted China's struggle against Japanese imperialism, discovering that it had ceased to be progressive. Next they found that we had underestimated the strength of Japanese imperialism "along economic and military lines" (see article entitled "War in the Far Pacific," by Henry Judd, *New International*, May, 1942). Trotsky's penetrating estimate of imperialist Japan was then incontinently thrown out the window. Scientific analysis suddenly lost its meaning in the glare of Japan's initial military victories. Had these flimsy-minded "analysts" been politicians in Lenin's day, they would probably have been impressed by the initial might of the "Russian steamroller" and accused Lenin of "underestimating" Czarism.

Impressionistic appraisals, arrived at on the basis of episodic or conjunctural events, are no substitute in revolutionary politics for scientific analysis. Those who follow the former line mistake the accidental and incidental for the main substance and eventually lose themselves in a maze of trivialities. Caution is no part of the character of the petty-bourgeois revisionists. The weight of scientific evidence of Japan's great and fundamental weaknesses should have given them pause. But no: "Japan has won some victories! Japan could not have been as weak as we thought! We must revise our estimate!" It is precisely here that the revisionists revealed the distance they had traveled from Marxism. The very essence of the Marxist method is to proceed from a fundamental economic and sociological analysis in which secondary phenomena find their natural place. The revisionists abandoned this method and substituted for it their own brand of petty-bourgeois impressionism.

They realized, of course, that Japan's victories alone furnished no adequate basis for revision. And so, after some casting about, the theoretician of the *New International* found that Marxists had "ignored" certain important industrial and political changes that had taken place in Japan, changes which "have been proceeding roughly since the last war." In what did these changes consist? According to our theoretician there had been "a shift from agriculture and light, consumers' goods industry to heavy industry," while on the political side "secret societies and military castes that now fully dominate the life of the country have succeeded in canalizing and concentrating the nation's energies behind their sinister schemes." With thoroughly characteristic carelessness, the writer failed to indicate the actual *weight* of the industrial changes he alleged had taken place. And at least some of his readers and co-thinkers must have rubbed their eyes at the assertion that the imperialist bourgeoisie had lost power in Japan and been superseded by "secret societies and military castes."

Our analysis of Japanese economy refutes the assertion that—either beginning with the last war or later—there were any *qualitative* changes in the structure. The proportions between industry and agriculture, between small-scale industry and large-scale industry, and between heavy industry and light industry, have remained fairly constant. There is no evidence whatsoever that even in the last years before war broke in the Pacific there had been anything even slightly resembling a radical alteration in any of these respects. And if the Japanese bourgeoisie, in all the years of comparative peace, did not and could not effect such a change, it is quite certain that during the past two years, under the stress of war with powerful antagonists, it has not taken place. The feudal survivals unquestionably remain in all their force, and with them the eco-

conomic and social backwardness. It is not denied that frantic efforts were made to build up heavy industry and that there was some slight shift away from light industry. But the results of these efforts were pitifully inadequate and the basic proportions of the industrial economy—rather, the disproportions—have remained. Socially, the slight change that occurred meant increased hardships for the masses because of more shortages of consumers' goods, and a consequent heightening of class tension.

By their initial territorial conquests, the Japanese imperialists secured for themselves a wealth of diverse raw materials to which they scarcely had access before, but this has been counterbalanced by the loss of leading export and import markets. For her raw cotton, Japan must now rely upon China's poor crop and such stocks as she was able to accumulate before the war. There is not a single country where she can buy wheat formerly imported from Australia—except, perhaps, Soviet Russia. Nor has she any substitute for Australian wool. In Malaya she has secured some iron and coal, but not nearly enough to compensate for loss of American iron (Japan was getting the iron produced in the Philippines even before the war). There is and there can be no compensation for the loss of all the finished steel and heavy machinery which Japan used to import from America. When her pre-war inventory is exhausted or wears out, her own puny heavy industry will not be able to meet all requirements. Japan has lost her lucrative silk market and one can imagine the dire effects of this loss on the rural communities. Fairly abundant supplies of oil and rubber have come to Japan through the conquest of Burma, the Netherlands East Indies and Malaya. But of what use is such abundance in a country with such a poorly-developed automobile industry? In any case, it must be remembered that the advantage which Japan has secured by gaining access to large supplies of valuable raw materials is temporary and depends upon adequate and protected shipping between the conquered territories and the homeland. For some time Japan's vital sea lanes have been preyed upon by American submarines. If and when a steel ring of blockade is forged around Japan all advantage from these sources will disappear.

Japan remains weak and vulnerable and for the first time in her history is matched against foes mightier than herself. In the early part of her modern career she had little difficulty in defeating backward China in the war of 1894-5 and seizing Korea and Formosa. A decade later, still a backward country, she challenged a country of still greater backwardness and wrenched from Czarism the "rights and interests" of Russia in Manchuria. In the World War of 1914-18, feeling by no means sure of itself in a struggle between mighty contenders, Japanese imperialism played a minor role, being content to grab Germany's Far Eastern possessions. In 1931-32 Japan's armies had a comparative walkover in Manchuria against the demoralized and poorly-trained soldiers of the corrupt and feeble Chang Hsueh-liang. In the second war against China which she embarked upon in 1937, Japan ran into serious difficulties, but by and large succeeded in accomplishing her aims against the reactionary regime of Chiang Kai-shek. Today the case is far different. American and British imperialism are by no means the same thing as Czarist Russia or backward China. In the military campaigns of the past, Japan's weaknesses were more than counterbalanced by the weaknesses of her opponents. Now the relationships are reversed.

The campaigns which ended in the capture of the British,

Dutch and American colonies in the Pacific were no real test of the relationship of forces between Japan and her opponents. Not all of them combined obliged the Japanese imperialists to exert anything like their full strength, subject their system to heavy strain, and thus lay bare its organic frailties. In all these campaigns, moreover, Japan enjoyed the great advantages of surprise and initiative and relative closeness to the intended scenes of action. She also profited from the hatred of the native peoples of those territories for their white imperialist masters. Thus these easy conquests of Japan were no more a test of the inherent strength of Japanese imperialism than the early victories of the Russian armies on the Austro-Hungarian front in the first World War were a test of the inherent strength of Czarism. In asserting that imperialist Japan was afflicted with the gravest maladies, Trotsky did not at all mean to imply that it had no strength at all and was incapable of winning battles. Yet this is what the petty-bourgeois revisionists seem to think. The main forces of the imperialist contenders in the Pacific have not yet been brought into the fray. The fighting now going on is in the nature of skirmishing for position. When the day comes that Japan is compelled to throw everything she has into the struggle, to defend the homeland from blockade and attack, all the debilitating diseases of Japanese society will make themselves felt. The longer the real showdown fight is delayed, the more explosively will these weaknesses assert themselves once that fight has started, for Japanese imperialism is now living on borrowed time and making the deepest inroads into her slender reserves. Wide fissures will open in Japan's social structure. Military defeat and revolution will follow.

Trotsky's Analysis Valid

"*Japan is economically weaker than either Russia or America,*" wrote Trotsky back in 1933. This our analysis has proved to the hilt.

"*Japanese industry is incapable of assuring an army of several millions of arms and military supplies for a war of several years,*" he declared. Trotsky obviously did not mean by this the type of war which Japan later waged in China, in which she was never under the necessity of mobilizing anything like her full resources. He meant the type of all-out war which Japan will be compelled in the nearest future to wage against combined American and British imperialism, either of which is by itself economically superior to Japan and which together form a coalition of strength which Japan does not even begin to match. Our analysis of the structure and defects of Japanese economy amply bears out Trotsky's assertion.

"*The Japanese financial system cannot support the burden of military armaments even in time of peace,*" Trotsky told us. It was done, however, at the cost of terrible inflation and social distress, economic dislocation, a virtual stoppage of all national development, and the accompanying danger of social revolution, more imminent today than ever before.

"*The Japanese soldier, as a whole, isn't good enough for the new technology and the new tactics of war,*" Trotsky wrote. Let us consider: What can be the mechanical aptitude of Japan's soldiers taken as a whole when they are drawn from a country where primitive agriculture prevails, and where a great part of industry is represented by the small factory and domestic workshop in which even a small motor is a rarity and mechanical tools the same; a country which possesses but one automobile to every 800 members of the population; a country where in general there is no widespread use of mechanical devices which could have created the elements of a skill among

millions of the people in the handling of all the complicated instruments of modern war? And what about the physical condition of the soldier, a by no means inconsiderable factor in weighing the stamina of the Japanese fighter? Decades and generations of the cruellest privation have made of the Japanese a C-3 nation. In his book *Japan Defies the World*, published in 1938, James A. B. Scherer, who lived many years in Japan, reported:

On the physical side, the Japanese recruit is beginning to show alarming results from undernourishment as a child at home, and from overstrain at school. The army has recently published figures revealing that tuberculosis has increased nearly twenty times since 1890, there being now twenty-four tuberculosis cases in every thousand.

A Tokyo publication, *Contemporary Japan*, in its issue of September, 1936, gave the highly significant information that "for various reasons, forty percent of those examined (for the army) in 1935 had to be rejected. Equally significant is the fact that only a few short years ago the minimum height for recruits had to be reduced from 5 ft. 1 in. to 4 ft. 10½ ins. in order to get enough men. Long years of malnutrition and semi-starvation have stunted the Japanese people and left them physically debilitated. Trotsky was indubitably right: "The Japanese soldier, as a whole, isn't good enough for the new technology and the new tactics of war." The assertion will receive dramatic confirmation in the events now unfolding in the Pacific war theater.

Finally, Trotsky declared that: "*The Japanese people are strongly hostile to the government. The disunited nation could not be united by the aims of the conquest.*" The hostility of the masses to the Japanese ruling class and its government has been demonstrated over and over again. The brutal repressions, the unremitting hunting down of persons believed harboring "dangerous thoughts," the suppression of labor unions and political parties—all are eloquent testimony to the acuteness of class antagonisms. Thus far, one must assume, hatred of the exploiters has not been extended to include the "divine" monarchy which, together with a parliament which always was

a caricature of western parliamentary institutions, crowns the structure of imperialist rule. The corrupt parliament was thoroughly discredited long ago.

For a lengthy period during the Shogunate, the Japanese emperors were exiles in their own land. In the Restoration of 1868 the rising merchant class, in alliance with the anti-Tokugawa feudal clans, restored the emperor as an absolute ruler who deigned to "grant" the Constitution of 1889 (patterned, incidentally, after the rigid constitution of Bismarck's Prussia). These early forerunners of the imperialist bourgeoisie consciously fostered the idea of a theocratic and patriarchal emperor, hoping thereby to effect a "national unity" from above, rather than by fundamental reforms from below. It has not worked. The myth of a "divine" emperor, which is embraced in *Shinto*, the official state religion, has little real hold on the popular mind. For example, Professor Embree, an eminent authority on Japanese village life, tells us that the *Shinto* shrine "enters but slightly into the everyday life of the Japanese villagers—which means more than half the population. The inhabitants of Tokyo are virtually compelled to bow low when they pass in the neighborhood of the Imperial Palace, and to do obeisance when the emperor rides forth on ceremonial occasions. Soldiers in the field must also, on national holidays, turn their faces in the direction of the Imperial Palace and bow down in reverence.

How much real belief there is in the emperor's "divinity" and/or benevolence it is impossible to determine. That many follow the cult of emperor-worship is hardly to be doubted. Also not to be doubted is the great value of this cult to the parasitic ruling class, in that it tends to keep the people submissive. Nevertheless, emperor-worship—even if general—and national unity are not one and the same thing. The class struggle is very real. This much can be said with absolute certainty: When the masses discover the connection between the monarchy and their exploiters; when they learn, as did the Russian masses in their time, that the monarchy is simply a ruling-class device for keeping them docile and "loyal," the last dyke against social revolution in Japan will have been breached.

From the Arsenal of Marxism

Military Doctrine or Pseudo-Military Doctrinairism III

By LEON TROTSKY

EDITOR'S NOTE: In this issue we conclude the publication of Leon Trotsky's outstanding military pamphlet, *Military Doctrine or Pseudo-Military Doctrinairism*, first issued in the Soviet Union in 1921 by the Supreme Military Council of the USSR, and later reprinted by this same highest military body in the three volume edition of Leon Trotsky's monumental work: *How the Revolution Armed Itself* (Moscow, 1925. Vol. III, Book II, pp. 210-240). The pamphlet was originally written by Trotsky in Moscow, November 22 - December 5, 1921.

The first two sections of the pamphlet appeared in the February and March issues of *Fourth International*.

* * *

The recognition that it is inadmissible for the Red Army to defend fortified positions (Tukhachevsky) sums up correctly, in part and on the whole, the lessons of the last period, but it cannot, in any case, be recognized as an unconditional rule for the future. Defense of fortified positions demands fortress troops, or more correctly highly trained troops, fused by experience and confident of themselves. In the last period we only began to accumulate this. Every regiment as well as the entire army in general was a living improvisation. It was possible to assure enthusiasm and zeal—and we secured it but

it was impossible to create artificially the necessary routine, the automatic fusion of the neighboring sections and their confidence in mutually assisting one another. It is impossible to create traditions by decree. To a large extent this does exist now and we shall accumulate more and more as time goes on. Thereby we obtain the prerequisites both for better carrying out maneuverist operations and, if need arises, positional actions.

We must reject all attempts of building an absolute revolutionary strategy with the elements of our limited experience of three years of civil war during which army sections of a special quality engaged in combat under special conditions. Clausewitz has warned very correctly against this. He wrote:

"What is more natural than that the revolutionary war (of France) had its own way of doing things? And what theory could have included that peculiar method? The trouble is that such a manner, originating from a special case easily outlives its day, because it continues *unchanged* while circumstances imperceptibly undergo complete *change*. That is what theory should prevent by lucid and rational criticism. In 1806 the victims of this methodism were the Prussian generals . . ."

Alas! The Prussian generals are not the only ones who incline toward methodism, i.e., platitudes and stereotypes.

10. OFFENSE AND DEFENSE IN THE LIGHT OF THE IMPERIALIST WAR

It is proclaimed that the second specific trait of revolutionary strategy is *aggressiveness*. The attempt to build a doctrine upon this turns out to be all the more one-sided in view of the fact that during the epoch prior to the first World War the strategy of offense was nurtured in the by no means revolutionary general staffs and military academies of almost all the big countries of Europe. Contrary to what Comrade Frunze writes* the offense was (and formally still remains to this very day) the official doctrine of the French Republic. Jaures tirelessly fought against the doctrinairism of pure offense, counterposing to it the pacifist doctrinairism of pure defense. The sharp reaction against the traditional official doctrine of the French General Staff came as a result of the last war. It might not be amiss to cite here two graphic pieces of evidence. The French military journal, *Revue Militaire Francaise* (September 1, 1921, page 336) adduces the following proposition borrowed from the Germans and incorporated by the French General Staff in 1913 into "The Statute on the Conduct of Combat Actions by Large Units." This proposition reads:

"The lessons of the past have brought their fruits: *The French Army, returning to its traditions, henceforth does not permit of conducting operations under any law other than that of offense.*"

The military journal goes on to comment:

"This law shortly thereafter introduced into our statutes on general tactics and on the partial tactics of different kinds of arms was made the basis of our entire military science which was implanted in the minds both of the students of our General Staff as well as of our commanding corps through joint discussions, practical exercises on maps or in the field and, finally, through the so-called *major maneuvers*."

"This circumstance," continues the journal, "produced at the time such a passion for the famous law of offense that anyone daring to come out with any sort of reservation in favor of defense would have met with a very poor reception. In order to be a good student of the General Staff it was necessary, even if insufficient, to conjugate interminably the verb *to attack*."

The conservative newspaper *Journal des Debats* for October 5, 1921 launches a sharp criticism from the same standpoint

* *Krasnaya Nov*, No. 2.

upon the statutes on infantry maneuvers which were published this summer. This newspaper says:

"This splendid booklet begins with an exposition of a whole number of principles which are set forth as the official military doctrine for the year 1921. These principles are admirable; *but why do the compilers continue to pay tribute to an old custom, why do they devote the first page to extolling the offensive?* Why do they advance most prominently to the fore the following axiom: 'He who attacks first exercises an effect upon the psychology of the opponent by revealing a will much stronger than the will of the latter'?"

Having analyzed the experience of two outstanding moments of struggle at the French front, the newspaper then says:

"The offensive can have an effect only on the psychology of an opponent bereft of resources or one that is weak to such a degree as can never be taken for granted. On an opponent conscious of his own strength, the attack does not at all produce an oppressive effect. He does not at all take the enemy's offensive as the manifestation of a will stronger than his own. If the defense has been consciously thought out and prepared as was the case in August 1914 (by the Germans) or in July 1918 (by the French), then, on the contrary, the defensive side considers that its will is the stronger because *the opponent is falling into a trap*."

The military critic continues:

"You are committing a strange psychological error in fearing the passivity of the Frenchman and his infatuation for defense. The Frenchman is always ready to rush into an offensive, whether he attacks first or second—an offensive that is properly organized. But do not tell him any more Arabian fairy tales about a gentleman who attacks first, being possessed of a greater will."

"The mere fact of attack does not assure success. An attack leads to success when gathered for it are all possible resources which surpass the resources of the opponent. *For in the last analysis he always conquers who proves to be the stronger at the moment of combat.*"

An attempt can of course be made to reject this conclusion on the ground that it flows from the experience of positional warfare. As a matter of fact it flows from maneuverist warfare with even greater immediacy and obviousness, although in a somewhat different form. Maneuverist war is war of great spaces. In the attempt to destroy the enemy's living forces it does not place value on space. Its mobility is expressed not only during the offensive but also in retreat, which is only a shift of position.

11. AGGRESSIVENESS, INITIATIVE AND ENERGY

During the first period of the revolution the Red troops generally shunned the attack, preferring to fraternize and discuss. During the period when the revolutionary idea was spontaneously flooding the country, this method proved very effective. The Whites at that time tried, on the contrary, to force attacks in order to preserve their troops from revolutionary disintegration. Even after discussions ceased to be the most important resource of revolutionary strategy the Whites continued to be distinguished by an aggressiveness greater than ours. Only gradually did the Red troops acquire energy and confidence which secure the possibility of decisive actions. The subsequent operations of the Red Army are characterized in the extreme degree by maneuverability. Cavalry raids are the most graphic expression of this maneuverability. However, these raids were taught us by Mamontov. From the Whites we likewise learned how to make sudden break-throughs, enveloping operations, penetrations into the rear of the enemy. Let

us recall! In the initial period we thought to defend Soviet Russia against the White detachments by means of cordons, by holding on to each other. Only later on, having learned from the enemy, did we close our ranks into a fist and endow these fists with mobility; only later on did we place workers on horses and learn to execute large-scale cavalry raids. A little exertion of our memories already suffices to make clear how ungrounded, one-sided, and theoretically and practically false is the "doctrine" alleging that a maneuverist aggressive strategy is peculiar to a revolutionary army as such. In certain circumstances this corresponds most with a counter-revolutionary army which is compelled to make up for the lack of numbers by the activity of skilled cadres.

It is precisely in maneuverist warfare that the distinction between defense and offense is obliterated. Maneuverist war is a war of movement. The goal of movement is the destruction of the enemy's living forces, at a remove of 100 versts or so. The maneuver promises victory if it preserves the initiative in our hands. The fundamental traits of maneuverist strategy are *initiative and energy and not formal aggressiveness*.

The idea that at each given moment the Red Army resolutely took the offensive on the most important front while temporarily weakening itself on all other fronts; and that just this characterizes most graphically the Red Army's strategy during the civil war (see Comrade Varin's article) is correct in essence, but it is expressed one-sidedly and therefore does not provide all the necessary conclusions. While *assuming the offensive* on one front, considered by us at a given moment as the most important for political or military reasons, we weakened ourselves on other fronts, considering it possible to take the defensive and *to retreat* there. But, after all, this testifies precisely to the fact—which strangely enough is overlooked!—that into our general operational plans retreat entered as an indispensable link side by side with attack. The fronts on which we assumed the defensive and retreated were only segments of our general circular front. On these segments there fought the sections of the one and the same Red Army, its fighters and its commanders. And if all strategy is reducible to offense then it is self-evident that the troops on those fronts where we confined ourselves to defense and even to retreats must have been subjected to depression and demoralization. Into the work of educating troops there must obviously enter the idea that retreat is not flight, that there are strategic retreats required sometimes by the need to preserve the living forces intact, at other times in order to shorten the front, and sometimes in order to lure the enemy in deeper, all the more surely to crush him. And if a strategical retreat is legitimate, then it is incorrect to reduce all strategy to offense. This is especially clear and incontestable, let me repeat, precisely with regard to maneuverist strategy. A maneuver is obviously a complex combination of movements and blows, shifts of forces, marches and battles—with the ultimate aim of crushing the enemy. But if strategic retreat is excluded from the maneuver then obviously strategy will acquire an extremely unilateral character, that is, it will cease to be maneuverist.

12. NOSTALGIA FOR STABLE SCHEMAS

"What kind of army and for what tasks are we preparing?" asks Comrade Solomin. "In other words: What enemies threaten us and through what strategic paths (defense or offense) will we most quickly and economically cope with them?" (*Military Science and Revolution* No. 1, page 19.)

Such a formulation of the question testifies most vividly

that the thought of Solomin, the herald of a new military doctrine, is completely the captive of the methods and prejudices of old doctrinairism. The Austro-Hungarian General Staff (like many others) elaborated in the course of decades variants of war: variant "I" (against Italy); variant "R" (against Russia), along with corresponding combinations of these variants. In these variants the numerical strength of Italian and Russian troops, their armament, the conditions of mobilization, the strategic concentrations and deployments constituted magnitudes which were stable, if not constant. In this way, the Austro-Hungarian "military doctrine" basing itself on specific political suppositions was firm in its knowledge of what enemies threatened the empire of the Hapsburgs, and from one year to the next it pondered how to cope with the enemy most "economically". The thought of the members of the General Staffs of all countries ran in the fixed channels of "variants." The invention of improved armor plate by the future enemy was countered by strengthening the firepower of artillery and vice versa. Routinists educated in the spirit of these traditions would feel themselves quite out of place under the conditions of our military construction. "What enemies threaten us?"—that is, where are our General Staff variants of future wars? And through what strategic paths (defense or offense) are we preparing to realize the variants outlined in advance? Reading the article of Solomin I was involuntarily reminded of the comic figure of the lecturer on military doctrine, General Borisov of the General Staff. No matter what question was under discussion Borisov would invariably raise his two fingers in order to take the opportunity to say:

"This question can be decided only in conjunction with other questions of military doctrine, and for this reason it is first of all necessary to institute the post of Chief of General Staff."

From the womb of this Chief of General Staff, the tree of military doctrine would spring up and produce all the necessary fruits, approximately in the ancient manner of the fabled daughter of an oriental king. Solomin like Borisov yearns essentially for the lost paradise of the stable schemas of "military doctrine", when it was known ten and twenty years in advance who the enemies were, and how and whence they threatened. Solomin like Borisov needs a universal Chief of General Staff who would gather together the broken pieces of crockery, glue them together, put them on the shelf and paste labels on them: variant "I," variant "R," etc., etc. Perhaps Solomin could at the same time mention to us the universal mind he has in view? So far as we are concerned, we know—alas!—of no such mind and are even of the opinion that there can't be such a mind because the tasks set for it are unrealizable. Talking at every step about revolutionary wars and revolutionary strategy, Solomin has overlooked just this: *the revolutionary character of the present epoch*, which has brought about the complete disruption of stability both in international and internal relations. Germany no longer exists as a military power. Nevertheless French militarism finds itself compelled to follow feverishly the most insignificant events and changes in Germany's internal life and along her borders: What if Germany suddenly raises several million men? What Germany will do it? Will it perhaps be the Germany of Ludendorf? But maybe such a Germany would provide only the impulse which could prove fatal to the existing rotten semi-equilibrium and clear the road for the Germany of Liebknecht and Luxemburg? How many "variants" must the General

Staff have? How many war plans is it necessary to have in order to cope "economically" with all the dangers?

I have in my archives not a few reports, thick and thin and medium-sized, submitted by learned authors who with polite pedagogical patience have explained to us that a self-respecting power must institute definite, regular relations, establish in advance its possible enemies, acquire suitable allies or, at least, neutralize all those that can be neutralized. For—as these reporters explained—it is impossible to prepare for future wars "in the dark;" it is impossible to determine either the numerical strength of the army, or its branches, or their disposition. Under these reports I do not recall seeing the signature of Solomin, but his ideas were there. All the authors, sad to say, were from the school of Borisov.

International orientation, including international-military orientation is more difficult nowadays than in the epoch of the Triple Alliance and the Triple Entente. But there is nothing one can do about it: The epoch of the greatest convulsions in history, both military and revolutionary, has destroyed certain variants and stereotyped patterns. There cannot be any stable, traditional, conservative orientation. Orientation must be vigilant, mobile, and expeditious, or, if you prefer, maneuverist. Expedition does not mean aggressive, but it does mean strictly corresponding to today's combination of international relations and concentrating the maximum forces on the tasks of today.

Under the existing international conditions orientation demands far greater mental skill than was required for the elaboration of the conservative propositions of military doctrine during the past epoch. And, in addition, this work has to be done on a far broader scale and with the employment of far more scientific methods. The fundamental work in evaluating the international situation and the tasks that flow from it for the proletarian revolution and the Soviet Republic is being fulfilled by the party, by its collective thought; and the directive forms are given this work by the party Congresses and its Central Committee. We have in mind not only the Russian Communist Party but also our international party. Solomin's demands for compiling a catalogue of our enemies and determining whether we shall do the attacking and just whom we shall attack appear so pedantic in comparison to the work of evaluating all the forces of the revolution and counter-revolution as they now exist and evolve that has been accomplished by the latest World Congress of the Communist International! What other "doctrine" do you need?

Comrade Tukhachevsky submitted a proposal to the Communist International that an International General Staff be established and attached to it. This proposal was of course incorrect; it did not correspond to the situation and the tasks formulated by the Congress itself. If it was possible to create the Communist International only after strong Communist organizations were formed in the most important countries, then this holds even more for an International General Staff which can arise only on the basis of national general staffs of several proletarian states. So long as this remains lacking an International Staff would inescapably be transformed into a caricature. Tukhachevsky found it necessary to deepen his error by publishing his letter at the end of his interesting book, "The War of the Classes." This error pertains to the same order as the headlong theoretical onslaught launched by Comrade Tukhachevsky against the formation of militia which he alleges, stands in contradiction to the Third International. Let us note in passing that the tendency to attack without the proper safeguards

generally constitutes the weak side of Comrade Tukhachevsky, one of the most gifted of our young military workers.

But even without an International Staff which does not correspond to the situation and which is therefore speculative, the World Congress itself, as the representative of revolutionary proletarian parties did accomplish—and through its Executive Committee continues to accomplish—the fundamental ideological work of the "General Staff" of the world revolution: keeping a tally of friends and enemies, neutralizing the vacillators with a view to later attracting them to the side of the revolution, evaluating the changing situation, determining the urgent tasks and concentrating efforts on a world scale upon these tasks.

The conclusions which derive from this orientation are very complex. They cannot be squeezed into a few General Staff variants. But such is the character of our epoch. The superiority of our orientation consists precisely in this, that it corresponds to the character of the epoch and its relations. In accordance with this orientation we align ourselves in our military policy as well. At the present time it is actively vigilant, defensive and preparatory in character. We are above all concerned in assuring with regard to our military ideology, our methods and our apparatus a flexibility so strong as to enable us at each turn of events to concentrate our main forces in the main direction.

13. THE SPIRIT OF DEFENSE AND THE SPIRIT OF OFFENSE

But, after all, Solomin objects "it is impossible at one and the same time to educate in the spirit of defense and in the spirit of offense." (*Loc. cit.*, page 22.) Now, this is sheer doctrinairism. Why can't this be done? Who said that it can't be done? Where and by whom is this proved? By no one and nowhere, for it is false to the core. The entire art of our military construction (and not only military construction) in Soviet Russia consists in combining the international revolutionary-offensive tendencies of the proletarian vanguard with the revolutionary-defensive tendencies of the peasant masses and even of broad circles of the working class itself. This combination corresponds to the entire international situation. By explaining its significance to the advanced elements in the Red Army we thereby teach them to combine defense with offense correctly not only in the strategical but also in the revolutionary-historical sense of the word. Does Solomin think perhaps that this tends to extinguish "spirit"? Both he and his co-thinkers hint at this. But this is already simon-pure Left SR'ism! The clarification of the essence of the international and domestic situation and an active, "maneuverist" adaptation to it cannot serve to extinguish spirit, but only to temper it.

Or is it perhaps impossible in a *purely military* sense to prepare the army both for defense and offense? But that, too, is nonsense. In his book Tukhachevsky underscores the idea that it is excluded, or almost excluded for the defense in civil war to assume positional stability. From this Tukhachevsky draws the correct conclusion that under such conditions defense, like offense, must of necessity be active and maneuverist in character. If we happen to be too weak for attack, then we strive to detach ourselves from the embraces of the enemy in order later to gather ourselves into a fist and to strike at the enemy's most vulnerable spot. Erroneous to the point of absurdity is Solomin's assertion to the effect that the army is moulded for a specialty—either for defense or for offense. In

reality the army is educated and trained for combat and conquest. Defense and offense enter as variable moments into the combat, all the more a maneuverist combat. He conquers who is able to defend himself well when it is necessary to be on the defensive and to attack well when it is necessary to attack. This is the only healthy training which we are obliged to give our army, first and foremost, in the person of its commanding staff. The rifle with bayonet is good both for defense and offense. The same thing applies to the fighter's hands. The fighter himself and the branch of the army to which he belongs must be prepared for combat, for self-defense, for resisting the enemy, for annihilating the enemy. That regiment is best able to attack which is best able to defend itself. Good defense is accessible only to a regiment that has the desire and ability to attack. The statutes must teach how to fight, and not incite to attack.

Revolutionism is a spiritual state and not a ready-made answer to all questions. It can give enthusiasm, it can assure zeal. Enthusiasm and zeal are the most valuable conditions for success but not the only ones. Orientation is indispensable; training is indispensable. And as for doctrinaire blinders—away with them!

14. THE IMMEDIATE TASKS AHEAD

But aren't there in the complex intermeshing of international relations certain outstanding, clear and definitive elements in accordance with which we ought to align ourselves in our military work in the course of the next few months?

There are such elements and they speak far too loudly for themselves to be considered secrets. In the West there are Poland and Rumania; behind their back stands France. In the Far East there is Japan. Around and close to the Caucasus—England. I shall dwell here only on the question of Poland, as the clearest and most intelligible.

Briand, Minister-President of France, has announced in Washington that we are presumably preparing to attack Poland in the spring. Not only every commander and Red soldier but every worker and peasant in our country knows that this is unadulterated balderdash. Briand himself of course knows it, too. Up to now we have paid so big a price to the big and little bandits to get them to leave us in peace, even if temporarily, that it is possible to talk about any "plan" on our part to assault Poland only as a cover for some fiendish plot. What is our actual orientation with regard to Poland?

We are proving to the Polish popular masses firmly and persistently not in words but in deeds—and first of all by the strictest fulfillment of the Riga treaty—that we want peace and are helping in this way to preserve it.

Should the Polish military clique, incited by the French stock-market clique, nevertheless descend upon us in the spring, the war will be on our side both in essence and in popular consciousness, genuinely defensive in character. Precisely this clear and definitive consciousness of our rightness in a war foisted upon us will act to weld together all the elements in the army most closely: the advanced worker—Communist as well as the specialist who is non-party but who is devoted to the Red Army as well as the backward peasant-soldier; and thereby best prepare our army for the initiatory and self-sacrificing offense in this defensive war. Whoever takes this policy to be indefinite and conditional; whoever remains unclear concerning "what kind of army and for what tasks we are preparing"; whoever thinks that it is "impossible at one and the same time to educate in the spirit of defense and in the spirit

of offense"—understands nothing at all, and would best keep quiet and not hinder others!

But if such a complex combination of factors is to be observed in the world situation, then how can we nevertheless orient ourselves practically in our military construction? What should be the numerical strength of the army? In what sort of units? With what dislocations?

All these questions do not permit of any absolute solution. It is possible to speak only of empirical approximations and of timely rectifications, depending upon changes in the situation. Only hopeless doctrinaires believe that answers to questions of mobilization, formation, training, education, strategy and tactics can be obtained deductively, in a formal logical manner from the premises of a sacred "military doctrine." What we lack are not magical, all-saving military formulas but a more careful, attentive, precise, vigilant and conscientious work resting on those foundations which we have already firmly lodged. Our statutes, our programs, our army formations are imperfect. This is unquestionable. There is an overabundance of omissions, misstatements, inclusions of things that are outlived, and of others that are incomplete. It is necessary to correct, improve, render more precise. But how and from what standpoint should this be done?

We are told that it is necessary to put the doctrine of offensive warfare as the basis for review and rectification. Solomin writes:

"This formula signifies the most decisive (!) turn (in the construction of the Red Army); it is necessary to review all (!) the opinions we now hold, to carry out a complete (!) re-evaluation of values from the standpoint of passing over from the purely defensive strategy to that of offense. The education of the commanding staff, the preparation of the individual fighter . . . armament—all this (!) must henceforth proceed under the sign of offense . . ." (*Loc. Cit.*, page 22.)

He also writes:

"Only if such a single plan is given will the reorganization of the Red Army, which has already begun, emerge from a condition of formlessness, dispersion, disharmony, vacillation and the absence of a clearly conscious goal."

Solomin's language is, as we see, rigidly aggressive, but his assertions are absurd. Formlessness, vacillation and dispersion exist in his own mind. Objectively, our work contains difficulties and practical mistakes. But there is no dispersion, no vacillation, no disharmony. The army will not permit the Solomins to incorporate their vaporings on organizational and strategical matters and in this way introduce vacillation and dispersion.

Our statutes and programs must be reviewed not from the standpoint of the doctrinaire formula of pure offensive but from the standpoint of our experience of the last four years. It is necessary to read, discuss and check the statutes at conferences of our commanding personnel. It is necessary to juxtapose the still fresh recollections of combat actions, major and minor alike, with the formulations in the statutes; and each commander must consciously ask himself whether or not the words correspond to the deeds, and if not, just where do they diverge. To gather this organized experience, draw its balance sheet, appraise it in the center by applying the strategic, tactical, organizational, political criteria of experience of a higher order; to cleanse our statutes and programs of everything that is outlived and superfluous; to bring them closer to the army and to instill in the army the feeling of how indispensable they are and to what measure they can replace crude handiwork—here is really the big, urgent immediate task!

* * *

We possess an orientation international in its scope and of a great historical sweep. One of its sections has already passed the test of experience; another section is now being verified and is meeting the test. The Communist vanguard is sufficiently assured of revolutionary initiative and aggressive spirit. We do not need verbal, noisy innovations with regard to new military doctrines, nor proclamations of them with the beating of drums; what we need is the systematization of experience, improvement of organization, attention to little details.

The gaps in our organization, our backwardness and poverty, especially in the field of technology, must not be erected by us into a *credo*. Instead we must do everything in our power to eliminate them, seeking to approach in this respect the imperialist armies which all deserve to be crushed but which nevertheless possess certain superiorities: rich aviation, abundant means of communication, well trained and carefully selected commanding personnel, precision in calculating resources, maintenance of correct reciprocal relations. This is of course only an organization-technical integument. Morally and politically the bourgeois armies are disintegrating or heading toward disintegration. The revolutionary character of our army, the class homogeneity of our commanding personnel and

of the mass of the fighters, the Communist leadership—here is where our most powerful and unconquerable force lies. None can take it away from us. All our attention must now be directed not toward a fantastic reconstruction but toward improvement and greater precision. To supply sections properly with food; not to permit products to rot; to cook good cabbage soup; to teach how to destroy body vermin and to keep clean; to correctly conduct training exercises, doing it less within four walls and more under the open sky; to prepare political discussions intelligently and concretely; to furnish each Red soldier with a service book and keep good records; to teach how to oil rifles and grease boots; to teach how to shoot; to help the commanding personnel thoroughly assimilate the statute regulations concerning maintaining communications, gathering intelligence, making reports, maintaining guards; to learn and to teach how to adapt oneself to various localities; to wrap one's feet correctly in pieces of cloth to keep them from getting rubbed raw; once again to grease boots—such is our program for the next winter and the coming spring.

Should anyone, on a holiday occasion, choose to call this practical program a military doctrine, he will not be held to account.

The National Question in Ireland

From the Theses of the Irish Trotskyists

EDITOR'S NOTE: For the information of the readers of *Fourth International* we reprint below abstracts from the theses on the National Question prepared by the Irish Trotskyists. It has just arrived in this country. For lack of space it was impossible to reproduce the document in its entirety. The omitted passages and sections are noted in the text.

* * *

Vested Interests and the Border

Britain, far from deriving super-profits out of her occupation of the six North-Eastern counties of Ireland, suffers a considerable financial loss; for, while it is true that there are British business-men with interests in Ulster, it is also certain that these interests would be completely compensated, and a residue retained, if the British Exchequer were to withdraw its subsidies towards the upkeep of the swollen Orange bureaucracy and the maintenance of social services in Ulster at the British level. Even in wartime Ulster is a depressed area. Despite the 40,000 skilled workers driven to find work in British war industries there are still 25,000 officially unemployed out of a total population of a million and a quarter. Peacetime unemployment is considerably higher than in any other part of the United Kingdom. Several million pounds sterling are mulcted annually from the English taxpayer for the upkeep of the Orange puppet statelet.

The fact is, however, that British overhead expenses in Ulster fall into precisely the same category as do grants to the armed forces, or the police—even when these expenses take the form not of direct outlays on behalf of the colossal Ulster police force, and other sections of the State, but of maintenance of social services and the provision of orders to Ulster industry during the “normal” depression periods. Britain maintains its garrison in Ulster, not primarily as a means of coercing the Irish people, but to counteract the possibility of a rival imperialism establishing a military bridgehead in the British Isles. The occupation engenders sentiments of revolt, however, and

necessitates the preservation of “order,” i.e., the coercion of the nationalist population . . .

The Orange bosses and bureaucrats, for their part, need to have their fingers directly dipped in England's economic pie. That is why they are given representation in the Westminster Parliament. At a time when great monopolies largely derive their super-profits by a barely-concealed plundering of the Exchequer, and when worth-while orders come only to those directly in the swim, it is a life and death question for Ulster capitalists to maintain a direct connection with the British State. That is why all De Valera's promises of virtual autonomy for the North within a United Ireland, if only Stormont would agree to sever its direct connection with Britain, have gone unheeded. Without State representation at Westminster their industries would die, for out of sight is out of mind. If Britain sacrificed them in a deal with De Valera they would look for a new imperialist paymaster. Orange “loyalty” has its world market price.

* * *

Eire and the Border

As her neutrality in the war underscores, Eire is *de facto* a sovereign Irish Republic, notwithstanding the slim pretense of British Dominion status kept up by Westminster. British Liberalism bought out the absentee landlord class (with the Irish peasants' own money to be sure!) to stave off a revolutionary seizure of the land. The Easter Week rising and the Anglo-Irish war brought an end to the foreign occupation of the South. Under the De Valera regime fiscal autonomy has enabled a host of petty manufacturing industries to struggle into being. Saddled with exorbitant interest rates on capital borrowed from British investors, and dependent on British monopolies for all primary materials, costs have been excessively high; and the dwindling, impoverished population cannot provide a market sufficient to absorb at a profitable level the

output of labor-saving machinery in use elsewhere. Already the pathetic "industrialization" period, begun only a few years ago, is at a close.

A chronic unfavorable balance of trade, rapidly dwindling foreign assets, a falling birthrate, mass unemployment and wholesale immigration to England revealed that the incurable maladies of world capitalist economy were eating at the vitals of the new sovereign statelet of Eire. The Second World War has only accentuated this disintegration. Today there are a hundred thousand unemployed within the 26 counties of Eire; while scores of thousands of others have been forced by unemployment into British war industries or the British armed forces. The export of men, sending home part of the proceeds of their earnings, has come to rival the agricultural export industry in importance.

Irish bourgeois nationalism had already exhausted its mission as a vehicle for the development of the productive forces before any real development took place. International socialism alone can ensure a fresh upswing in production for Ireland; and it is precisely for this reason that the one uncompleted task of the bourgeois revolution, national unification, can only be solved by the proletarian revolution. The inclusion of the six Ulster counties within the framework of the national state would only hasten the decline of the already stagnant heavy industries of the North without furthering the development of Southern industry to any appreciable degree. National unification under the capitalist system, by plunging the hostile Protestant proletariat of the Northern industries into permanent unemployment, would either lead straight to the victory of the social revolution or to fascism. There could be no middle way . . .

At times in the recent past the nationalist fervor of the common people of Ireland must have seemed dim, or dead, not only to the casual observer but to the workers themselves. But it only lay dormant, ready to blaze into life again. For the famous patriotism of the Irish people is something more than a traditional hangover, or a state of mind induced by bourgeois propaganda. It is an emotion of revolt, engendered by centuries of national degradation, kept alive by the knowledge that yesterday's powerful imperialist oppressor still occupies a part of the national territory and may yet again lay a claim to the South of Ireland.

When Tom Williams was hanged by the Stormont regime last year, flags were flown at half mast throughout Eire, the shops of the main Dublin thoroughfares closed as a mark of respect and protest rallies, organized by the Reprieve Committee, were held throughout the country. The threat to conscript Ulster in 1941 created a crisis in Eire overnight and a wave of anti-British sentiment swept over the Southern workers. The workers' patriotism is their pride in their age-old fight against imperialism. This is an ennobling sentiment, notwithstanding the poisonous bourgeois chauvinism mixed into it by the capitalist politicians and their reformist and Stalinist hangers-on who at all times seek to manipulate the freedom-loving aspirations of the workers for their own reactionary ends.

The rich ranchers and the rentiers are pro-British. The small farmers and the basic section of the bourgeoisie which is interested in production and trade for the domestic market look to England with strong forebodings. Britain is still a bourgeois democracy and it is not so easy just yet to get down to seizing the Eire ports; for, besides the huge numbers of Irish in British industry and the Army, the English workers

in uniform would not go willingly into an aggression against the "almost English" people of Eire.

* * *

Catholic Church's Mass Basis

If Ireland has hitherto proved to be the most impregnable of all the Vatican's citadels, this is not due to accident. During centuries of national degradation the social classes were mixed into a common Catholic cement by the British, who persecuted the native Irish ostensibly on account of their Catholicism . . . Sentiment against the foreign imperialists was always uppermost and the masses encased themselves in the rituals and doctrines of the mother Church as in a suit of armor in lieu of more material means of defense. Catholic fanaticism the more easily became synonymous with the spirit of outraged nationality because, unlike in the other countries, the Irish priesthood never directly functioned as an exploiter.

For 700 years Ireland was a colony. Against this, for barely two decades an uncertain independence has lasted for the South; and, during this time, the fledgling Eire statelet has been sedulously inculcating a psychology of national exclusiveness among the masses by fostering all those ideological distinctions and cultural pursuits which set the Irish apart from the neighboring English nationality. It is well to remember in this connection that in its long-drawn-out trade war with British the Fianna Fail Government received the backing not only of the bourgeois and peasant interests involved, but also of the majority of the workers. So long as imperialism remains intact in the North and a serious threat to the South, and until the workers find a revolutionary socialist leadership, we will have to reckon with the power and prestige of the priesthood . . .

On the surface the Catholic Church looks unassailable. Yet its coming eclipse can be discerned precisely where the appearance of strength seems greatest. A picture of Christ on the Cross pinned to a Falls Road window is a demonstration against the imperialist *status quo*, but the Church cannot lead the change. The republican workers will throw away their icons as soon as the ideals of socialist internationalism begin to take shape among them.

To expose the treacherous role of the allegedly neutral Christian ideology is an essential part of the struggle to develop a revolutionary consciousness among the workers . . .

The cowardly Eire Labor Party, on the other hand, has consistently pursued a shameful policy of appeasement towards the Catholic Church, even going so far as to claim that its program is in conformity with the Pope's Charter of Labor.

The Church will be a colossal weight on the side of counter-revolution. It is one of the main propaganda tasks of our movement to explain this to the workers. Every insolent interference with the affairs of the labor movement must be combated. In particular the role of the Vatican in the present European situation must be mercilessly exposed. It would be treason to socialism to keep silent on grounds of expediency.

In every important strike the bourgeois press is forced to drop its spurious neutrality. So likewise, in the hundred-and-one minor sorties leading up to the decisive revolutionary struggle, hunger marches, strikes, during every *spate* of which the bourgeoisie and its henchmen will take panic and cry "wolf," the role of the clergy will become more and more obvious . . .

It is reformism, holding out no hope of escape from the drab routine of poverty, that turns the backward masses over to conservatism and clericalism and in a crisis makes them

storm-troopers of the reaction. Notwithstanding its tirades against the Stalinist bureaucracy, to which it attributes the original sin of the Bolshevik Revolution, it is precisely thanks to the opportunist politics of Stalin that the Papacy is still a world power despite its notorious role in Spain and elsewhere.

However, the era of Stalinism and reformism is drawing to a close. The great class struggles impending throughout the world will find an echo in the remotest corners of rural Ireland. Certainly reactionary clericalism will still retain a formidable following, but the majority will be won for the revolution.

* * *

The Nationalist Workers

At present the living standards of even the Southern workers depend in the last resort upon the British Empire. It is the Colonial Empire which bolsters up profits, salaries and wages in England, thus permitting the absorption at a relatively high price level of Eire's agricultural export, on which the remainder of the economic structure rests. Freedom of access to the British market and state independence, especially in regard to fiscal policy, are the twin needs of the Eire bourgeoisie and, so long as they cannot surmount capitalism, also of the workers. The Northern nationalist workers, on the other hand, are as economically dependent upon direct incorporation into the United Kingdom as are the Protestant workers. In the days of self-sufficient peasant tillage the Catholic masses had an economic stake in fighting for an Ireland freed from the British grip on the land. Today, however, when all trades and occupations draw their life blood from the heavy industries which only survive by virtue of Ulster's political unity with Britain, a bourgeois United Ireland could only bring pauperization to its most ardent partisans—the Northern nationalist workers . . .

The Tory regime at Stormont is the oldest in Europe—preceding Mussolini's assumption of power it has outlasted the Roman Duce. The main props of its rule are: (a) its mass following amongst the Protestants based on Britain's financial bribes and the specter of Republicanism; (b) constituency gerrymandering; (c) the Civil Authority (Special Powers) Acts which give almost unlimited power to the colossal army of police.

Ireland was partitioned by the British in such a way as to assure the Tory Unionist Party of a fool-proof majority over its nationalist opponents. Stormont in its turn gerrymandered the six county electoral seats so effectively that the nationalist voters can only obtain a mere fraction of the representation to which their numbers entitle them. In consequence abstention from the vote has become a tradition in many Republican areas, so much so that a Unionist can get into Stormont by mustering the merest handful of Protestant votes.

Only a few of the far-reaching powers vested in the Civil Authority can be listed here:—

(a) By police proclamation publications may be banned, meetings and demonstrations forbidden and a state of curfew imposed.

(b) The police hold the right to enter and search premises without a warrant and to confiscate or destroy property.

(c) Arrest and internment may be ordered on suspicion.

(d) Habeas corpus is suspended and internees and their relatives may be prevented from either seeing or communicating with one another.

(e) One of the most sinister clauses relates to the right of the Civil Authority to withhold the right of inquest.

A jailed or interned Republican is automatically disquali-

fied from obtaining his family allowances under the Unemployment Insurance Acts on the grounds that he is not available for work. A former political prisoner or Republican suspect finds it extremely difficult to keep employment owing to the police practice of warning employers against them. An isolated incident may kindle with unexpected suddenness into a crisis during the course of which hundreds of suspects are rounded up and scores of families, deprived of a breadwinner, are menaced by the specters of hunger and debt. This explains why the barometer of parliamentary contests registers such startling overnight changes . . .

At the last Labor Party Conference it was resolved that the party should take the initiative in inaugurating a Northern Ireland Council of Civil Liberties. This is a welcome development from the days of Midgley. The Trotskyist movement has conducted a long campaign for the setting up of such a Council to combat the injustices meted out under the Special Powers Acts. Militants in the Labor Party, and the workers generally, must see to it that this decision is really implemented by the building of a genuine Civil Liberties Council supported by and representative of every section of the labor movement. Militants in the Eire labor movement must demand similar measures.

By bringing into the clear light of day the full, unimpeachable facts on every case of arbitrary search, arrest and intimidation; by demanding full facilities for enquiry into every case of alleged police intimidation and brutality; by spreading information regarding the unsanitary overcrowded conditions under which political prisoners live; by exposing the farce of the police-influenced Internees' Appeals Tribunal; and, in short, by making a public display of samples of the British "democracy" being meted out to hundreds of Ulster citizens, a Civil Liberties Council has a revolutionary role to perform. It can hasten the downfall of the regime. It can set on fire the conscience of the whole community, shaming and shocking even the Protestant petty bourgeoisie into protest.

The fight for civil liberties is an integral and immensely important aspect of the class struggle. It is instructive, therefore, to perceive from this angle how low the Stalinist renegades have sunk in their clownish eagerness to act as sycophants to Tory Unionism. Stalinist policy, as is well known, is to give undivided attention to "democracy's" battle against Hitler. However, the tyranny endured by the Ulster minority is too near at hand and affects too large a number of workers to be passed over in silence. At their recent Congress, therefore, the Stalinists passed a resolution "demanding" an end to [religious] sectarian discrimination in the hiring of labor and "insisting" on various other laudable changes in the direction of greater justice for the Catholic workers. However, this was a resolution for the record only. Civil liberties cannot be wrested from the vested interests without the maximum effort of a united proletariat, but complete and unconditional independence from the Orange capitalist state is the prerequisite for proletarian unity. The Stalinists, however, are the most steadfast and unswerving supporters of the Orange Tory Cabinet.

Actually, the Stalinist Party is completely opposed to the extension of civil liberties. Its recipe for ending discrimination against the Catholic workers clearly amounts to this: "Put the Protestant workers in the same boat: abolish civil liberties for them also!" This can clearly be seen from the March 13, 1943 issue of their paper *Unity*. In a front page editorial, while wholeheartedly professing agreement on the need for special powers, they permitted themselves to indulge in a light

criticism of the sectarian character of the Civil Authority (Special Powers) Acts, and—without forthrightly demanding the abolition of these acts—suggested that the British Emergency Powers Act would be a “fairer” weapon in the hands of the Government. This is equivalent to a demand to abolish hanging in favor of electrocution. * * *

The Communist Party of Ireland

Protestant-Republican working class unity can be forged only on the anvil of the class war. National independence will be won either as a by-product of the Irish and British revolutionary struggles or not at all. Finally, only the victory of socialism on a world scale will end national oppression forever. The Trotskyist movement alone fights under the banner of international socialism and therefore, alone of all parties and tendencies represents the true national interests of the Irish people. It alone is implacable in its hostility alike to imperialism and to all forms of capitalist rule; and alone is the enemy of every manifestation of bourgeois ideology within the ranks of the working class. On the other hand, the Communist Party of Ireland—Irish, as it is Communist, in name only—confuses, disorients and increases the disunity of the working class. The Stalinist Party is never permitted to absolve itself from a sense of responsibility towards the capitalist system. This follows from its role as a satellite of the Kremlin bureaucracy.

The Kremlin bureaucracy is fully aware that the social stability of the capitalist countries is a prerequisite for its own plunderous rule over the Soviet working masses. World revolution constitutes an even greater threat to its vested interests than world imperialism; for while it is possible to hope that the antagonisms dividing the great powers will always drive one of the camps of imperialist predators into seeking an understanding with the Kremlin, no hope whatever can be entertained of the revolutionaries making their peace with bureaucratic tyranny. A revolution in any one of the advanced countries would act as an inspiration and a signal to the Soviet masses to break asunder the chains of Stalinism. Thus, under the totalitarian Stalinist regime, the Soviet Union is as deeply involved as any of the capitalist countries in the jugglery of power politics.

It follows, therefore, that either the Stalin regime will be in the camp of British imperialism or working in collaboration with its (Britain's) imperialist enemies; and that the Communist Party of Ireland will be committed either to supporting the British ruling class or to demagogically opposing them. However, opposition to British imperialism does not mean for the Stalinist Party support for an independent proletarian struggle for national and social freedom. It simply means that an alliance with the Orange dictatorship on the essentials of the Tory program, is replaced by an attempted alliance with the bourgeois nationalist organizations on *their* program. One form of “national united front” takes the place of another. That is all.

The social set-up in Northern Ireland undoubtedly offers the Stalinists admirable scope for the creation *on paper* of national fronts to suit all purposes. In reality of course either form of the so-called national front is of an equally fictitious nature. This is not to imply that the fiction is without its effects; but these are wholly on the side of sectarian disunity. What happens is this: each fresh turn-about of the Stalinists—not only leaves the caste bigotry of the workers unchanged, but actually leads to a strengthening of the bonds of ideology uniting them to the bourgeois politicians belonging to their own particular side of the community. For instance, during the

period of the Stalin-Hitler pact the Communist Party's flirtation with the nationalist organizations had the double consequence of sustaining the worst illusions of the Republican proletariat and, at the same time, hopelessly alienating the Protestant workers. Among the Protestants the Stalinist Party has registered formidable gains over the past two years. Membership has probably increased seven or eight-fold. These new recruits consist mainly of worker and petty-bourgeois elements completely new to politics; drawn towards the “left” out of admiration for the Red Army but, most of them, unemancipated from the old jingoist mentality. On the other hand the strike-breaking role of the Stalinist Party has alienated most of the experienced industrial militants among the Protestants.

In Eire, following upon Hitler's invasion of the Soviet Union, the Communist Party, afraid to proclaim openly the new policy foisted upon it by the Kremlin—the ending of Eire neutrality—quietly dissolved itself into the Labor Party. Hitherto, despite its imposing record of treachery, Stalinism has always brazenly tried to justify itself in the eyes of the workers. In this single episode is contained the whole preceding twenty years of Stalinist degeneration; its political bankruptcy and its moral spinelessness. The greatness of Bolshevism consisted not merely in its capacity to withstand the material blows of the reaction but even more, to swim against the current of popular feeling. Stalinism gives a few short grunts and then sinks to the bottom. * * *

Nationalism and Socialism

The fundamental tasks of nationalism awaiting the solution of the approaching revolution are: (1) the healing of the sectarian breach; (2) the winning of national independence from British imperialism; and (3) the ending of partition. These form an inseparable trinity. None are realizable as isolated aims in themselves, or possible of attainment except by means of the socialist revolution. Conversely, the socialist movement can turn its back on the problems of nationalism only at the price of prostration before capitalism; for a proletariat divided within itself cannot seize state power. National tasks and social tasks are thus inextricably woven together.

The national question is a social question and, moreover, one of the largest magnitude. Hitherto, the prevailing tendency among socialists has been to regard the intrusion of Orange and nationalist banners into the arena of the class struggle as a complication of an exclusively detrimental nature to the labor movement; as a plague of ideologies, in fact. Most certainly this judgment holds true under all circumstances so far as Orangeism is concerned. On the other hand, the unsolved national question—which is not at all a religious sectarian issue from the standpoint of the nationalist workers—is not necessarily a brake upon the class struggle but, under favorable circumstances, can act as a dynamo upon it, causing violent accelerations of tempo.

Finally, the best Irish nationalists will always be the Trotskyists; for Trotskyism's conceptions of international solidarity and socialist cooperation alone correspond to the national needs of the Irish people. An isolated proletarian dictatorship, even assuming it were not militarily overthrown, could not in the long run prevent a resurgence of sectarian disunity; for ideology cannot take the place of bread indefinitely. With the prolongation of hunger and poverty the wheels of the revolution would begin to revolve backwards. It is only within a system of world socialist economy that the unity of the Irish people will become indestructible for all time.

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You have written editorials in your magazine upon the unjust imprisonment of the 18 leaders and members of the Socialist Workers Party and of Local 544-CIO Truckdrivers Union, who are now behind bars in three Federal penitentiaries.

These 18 Minneapolis Case prisoners were tried and convicted under the Smith "Gag" Act, not for anything they did, but for their socialist ideas and opinions. Three times the U. S. Supreme Court refused to review the case which would have tested for the first time the constitutionality of this viciously anti-labor act. Thus by these imprisonments, people can now be deprived of their freedom to think and speak—in defiance of our guarantees under the Bill of Rights.

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(Signed)

JAMES T. FARRELL, Chairman

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