

THE NEW

INTERNATIONAL

A MONTHLY ORGAN OF REVOLUTIONARY MARXISM

**Twenty Years of the Russian
Revolution** By Max Shachtman

**The Left Wing Convention and
The Founding of the New Party**

**The Communist Manifesto 90
Years After** By Leon Trotsky

**The Question of Unity in the
C.I.O. and A.F. of L.** By B. J. Widick

**The Anarchists in the Spanish
Civil War** By Felix Morrow

**The Stalinist Liquidation of
Soviet China** By Li Fu-jen

**John Brown, A Revolutionary
Terrorist** By George Novack

Books on the Twentieth Anniversary

**Feuchtwanger, Lyons, Serge,
Beal, Yvon, Gide** By Maurice Spector

JANUARY 1938

TWENTY CENTS

At Home

WELL, friends, here's THE NEW INTERNATIONAL once again. This time, we hope, to stay. But that's up to you, and you, and you to make possible by helping to obtain subscriptions, to sell the magazine, and by sending in contributions regularly to maintain THE NEW INTERNATIONAL on a sure foundation. Judging by what comrades and friends have written upon learning that THE NEW INTERNATIONAL was to appear again, prospects are bright. A comrade from the mid-West, in far-off Hutchinson, Kansas, says: "To say that I'm glad THE NEW INTERNATIONAL is going to be re-issued again is putting it mildly. . . . We need the theoretic organ to keep us posted about world events in the revolutionary movement. Enclosing subscription and bundle order and will try to send donation from time to time." A comrade near-by in Astoria, Long Island City, declares that "THE NEW INTERNATIONAL had a great deal to do in making me a 'Trotskyist'. . . . I don't think any rank and filer ever distributed more of them around the periphery of the radical movement than I did. For myself [brethren, take note] I pledge \$5.00 a month and if I can increase it later, I certainly will. I also intend to hold a small house party and later a branch affair for THE NEW INTERNATIONAL."

The old NEW INTERNATIONAL made and left its mark, and it's wanted back quickly and regularly, as the comments of a St. Louis comrade indicate. "The reappearance of THE NEW INTERNATIONAL is a real cause for celebration. I feel strongly obligated to support the enterprise in every way possible and I know that the other comrades feel the same way." Result: Enclosure of bundle order and a monthly pledge for the Sustaining Fund. A sympathizer in Pittsburgh, Pa., also says it in word and indeed: "Happy to contribute to THE NEW INTERNATIONAL. Enclosed five dollars. May it accomplish its purpose and light up the dark road." In New Haven, bona fide intellectual fodder is wanted and the comrades there "look forward with a great deal of anticipation to THE NEW INTERNATIONAL". A Plentywood, Montana, comrade shows the right spirit by informing us that "everybody out here is broke, but we'll do all we can. We're sure glad to learn the N. I. is coming out again".

From points still further West, a comrade from San Diego, Calif., sends in three subscriptions and a bundle order and declares that "San Diego Local is firmly supporting THE NEW INTERNATIONAL". Ditto, writes a comrade from Berkeley, Calif., enclosing subs and saying, "We'll do all we can for THE NEW INTERNATIONAL. News about N. I. is best I've heard in a long time." The Cod region makes known its attitude; a letter from the Boston literature agent says: "Anxiously awaiting the release of the first copy of THE NEW

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Hands Off in Spain!

THE international proletariat has cried "Hands Off Spain!" to Hitler and Mussolini. It is high time that the irresistible demand be made to the Stalinist G.P.U.—"Hands Off the Revolutionists in Spain!"

The terror, intimidation, suppression, imprisonment and murder practised against revolutionary militants in Loyalist Spain continues unabated. While the leaders of the People's Front lead the masses from one inexcusable defeat to another, and conduct secret negotiations with the fascists for a fatal compromise, while Litvinov proudly announces in Geneva that Spain has been sacrificed in the

INTERNATIONAL; we're putting in efforts in obtaining subscriptions and thus far have quite a few." Minneapolis, likewise, has a committee for the magazine to canvass for subscriptions and already has sent in a batch. The manager of a New York book-shop has placed an order for 150 copies of the first issue and says this is "only a starter". And so on from Chicago, Columbus, Akron, Philadelphia, Newark, and other locals. Now YOU have had an opportunity to read the first issue and we're sure you like it. But we mean to be still better; the editorial department will keep up its end. It's up to YOU now to do your share. Help SELL the magazine. Send in SUBSCRIPTIONS. Assist with regular contributions. THE NEW INTERNATIONAL is a costly financial enterprise. It cannot be maintained solely through bundle orders and subscriptions, though these of course are the bed-rock of the magazine. Monthly pledges for THE NEW INTERNATIONAL are required to ensure regular issuance. We're here again. Now, YOU get busy!

—THE MANAGER

interests of "peace", the best soldiers in the struggle against reaction are being hounded by the imported G.P.U.

Like so many others, Andres Nin, the leader of the P.O.U.M., was lynched by the Stalinist secret police. The whole P.O.U.M. leadership, including Juan Andrade and Julio Gorkin, and scores of members, are kept in prison for months without a trial. Literally thousands of anarchist and left wing socialist militants of the Caballero group are kept in the private dungeons of the G.P.U. or the government's own prisons.

Foreign militants, by the score, have disappeared or are held in prison, some without charges, all without trial. Our own Harry Milton was kept in prison for months before his release, forced by protest. Even the American right wing socialist, Sam Baron, was only recently freed from imprisonment as a "Trotskyist". Marc Rein, son of the Menshevik leader Abramovich, has disappeared—to Russia, it is feared. Erwin Wolf, the Czech militant, has met the same fate. The whereabouts of Kurt Landau, well-known Austrian revolutionist, and V. Vitte, leader of the Greek Archiomarxists, are unknown.

The champions of "democracy" in Spain deprive working class militants of the most elementary democratic rights. The infamous outrages of the G.P.U. must be answered by a storm of international proletarian protest. Only in this way was Harry Milton's life saved. Hundreds of other lives are in danger. The Spanish Ambassador Fernando de los Rios at Washington, and the government at Barcelona, must be inundated with the sharpest protests from every labor organization and meeting.

Notes

THE FIRST request we make to all our readers who have already rallied so loyally to the review in all parts of the world upon the announcement of its re-publication, according to the orders received by the business manager, is an expression of opinion. Do the contents fulfill the requirements? Whether or not they do, what suggestions have the readers for improvement?

We lay great store by international collaboration, so that our readers may have the best analysis of world political events and the developments in the international labor movement. Letters have already been written to the most qualified writers in the revolutionary Marxian movement of the most important countries of Europe and Latin America inviting regular contributions to the review. Coming issues will devote the necessary number of pages to such articles.

What is more fitting for a review issued by Marxists in the United States than the closest attention to the situation in the countries to the south of us? The revolutionary movement in Latin America has a decisive rôle to perform in the period to come. An effective struggle against Yankee imperialism requires a thorough knowledge of its workings on the American continents. We expect to publish important studies in this field by our comrades in Mexico, Cuba, the Argentine, Brazil, Panama, Chile, Venezuela, and other Latin American lands.

Nor do we intend to ignore our own United States. In addition to articles on current political problems—the future of the Labor Party movement in the United States, for example, is one such problem we hope to treat soon—we aim to probe into the history of the past. Old readers especially will welcome the return of George Novack, whose all-too-brief picture of John Brown appears in this issue. The author has promised us an absorbing article on the famous, and much-maligned, "draft riots" in New York during the Civil War. Others will come.

To ignore the enduring work of Marx and Engels would be not to live up to our title. As before, we shall produce some of the best works of these great thinkers which have not yet, unfortunately, been translated and published in English. Their freshness and cogency to present-day problems are often astonishing.

Polemics? Discussions? About serious questions, seriously dealt with—always. By the way, what responsible representative of anarchism will take up the challenge of Felix Morrow in the current issue? Our pages are waiting for him.

This is not a prospectus, only some hints. And your "hints"?

THE EDITORS

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The Aims of Our Review

IT IS INCREASINGLY clear that the center of gravity of the revolutionary labor movement is shifting Westward. The birthplace of the scientific socialist movement is now a fascist shambles. In Russia, the vanguard movement has felt the cruel, prostrating blows of a nationalist ruling clique which has become a vast international machine for falsifying the Marxism which the 1917 revolution retrieved from the mud. Wherever the labor movement still exists as a force in Europe, it is in the paralyzing grip of either or both the Second and Third Internationals.

In the United States, however, the labor movement is experiencing a sweeping upsurge. Almost overnight, the trade unions have swelled with hundreds of thousands and millions of new members. In the mass economic struggles that accompanied this trend the new trade unionists, with that aggressiveness characteristic of the American worker in a fight, spontaneously adopted the most militant and advanced forms of struggle. The sit-down strikes which upset the equanimity of the American ruling class are the first minatory, if unconscious, declaration by the working class that it does not have too much awesome respect for capitalist property rights and claims. They foreshadow the revolutionary tomorrow when the toilers will permanently occupy, manage and own the industries which will be the property of organized society.

Despite its tumultuous rise, however, the workers' movement in the United States lacks consciousness, crystallized in a program and a scientific doctrine, and implemented by a revolutionary political party. Where is the scientific doctrine to come from? The radical American intelligentsia, like the intellectuals as a whole, has no roots in the masses, to whom it has nothing to offer and who, for that reason, ask nothing of it. The intelligentsia, which has abandoned the traditional prejudices of "Americanism" and is seeking a new orientation, considers that it has found one in an uncritical acceptance of the "Russian experiment". In actuality, it means that, having no doctrine and no social support, the intelligentsia finds nothing better than to sink to its knees before the Soviet bureaucracy. Hardly has it half-liberated itself from prevailing bourgeois ideology than it falls victim to a consuming spiritual Inquisition. For the Kremlin bureaucracy, and its spiritless tool, the Communist International, are not the banner-bearers of revolutionary science but its fiercest antagonists.

The havoc wrought in the labor movement by the social-democracy is second only to the devastation of its principal present collaborator, Stalinism. In the Soviet Union, not only politics but also science, literature and art are impressed into service to justify, consolidate and glorify the Bonapartist dictatorship. All independent thinking is hounded and persecuted as a mortal danger. Creation is permitted only as a command performance. It is not surprising that the sources of spiritual creation opened up by the revolution have dried up so quickly. Not a single work of economics, politics or sociology has been produced that might take its place in the library of humanity. Philosophy has degenerated into shameful scholasticism. Literature, painting, architecture, music, which might have attained new heights in the service of socialism, are tainted with sterility.

The pestilence is not confined to the borders of the Soviet Union. Throughout the Communist International and its affiliates, every means is used to humiliate, emasculate and enslave the progressive movement in all countries. The authority of the October

revolution is replaced by the authority of the infallible Leader, and supplemented by a system of bribery without precedent in history. A drill-sergeant spirit, Byzantinism, bigotry, jesuitry, lies and calumny poison the atmosphere breathed by the advanced workers as well as by the radical intellectuals. This work of demoralization on a world scale is cloaked under the banner of the "defense of the Soviet Union".

Our aim is to help break down the demoralizing and reactionary influence of Stalinism and its newly acquired ally, social reformism of the old school. We have no other weapon at our disposal save the ideas of revolutionary Marxism. *All* the events since the outbreak of the last world war have only confirmed our belief that unless the labor movement is built upon these ideas, it not only cannot liberate itself from capitalism, but it cannot even exist under capitalism as an independent force. All that the innovations and the "practical" substitutes have yielded in the last quarter of a century has been one defeat after another.

The review does not propose merely to defend ideas and theories. It takes upon itself the militant advocacy of the Fourth International, which is the world movement of revolutionary Marxism, and of its section in the United States. The decisive factor in the historic future of this country, as well as all others, will be the revolutionary proletarian party. We intend to proclaim its ideas, above all in the general political and theoretical fields, and thereby to build and strengthen it.

To defend the ideas of Marxism, we must first tear it from the claws of the Inquisition, from its traducers and distorters wherever they may be. We intend to re-conquer the freedom of criticism and creation. We seek to restore honesty, sincerity and truth to their full rights, to restore independence, dignity and self-confidence to revolutionary thought. A genuine Marxian review is bound by no obligations other than those of honesty in matters of theory. Marxism, by its very nature, is not a dogma, but a guide to action; it is criticism which stops before no taboo. It is alien to idolatry. It imposes the necessity of sharpening all the fine-edged and incisive instruments of thought.

Marxism means the analysis of the living historical process. Unfettered analysis presupposes the inevitability of differences on the basis of Marxism itself. For this reason we intend to throw open the pages of our review to a greater extent than ever before to a discussion of those problems which concern the living revolutionary movement. The editors do not propose to act as mute spectators at a forum, but as active participants who have a standpoint to present and who do not fear to confront discussion or debate.

We make no pretensions to that hypocritical impartiality which more often than not conceals a fear to express a firm opinion. We are the staunch partisans of the doctrines of revolutionary Marxism. We regard this science of the proletariat as one that gives us the keenest instruments with which to analyze problems and events. The function of a Marxian review is not fulfilled by translating the latest ukase of the Moscow bureaucracy. Nor is its obligation at an end when, every month or every quarter, it analyzes the revolution of 1776, or the Civil War, or the position of agricultural labor under Mussolini, or the intricacies of nominalism, but flees from the very thought of uttering a word on such burning questions as the crisis of the Russian revolution, the People's

Front, or the proletarian attitude towards the coming war. Our conception of the defense of Marxism does not include flight from the problems of the day; it presupposes a serious attempt to answer the questions posed by the class struggle.

An answer to the questions of the day implies very often the most vigorous polemical manner. We are mindful of the fact that the best-organized enemy of revolutionary Marxism in the ranks of the labor movement, is the international Stalinist machine. The most dangerous enemy calls for the heaviest blows.

The alarmed courtiers will of course reply that we are destroying the foundations of the Soviet Union, weakening the united front of the democracy, and serving fascism. We reply in advance to these outcries with contempt, which will easily arm itself with irony and sarcasm when a simple boot is not enough. All living things are consumed and rejuvenated. The ossified revolution, before all else, has need of rejuvenation. We have nothing in com-

mon with the high-class concentration camp of the "Friends of the Soviet Union". We base ourselves entirely on the revolutionary foundations of the Soviet régime. We hate its exploiters, its parasites, its grave-diggers. In the interests of the Soviet Union and of the world proletarian struggle against capitalism, we declare implacable war on Stalinist Bonapartism and its international lackeys. The Babylonian captivity of revolutionary thought cannot and will not last forever. The frame-ups and purges mark the beginning of the end. We want to hasten the destruction of police-command over the vanguard throughout the world.

We begin our work with modest means and forces but with an unshakable faith in the future. Our tasks are of international significance. That is why we are counting on international collaboration. Over all obstacles and in spite of all difficulties, we shall carry on our work to the end!

THE EDITORS

The Convention of the New Party

THE CONVENTION OF THE revolutionary militants expelled from the Socialist Party and those who are in solidarity with them, will take place in Chicago during the New Year week-end. It will mark an impressive milestone in the building of the revolutionary workers' party of the United States. The event is of international importance, for in the strongest center of world imperialism the convention will establish the largest section of the Fourth International.

The expulsion of the left wing from the Socialist Party is a decisive culminating point in the development of both the former and the latter. Under the impact of the catastrophic defeats of the working class in Central Europe in 1933-1934 and of the terrific crisis of world capitalism, the then moribund Socialist Party of America acquired a new lease on life by the infiltration of several thousand young and militant left wing elements whom the bureaucratic adventurism of the Communist Party repelled. The pressure of these left wing forces was strong enough to produce a split in the Socialist Party as a result of which the incorrigible Old Guard separated itself from the organization. The right wing Bourbons, stubbornly repeating the stereotyped formulæ of the bankrupt social-democracy and refusing to assimilate a single one of the obvious lessons of international events, retired to the comforts of a little Fabian society dedicated to maintaining a couple of municipal socialist election machines and to beseeching the labor bureaucracy to build them a labor party shelter.

With all their immaturity and confusion and despite their haphazard leadership, the left wing militants were seriously striving to build a revolutionary party based on Marxian principles and participating actively in the class struggle. It was quite clear that with the centrist leadership of these militants continuing at the head, the energies of the movement would be dissipated and the movement itself end up in a state of disintegration. The best elements among the militant left were therefore constantly at loggerheads with the New York centrist leaders who, from the days before the Detroit convention in 1934, operated on the theory that capitulation to such congenital right wingers as came from the Milwaukee sewer-socialism school—to say nothing of capitulation to Norman Thomas and his entourage of muddleheads, Fabians, pacifists, Industrial Democrats and other nice people—was always preferable to an honest fight for revolutionary principle.

Nevertheless, revolutionary ideas were making their way in the party and the desire to have them prevail was concretized in the growing demand that all revolutionists not members of the S.P. should be invited to join its ranks with full rights, obligations and privileges, including the right to defend their point of view. In order to break down any organizational barriers between the revo-

lutionary workers inside the party and those outside of it, and to effect a fusion of the two, the Trotskyists, organized at that time in the Workers Party of the United States, decided more than a year and a half ago to join the Socialist Party.

The affiliation of the Workers Party members to the S.P. (and of the Fourth Internationalist Spartacus Youth League to the Young People's Socialist League) coincided with the departure of the Waldman-Oneal-Lee-Forwards gang at the Cleveland party convention. Almost automatically, the split of the main bulk of the right wing, followed shortly thereafter by its Bridgeport and Reading contingents, caused a shift of position within the ranks of the party. A consistent left wing, standing on principled grounds and meaning business, was soon crystallized around the *Socialist Appeal* at its Chicago Institute in the Winter of 1936. It was achieved by a harmonious fusion of all the genuinely left wing elements—the former members of the Workers Party and those revolutionary socialists who had been carrying on a fight for left wing policies before the Workers Party was dissolved.

At the opposite pole of the party, the right wing forces effected a concentration of a loose but nonetheless effective kind, united on no clear-cut political program, but animated by a violent antagonism to the principles of revolutionary Marxism to which, like the Stalinists, they applied the general tag of "Trotskyism". The concentration included both groups of Wisconsin reformists, the Porter-Berger Stalinist crew and the Hoan-Benson good government people; the pacifists, the Fabians of the League for Industrial Democracy and other good folk for whom the socialist movement begins and ends with Norman Thomas; liquidators of the Alfred Baker Lewis school who favor the dissolution of the party into an educational institute; the deadwood, the right wing remnants, young trade union officials on the make and assorted imponderabilia organized in New York under the leadership of an ambitious office-holder by the name of Altman; and a frankly Stalinist group in Connecticut organized under the fitting, memory-stirring name of Committee of Correspondence.

Between these two currents stood the Hamlets of the Clarity group, organized as a separate entity following the split that occurred in the New York left wing group when the centrists—Zam, Tyler, Delson—found themselves in a minority. It set itself the not at all modest and not at all mean task of reconciling the irreconcilable, thus underwriting its own certain collapse.

The first blow dealt the left wing was delivered at the special convention in Chicago early this year, when a motion by Thomas was adopted prohibiting the publication of any separate group organs. The left wing being excluded from participation in the official party paper, which was the monopoly of the right wing

and the centrists, the decision was tantamount to a gag, especially when the convention pledge to publish a generally accessible internal discussion paper was nonchalantly scrapped by the first meeting of the National Executive Committee following the convention.

The second blow at the left wing in particular, and at the leftward development of the party in general, was delivered at the Philadelphia meeting of the N.E.C. which finally adopted a resolution on Spain. Although the convention had taken a position against People's Frontism, the resolution on Spain was a political endorsement of the Caballero People's Front and, worse than that, covered up the régime that massacred the revolutionary workers during Barcelona's May Days. Noteworthy is not the fact that the right wingers throughout the party and on the N.E.C. voted for this resolution, but that it was sponsored and carried by the Clarity group majority on the committee, which, then as now, made no modest claims to radicalism.

The reply of the rank and file of the party and the youth organization was a fear-inspiring reminder to the right wing and its centrist allies of the growth of the left wing movement. In one party and youth organization after another, the membership voted down the miserable resolution on Spain and called upon the N.E.C. to discard it in favor of a revolutionary document. This evidence of left wing growth was answered by the Clarity-right wing combination with one of the most stupid decrees known in the radical movement. As one Clarity statesman said, martial law was established in the party. Others called it the gag-law. And so it was. It prohibited the membership from discussing party policies—nothing more. It forbade any attempt to call upon the N.E.C. to initiate a new policy or alter an old one. It established an *index prohibitorum* for heretical literature—*i.e.*, the literature of the left wing—which party institutions might sell only upon peril of excommunication and consignment to the fires of hell. The whole idea met with the approval of everybody but the membership, and it might still have worked if the N.E.C. could have gotten enough cops to enforce it, or if it really had the power to issue letters of mark and reprisal. But the more desperate and arbitrary the prohibitory decisions of the N.E.C., the more clearly was its futility and impotence revealed.

The general rebellion of the membership against the infamous gag-law was only widened by the notorious Altman-Thomas-Laidler proposal to support the bourgeois blatherskite, LaGuardia, candidate of the Republican party for mayor of New York, to support him not only in contravention of solemnly adopted convention decisions, but by the peculiarly craven step of withdrawing the socialist candidate for LaGuardia's benefit without giving him a "formal" endorsement. The right wing took the offensive on this proposal, and as was always the case when confronted by a serious offensive, the Clarity National Executive collapsed and endorsed the proposal by a majority vote.

Simultaneously, a fox-hunt was organized by the right wing against the left, which had roused the bulk of the active membership against the odious sell-out in New York, and therefore stood in the way of its execution. More than a hundred supporters of the left wing Appeal Association were brought up on charges by the Altman administration for the crime . . . of belonging to the Appeal Association and owing fealty to an alien organization, namely, the Fourth International. In a word, the crimes charged were not acts of indiscipline, but the facts of association and belief, that is, a "conspiracy indictment". Speaker of the Assembly Sweet who hailed the five socialist assemblymen before him in 1920 in order to deprive them of their seats, charged them with no greater crimes.

It is difficult to describe what followed in temperate language. What passed for a trial of the left wingers was at once ludicrous and obscene. The Altman group functioned imperturbably as plaintiff, prosecuting attorney, judge, jury, court of appeals and executioner, thus economizing time and energy. The no less aus-

terely impartial National Executive Committee, after resolving to turn over the party to the People's Front combination of Alfred Landon's party—the Fusion party—the Progressive Party—the American Labor Party—the Communist Party—the Lovestone group, devoted itself for an hour to hearing the appeal of the left wing and then endorsed the expulsion, the Clarity group vying with all the other right wingers for the dubious honor of torpedoing the Socialist Party. To guarantee its sinking beyond the efforts of divers, a resolution was unanimously adopted calling upon all members to cease and desist from any continued support of the left wing or its organ on pain of immediate expulsion. Provision was made for the prompt lifting of the charters of all organizations which failed to execute the mass expulsion order.

The lamentable collapse of the Clarity diplomatists in face of the right wing offensive in New York and Wisconsin was matched only by their effrontery and virulence in proceeding to cut the party to pieces so as to dislodge the left wing. But that proved to be no simple matter. Despite all kinds of shady manipulations, rigging and dues-fixing, the left wing received an overwhelming majority of the votes for the Young People's Socialist League convention, which adopted a left wing program, elected a revolutionary leadership, and endorsed the Fourth International. In New York, the majority of the active members stood firm with the left wing; likewise in Chicago; likewise in Ohio. In states like Minnesota, California and Indiana, the left wing was supported by anywhere from 75 to 95 percent of the membership. In reply to the LaGuardia party wreckers, the left wing issued a call for a special convention in Chicago over the signatures of the National Executive Committee of the Y.P.S.L., the Executive Committees of the New York and Cook County Left Wing, and the State Committees of the Ohio, Minnesota, Indiana and California party organizations. The convention call has since been endorsed by numerous important party centers, like Rochester, N. Y., Bucks County and Allentown in Pennsylvania, Kansas City and St. Louis County in Missouri.

While the left wing is consolidating its forces for the re-formation of the revolutionary Marxian party in the United States, the remnants of the old Socialist Party are disintegrating apace. In the traditional stronghold of New York, the party simply did not exist as a factor in the current election. In Philadelphia, it endorsed the candidates of the Communist Party. Its Stalinist wing is breaking off and moving formally to the C.P., as fore-shadowed by the affiliation to the latter by the S.P.'s star of hope among the students, Lash; by the tour which Hilliard Bernstein, an S.P. wheelhorse among the unemployed, is making for the Stalinists; and by the approaching desertion of David Lasser, president of the Workers Alliance. The number of members who have become indifferent or dropped out entirely runs into the hundreds. The Jewish section is secretly negotiating for fusion with the Jewish section of the Old Guard, and does it with impunity despite the tearful protests of the demoralized Clarityites. The latter's tenure in the party is itself tenuous, if the S.O.S. cry of their latest faction circular is to be credited; some of them are already up on charges and others are threatened with removal from posts or from membership. The activity of the National Office in the past period has been confined largely to the not very profitable business of taking in charters—not members. Attempts to resuscitate the "official" Y.P.S.L. with hypodermic injections of Altmanite subsidies, in lieu of members, have proved vain. The only organization still left in the S.P. that is worth shaking a stick at—Wisconsin—will not be long in solving the enigma of continued affiliation that has puzzled so many observers. The paladins in the great war against the "sectarian left" have ended by reducing the old S.P. to a sect, and a disintegrating one to boot.

The future of the revolutionary political party of labor in the United States lies with the left wing conference in Chicago. It has no need to look back to the moribund movement that is left in the hands of Thomas and Tyler. The revolutionary possibilities of the

old S.P. have been exhausted. Substantially all that was life-worthy in it, capable of assimilating revolutionary ideas and carrying out serious socialist action, is now associated with the left wing. The tasks before the new party which will be established in Chicago are truly enormous, and the difficulties not less so. But the prospects of growth are sure, and the convictions of the revolutionists are firm.

The new party will not have to invent new formulæ or new principles. It starts with the principles that have withstood the assault of time and the test of the class struggle. It will appear as the American section of the Fourth International, which stands on the granite foundation of the experiences and lessons of almost a century of the revolutionary movement. Its ideas are invincible and, once fused with the rising American working class, they will create a movement that marches irresistibly to the final triumph.

The Dewey Commission

THE COMMISSION OF Inquiry into the charges made against Leon Trotsky at the Moscow trials has announced that it will deliver its final report at a public meeting called for December 12. We are not as yet, of course, acquainted with the content of the report. The character and abilities of the members of the Commission and our knowledge of the scientific thoroughness with which they have pursued their investigation, however, assures us in advance of the profound historical significance of the forthcoming document.

Probably no analogous Commission in the history of the labor movement has ever been confronted with such obstacles or subjected to so vicious, unabating and ruthless an attack. By every method, precedented and unprecedented, every agency of every form of reaction has brought its energies to bear on one sole aim: to prevent the truth about the Moscow Trials from being known. It is a vast tribute to the courage and integrity of the Commission members, and of its distinguished chairman, Professor John Dewey, that they have not been turned aside, but have carried their work to its completion.

The attack against the Commission is in no respect accidental. No question of our time is more crucial than that of the Moscow trials. In the issue of the trials is summed up in concentrated form the problem of the Russian revolution which in its turn sums up the problem of the international revolution and thus of the future of mankind. To suppose that the trials are "out-dated", have sunk into the background against the lurid and mighty events of the intervening months, is to be merely blind.

The trials of Zinoviev-Kamenev and of Piatakov-Radek are the blue-prints of the full force of the reaction against the proletarian revolution, of the counter-revolution. In them the ideology, the methods and the implications of the counter-revolution are displayed in the purest and bluntest manner. These trials are the arch-type upon which are modelled the entire series of lesser trials, purges, executions which have become a daily feature of the Soviet régime. No one can even pretend to understand the meaning of the purge without first understanding the trials; and they are equally necessary to an understanding of the new Constitution, the developments in Soviet economy, and indeed of the entire present policy of Stalinism.

But the trials are not in the least a "merely Russian phenomenon", as the philistines are so anxious to insist. Their effect was felt immediately by the entire world; in every nation the trials at once became, and remain, an inescapable issue. More directly and specifically, the method of the trials has already been introduced into country after country, on an international scale. What is the policy of the Stalinists in Spain but the trials transferred to Spanish soil? In Czechoslovakia, the first Moscow trial has already been attempted—to end in failure, for this first time. In France, the preparation is well under weigh. In this country also, the trials

have already begun: the Stalinists in Minnesota are now endeavoring to transform the events surrounding the assassination of the labor leader, Corcoran, into a native American replica of the Moscow trials. It would be naïve to imagine that it will stop with this, whatever the immediate result. Stalinism and all of its henchmen, agents, and allies, are now irrevocably committed to the method of the trials; this method now sums up its political substance; and it can no longer draw back.

There is no avoiding the issue of the trials, and there is no middle ground. That is why it is a permanent issue, why it remains and cannot be thrust aside. For, in actuality, the issue of the trials is the issue of the revolution itself. If Stalin and Vishinsky are correct, those who made the revolution are traitors, fascists, counter-revolutionists, and the revolution in its own history proves that the goal of socialism is impossible and must be abandoned. But to understand the truth, to realize that the trials are the most gigantic frame-up in history and to realize why that frame-up was undertaken, is to see that it is Stalinism which is the counter-revolution, and to re-assert triumphantly the goal of socialism and the methods—the methods of Marx and Lenin and Trotsky—through which that goal will be achieved.

Anarchism in Spain

THE APPEARANCE OF Rudolf Rocker's *The Tragedy of Spain* warrants a proposal to the anarchists of the English-speaking world for a basic discussion of the rôle of anarchism in the Spanish revolution. As events dictate, Rocker's pamphlet is in large part a damning indictment of the bourgeois-Stalinist counter-revolution. We subscribe to every jot and tittle of that indictment. Our comrades throughout the world have undertaken as their elementary duty the defense of the C.N.T. workers. We stand in unconditional solidarity with them against their oppressors. Our own press has largely subordinated our critical analysis of the strategy of Spanish anarchism to the immediately pressing task of rallying aid for the persecuted anarchist movement. If Rocker's new work were but such a defense alone, we should be only too happy to solidarize ourselves with it completely.

The Tragedy of Spain is, however, more than a defense pamphlet. It is also an attempt to justify the fundamental strategy pursued by the C.N.T. leadership. More, it "deduces" the bourgeois-Stalinist repressions from Lenin and Trotsky's theories which "were merely pathbreakers" for Stalin, whose policies are "only the logical result of the work of his predecessors".

No one can have failed to observe the sudden recrudescence of anarchist and syndicalist attacks on the foundations of Leninism. The struggle for Kronstadt in 1921 is revived as a burning question! Strenuous are the attempts to pronounce Stalinism the natural heir of Bolshevism. Trotsky and other comrades have analyzed such arguments and coped with them at great length. Here, I wish merely to underline one reason for the revival of this stuff: the disastrous course of the leadership of Spanish anarchism has developed a strong semi-Bolshevik current in the anarchist movement. The Friends of Durruti, supported by sections of the Libertarian Youth and the F.A.I., represent this tendency in Spain itself. Their recognition of the necessity for democratic organs of power (soviets) and organs of repression against the bourgeoisie and its direct allies (dictatorship of the proletariat)—lessons learned not from books but from the hard blows of the Spanish events—have spelled the end of anarchist prejudices against proletarian state power. But this is Trotskyism! The anarchist leadership outside Spain therefore seeks to immunize its followers against this tendency by identifying it with . . . its merciless persecutor! (Inside Spain, however, this method is employed but little, for the simple reason that the C.N.T. leadership courts Stalin.) This stratagem will not save anarchism from discussing with us the question: the movement led by their Spanish comrades was the

greatest single force in the Iberian proletariat; anarchism has thus received its first test on a large scale; what has that test shown?

We contend that the Spanish events have demonstrated the complete bankruptcy of anarchism as a guide to the proletariat on the road to a socialist society. I shall briefly outline some necessary points of discussion:

I. *Anarchism becomes class collaborationism in the period of social revolution.*

During the period of stable bourgeois rule, anarchist hatred of oppression spurs it to struggle against capitalism. But in the crucible of the revolution, when the bourgeoisie can only weather the flames by offering to collaborate in building the "new society", anarchist opposition to the dictatorship of the proletariat is revealed as a "non-class" ideology, in other words, class collaborationist. Why didn't the C.N.T. take power on July 19, 1936, or propose the assumption of power by democratic organs with franchise limited to worker and peasant? Note the answer of Rudolf Rocker—who is concededly the most important figure in world anarchism. Arguing against the Stalinist myth that the C.N.T. was trying to take power in May 1937, Rocker says: "If the C.N.T.-F.A.I. had really entertained any such plans, they had for a long time after the 19th of July the best opportunity to put their wishes into effect, for their tremendous moral and physical superiority over every other faction was such that simply no one could have resisted them. They did not do so, not because they lacked the strength, but because they were opposed to any dictatorship from whichever side it proceeded."

Note that the anarchist criterion is not conditioned by the specific Spanish situation: it is a blueprint for all revolutions: class collaboration with any section of capitalists who do not take arms in hand against the masses (they do not because they have not yet the strength!) is at the very heart of the anarchist conception of the road to socialism. Thus the Spanish anarchists—and all who follow them in the future—rehabilitate the bourgeoisie before the masses, nurture them, give them time to restore their strength—and to turn and crush the masses.

II. *A coalition government is inevitably anti-working class.*

Rocker is less than entirely honest—to put it no more strongly—in writing a pamphlet which does not once comment on the significant fact of C.N.T. participation in the Valencian and Catalonian governments! These coalitions with the bourgeoisie, instruments of class collaboration during a revolutionary period, were the most important means whereby the bourgeois-Stalinist bloc recouped the power from the masses. They did so by the simple device of arrogating more and more power to the government, *i.e.*, to the old bourgeois state for which the C.N.T. served as a "red front"; and they did so with the direct approbation of the C.N.T. leadership.

Rocker is guilty of a vulgar anti-Stalinism which does not take into account the rôle of the bourgeois state, for which Stalinism merely served as the most efficient bloodhound. "If one can bring any reproach against the leading persons in the C.N.T.-F.A.I.," says Rocker, "it is that they accorded these false 'brothers' [the Stalinists] a greater confidence than they deserved, and that under the pressure of desperate circumstances they let themselves be drawn into making concessions which could only prove disastrous to them later." This, and other equally vague statements of the same kind, remind one of those academic admissions of error which Stalinism gives as lip-service to critical Marxism, but the exact contents of which are discreetly left for future turns and twists. The fact is that the basic crimes of the C.N.T. leadership were committed during the first weeks of the Generalidad government (September 26 on), when the Stalinists were still hopelessly weak in Spain and when no Russian arms had yet arrived. What were those basic crimes? Joining with the bourgeois-Stalinist bloc in issuing a series of decrees wiping out the revolution: the decrees dissolving the Central Committee of Anti-Fascist Militias and turning its powers over to the Ministries of Defense and Pub-

lic Order; the decree dissolving all the revolutionary committees throughout Catalonia; the decree establishing municipal governments based on fixed ratios of representation from the various parties; the decree disarming the workers; the decree providing for compensation to the landlords and factory owners; the decrees militarizing the militias under the bourgeois military code. I mention only those decrees which the bourgeoisie proposed and the C.N.T. approved. I shall not even mention those necessary measures for the social revolution which the C.N.T. failed even to propose (nationalization of banks, land, *etc.*, *etc.*).

Can one speak of this systematic legislation, approved by the C.N.T., as an "error"? No, C.N.T. approval flowed from a basic tenet of anarchism: the refusal to distinguish between workers' states and bourgeois states, hence C.N.T. collaboration in a bourgeois state, C.N.T. approval of legislation to strengthen the bourgeois state against the workers. The crimes of the C.N.T. leaders cannot be laid to their trustfulness in the Stalinists. As a matter of fact, I can adduce page and chapter to demonstrate that they understood who their Stalinist confrères were. Much deeper were the roots of this collaboration with reformists and bourgeois counter-revolutionaries: it flows from anarchist theory.

III. *There is today in Spain a corrupt, degenerate anarchist bureaucracy.*

Doctrinairism can explain much: leaders pursuing false theories will not admit the falsity of their theories, despite the impact of events. But this is not the only explanation for the present course of the C.N.T. leadership. Fifteen months of class collaboration, of occupying bourgeois governmental posts, *etc.*, has crystallized a bureaucratic layer in the C.N.T. which feels its affinity with the communist and socialist bureaucracies rather than with the masses of the C.N.T. Despite all the experiences of the first coalition governments, this C.N.T. bureaucracy seeks only to return to the government, under the face-saving formula of the "anti-fascist" front, which is nothing but a re-baptized People's Front. This bureaucracy concealed from the workers on the barricades in the May days the government's sending of troops from Valencia, the Generalidad's violation of its agreements, the massacre at Tarragona, *etc.*, *etc.*—intent only on getting the workers to capitulate. This bureaucracy calls upon the masses to put its faith in Caballero—the same Caballero who headed a government which boycotted Catalan economy, prevented systematic development of a war industry in Catalonia, starved the Aragon front of arms, established political censorship of the workers' press, organized prætorian forces in the Assault, Civil guards and *carabineros*, *etc.*, *etc.* This bureaucracy praised Stalin, suppressed all criticism of the Moscow trials, and thus facilitated the bloody work of Stalin's hangmen. This bureaucracy did not lift a finger to save the Friends of Durruti, its contenders for leadership of the C.N.T., from being outlawed by the government. One can no longer speak of this C.N.T. bureaucracy as just making mistakes.

Yet anarchist comrades, particularly in the English-speaking world, in the name of unity of action, of defense of the Spanish workers, remain silent about these crimes and thus join in bearing the responsibility for them. While the late Camillo Berneri and Joaquin Ascaso, among others, have not hesitated in Spain publicly to denounce the policies of the C.N.T. bureaucrats, while more and more local papers of the C.N.T. movement speak out, we find the American anarchists especially silent about the tragic course of the C.N.T. Who is served by such silence? Certainly not the masses of any country. Certainly not the theoretical foundations of the revolution in any country. We have opened the discussion. What do the anarchists have to say?

Felix MORROW

As indicated in the article of Felix Morrow, the Editors of THE NEW INTERNATIONAL are ready to open its pages to a discussion article on the subject by a responsible advocate of the policy of the Spanish anarchists.

Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Russia

The 20th Anniversary of the Bolshevik Uprising and the Degeneration of the Soviet Power

THE TWENTIETH anniversary of the Russian revolution has been greeted in monotonous dithyrambs by the liberals of almost every school. It is not so much the social revolution against capitalist society and private property to which they pay their belated aspects. They hail what they consider the successfully established Great Power, the abandonment of all those childish notions of world revolution which they always regarded as utopian and more than a little ill-mannered, and the maturing of the once rude youngster who has now come of age and is eminently fitted to join the society of the respectable and democratic nations of the earth.

This aspect of the twentieth anniversary is of no small symptomatic significance. In November 1917 and afterwards, the liberals regarded the Bolshevik revolution as an unwarranted intrusion upon the legitimate development of Russia towards their concept of democracy, under the ægis of Kerensky and his coalition government with the realistic and statesmanlike social-democrats. The withdrawal of the Soviets from the imperialist war which left the Allies all alone in the fight to make the world safe for democracy, and the subsequent overturn of all the economic power of the capitalistic class and their political retainers only added to the already mounting horror of the liberal intelligentsia. Their horror was not abated but intensified when the proletariat began to shatter the resistance of the counter-revolution with distinctly impolite weapons of ruthless warfare.

The dust stirred up by the intense class struggle in Russia blinded the liberals to the world-historical significance of the revolution which was laying the foundation stones for a hitherto only dreamed-of social order. Even years later they could not forgive the Bolsheviks their audacity. Grudgingly at first, and in the end enthusiastically, with a pitying if not angry glance at the Trotskyists who strike a discordant note at the ceremony, they joined in the now stylish endorsement of the Soviet régime. But their tardy recognition of the revolution of 1917 coincides not with its social triumph but with the period of its degeneration. Just as they once failed to see that the victory of the Bolsheviks marked the victory of the social revolution against capitalism, so they fail to see that the victory of the Stalinist bureaucracy marks the victory of a *political counter-revolution*. Yet that is precisely what is new in the development of the Russian revolution.

* * *

Not a single Bolshevik leader considered it possible for the Soviet power to endure for a long period of time, much less for Russia to achieve the classless socialist order, unless the workers of one or more advanced capitalist countries come to its aid.

When we began the international revolution [said Lenin at the Third Congress of the Communist International in 1921] . . . we thought, either the international revolution comes to our aid and then our victory is quite assured, or else we do our modest revolutionary work and do it in the knowledge that in the event that we suffer defeat, we are thereby of use to the cause of the revolution, because we make it possible for other revolutions, made shrewder by our experiences, to do it better. It was clear to us that without the support of the international world revolution, the victory of the proletarian revolution is impossible. Even before the revolution and also afterwards, we reflected: either the revolution in the other countries, in the capitalistically more developed countries, comes immediately or at least in very swift succession, or we must succumb.

Neither the hope nor the prognosis was realized, as is known. Yet the Soviet state has not perished. At first blush, this seems to confirm Stalin's nationalistic thesis that a socialist society can be established within a single country regardless of whether the revolution triumphs in other lands. But only at first blush. For while the Soviet state has not succumbed despite its enforced iso-

lation, it has not only been unable to achieve its socialist goal but it has been corrupted from within by the deadly cancer of degeneration. The canal through which the poisons have flowed to the heart and head of the régime, is the Stalinist bureaucracy.

Even before it expropriated the economic power of the bourgeoisie, the Russian revolution deprived it of its political power. Its place was taken by the rule of the working class, a proletarian democracy, Lenin wrote, "a million times more democratic than any bourgeois democracy, and the Soviet régime . . . a million times more democratic than the most democratic régime in a bourgeois republic." The Soviet democracy was based on the abolition of a professional governmental bureaucracy divorced from the people, on the indivisibility of the legislative and executive bodies, on the direct rule of the toilers through their deputies to the Soviets, subject at all times to recall, on the armed people as against a professional body of armed men divorced from the masses, and on the privileged position of the proletariat as the vanguard of the toiling masses. While the Bolshevik party, as the tested and trusted revolutionary vanguard of the proletariat, was the ruling party, it maintained a live and sensitive contact with the toilers through the Soviets, the trade unions, the factory committees, the committees of poor peasants, the coöperatives, and similar institutions. The existence of a wide freedom of discussion and decision in all these bodies, of genuine workers' democracy, made of this interlocking system of institutions the living reality of the political rule of the proletariat—never ideal or flawless, to be sure, but decisive.

The counter-revolution of the Stalinist bureaucracy consists in nothing less than this; It has effectively destroyed all these institutions in the last fourteen years and thereby it has just as effectively expropriated the proletariat *politically*.

THE OLD GUARD OF THE PARTY.—Lenin attached, even if not uncritically, a tremendous significance to what was called the Old Guard of the Bolshevik party. He regarded those veterans who had passed through three revolutions, the World War and the civil war, as one of the main assurances that the revolution would continue along its indicated path. "It must be recognized," he wrote to the Central Committee in March 1922, "that at the present time the proletarian party policy is determined not so much by its membership as by the unlimited and powerful authority of that thin layer which we may name the old party Guard." The Stalinist bureaucracy, in the course of its reaction to the revolution, its traditions and its ideology, has destroyed the Old Guard which embodied them.

Take but one example which comes to hand, the Central Committee elected at the 9th Congress in 1920: Artem, Dzerzhinsky, Lenin, Bukharin, Zinoviev, Kamenev, Krestinsky, Preobrazhensky, Rudzutak, Radek, Rakovsky, Rykov, Serebriakov, I. N. Smirnov, Tomsky, Trotsky, Andreyev, Kalinin and Stalin. The first three died of natural causes. Of the rest, Zinoviev, Kamenev, Serebriakov and I. N. Smirnov were murdered by the Stalinists; Tomsky was killed or driven to suicide; Trotsky is in Mexican exile; Bukharin, Krestinsky, Preobrazhensky, Rudzutak, Radek, Rakovsky and Rykov are imprisoned or disgraced—all thirteen of them as fascists or wreckers or assassins. Only Stalin, Kalinin and Andreyev remain, which is like saying that only Stalin remains.

Important to note in this devastating and uninterrupted purge is the fact that it is not only the generation of defenders of the October that has been crushed. The Trotskyists or Zinovievists—men like Trotsky, Zinoviev, Kamenev, Rakovsky, Mdvani, Piatakov, Smirnov, Smilga, Preobrazhensky, Bieloborodov, Muralov—were removed long ago by the Thermidorian generation that

brought Stalin to power. Now even the men of the Thermidorian reaction have gone or are going: Bukharin, Rykov, Rudzutak, Tukhachevsky, Bubnov, Postyshev, and hundreds less well known. Their places are taken by entirely colorless unknowns like Beria, Eikhe, Zhdanov, Khrustchev who are not so much party leaders as Stalinist governor-generals who rule the provinces like old Turkish Walis; they are made or un-made in a day by simple decree, and their coming and going are like the shadows of a guttering candle flame.

THE BOLSHEVIK PARTY.—Whatever else it may be, a political organization that does not have a free and rich inner life is not a revolutionary proletarian party. In Lenin's time, even after the Mensheviks and Social Revolutionists had placed themselves outside the Soviet pale by their counter-revolutionary course and left the Bolshevik party with a monopoly of political rule, the party led an intense and active inner life, discussing freely at all times, debating all questions openly, electing, criticizing and removing its leadership and deciding the party line at will. Under the gun-fire of the Kronstadt mutiny and the echoes of the peasant risings in Tambov and elsewhere, the 10th Congress adopted the entirely exceptional and temporary emergency measure prohibiting separate factions with separate platforms. This unprecedented limitation on party democracy, however, was adopted with numerous significant reservations. The adopted resolution stated:

It is necessary that every party organization takes rigorous care that the absolutely necessary criticism of the shortcomings of the party, all analyses of the general party direction, all appraisals of its practical experience, every examination of the carrying out of the party decisions and of the means of correcting the mistakes, etc.—shall not be discussed in separate groups standing upon any "platform", but rather in the meetings of all the party members. Towards this end, the Congress decides to publish a periodical *Discussion Sheet* and special periodicals. Everyone who comes forward with a criticism must take into consideration the position of the party in the midst of its encircling enemies, and he must also strive, in his direct activity in Soviet and party circles, to correct the mistakes of the party in practise.

While the Congress orders the Central Committee to exterminate all factionalism, the conference declares at the same time that those questions which attract the special attention of the party membership—e.g., on the purging of the party of unproletarian, unreliable elements, on the struggle against bureaucratism, on the development of democracy and the broader participation of the workers, etc.—and in general all objective proposals, must be examined with the utmost possible scrupulousness and tested practically. All party members must know that the party cannot take all the required measures in these questions, since it encounters a whole series of the most varied obstacles, and that while the party decisively rejects an un-objective and factional criticism, it will continue tirelessly to test new methods, and to fight with all means against bureaucratism and for the extension of the democracy of the self-active masses, for the uncovering, exposure and expulsion of all unreliable elements from the party. (*Russische Korrespondenz*, Nr. 5, May 1921, p. 323.)

Not aimed at suppressing democracy, even the restrictions of the 10th Congress were designed to extend discussion and criticism, to organize it, to ferret out bureaucratism, and to do all this in a manner that would be less dangerous and factional under the concrete conditions. When, at the same congress, Riazanov moved an amendment prohibiting elections of delegates to coming congresses on the basis of factional platforms, Lenin, quick to sense the danger, replied:

I think that the desire of comrade Riazanov is unfortunately not realizable. If fundamental disagreements exist on a question, we cannot deprive members of the Central Committee of the right to address themselves to the party. I cannot imagine how we can do this. The present congress can in no way and in no form engage the elections to the next congress. And if, for example, questions like the Brest-Litovsk peace arise? Can we guarantee that such questions will not arise? It cannot be guaranteed. It is possible that it will then be necessary to elect by platform. That's quite clear. (*Minutes of the 10th Congress*, p. 292. Russ. ed.)

And again, elsewhere, during the same period, Lenin wrote:

But if deep, fundamental disagreements of principle exist, we may be told: "Do they not justify the sharpest factional action?" Naturally they justify it, if the disagreements are really deep, and if the rectification of the wrong policy of the party or of the working class cannot be obtained otherwise. (*Works*, Vol. XVIII, Pt. 1, p. 47, Russ. ed.)

In the period of acute danger to the Soviet régime, when it had to make the painful and hazardous transition to the New Economic Policy, and when the party imposed certain organizational restraints upon itself, Lenin nevertheless called for freedom of discussion and criticism, for internal discussion organs, and acknowledged the permissibility and even inevitability of factions, platforms and the "sharpest factional action". By this he was merely testifying to the existence of a *living party*.

The Stalinist bureaucracy has changed all that. It started with the Trotsky-Zinoviev Opposition. In 1927, it prohibited the publication of their *Platform*, arrested those leaders and militants who mimeographed it for circulation in a pre-congress discussion period, and expelled all those who defended it. It demanded not only that the Opposition supporters cease *advocating* the views in their *Platform*, but that they cease believing those views! In 1932, Stalin demanded the execution of the old Bolshevik, Riutin, for circulating a "platform" which ended with Lenin's demand that Stalin be removed from his post; Riutin was "merely" imprisoned by the G.P.U. In the last few years—the years of Stalinist domination—not one single word of criticism of the party leadership has been uttered; not one single proposal different from the proposals of the Führer. Nobody dares. Yet there are differences of opinion, whispered about and muttered in tiny grouplets. Only, the party does not decide these differences. The party is dead. The G.P.U. decides them in accord with the instructions of the Secretariat.

The congress of the party is its highest and most authoritative instance, selecting the leadership to carry out the line of policy which the congress adopts. At least, so it was in Lenin's time. The question of seizing power, the Brest-Litovsk treaty, the New Economic Policy, the trade union question—all these were decided at party congresses, after the fullest discussion of all the conflicting standpoints. In the Stalinist epoch, congresses no longer take place. In their stead, the bureaucracy organizes palace assemblies of hand-picked lieges who listen without discussion to the Throne Speech of the Führer. The lesser bureaucrats appear only for the purpose of burning frankincense to Stalin and of giving him assurances of their blind fealty in terms reminiscent of the fawning speeches made by provincial princelings to an Oriental potentate.

Just think: In the days of illegality and thin purses, under Tsarist despotism, the Russian party nevertheless held four regular congresses between July 1903 and May 1907. (Of party conferences under Tsarism, there were eight, from the Tammerfors meeting in 1905 to the Poronino meeting in 1913.) In the revolutionary period, between the overthrow of the Tsar and the death of Lenin, the party held eight regular party congresses (and seven conferences). The Stalinist record is quite different. The first real post-Lenin congress was the 14th, in December 1925; the 15th was held 2 years later; between it and the 16th, 2½ years were allowed to elapse; between the 16th and the 17th Congress—the last to be held, in January 1934—more than 3½ years went by. The statutes adopted by the Stalinists themselves at the 17th Congress provided (§27) that "regular congresses are convened no less than once in three years". In cynical violation of its own statutes, the bureaucracy has let four years pass and the fiction of a party is not even allowed to hold its fiction of a congress. And what four years these have been! What drastic changes the bureaucracy has made without even going through the formality of consulting the party! Under the Stalinist bureaucracy, the Bolshevik party (if it may be called that) has been allowed to meet in congress (again, if it may be called that) only four times in more than thirteen years. The party met more often under the Tsar! The bureaucracy has crushed the old party.

THE TRADE UNIONS.—In the early days of the revolution, the Bolsheviks regarded the trade unions as a school of Communism, and as one of the institutions through which the workers ruled in the factories and the Soviets. The Bolsheviks did not fear debate and discussion, and as late as 1920, almost three years

after the revolution, Dalin and Martov could still appear as the official representatives of the Menshevik party at the 3rd Congress of the trade unions to present their views and debate the Bolshevik spokesmen. But even more: the Bolsheviks regarded the trade unions as an indispensable instrument for the defense of proletarian interests from the transgressions, abuses and wantonness of the state itself, and especially of its bureaucracy. It was only in 1927 that Molotov put forward the bigoted, bureaucratic conception that since Russia is a workers' state there can be no question of defending the workers from it. Lenin had nothing in common with this bureaucratic idealism. Speaking before the party fraction of the 8th Soviet Congress on December 30, 1920, during the discussion on the trade union question, he said:

Comrade Trotsky speaks of the workers' state. Permit me, that is an abstraction. When we wrote about the workers' state in 1917 that was understandable; but when it is said today: Why defend, defend the working class against whom, there's no longer a bourgeoisie, don't we have a workers' state—then an obvious error is being committed. The whole joke is that it is not quite a workers' state. That's where the basic mistake of comrade Trotsky lies! We have passed over from general principles to objective discussion and to decrees, but that's where we are being held back from practical objective work. That will not do! Our state is in reality no workers' state, but a workers' and peasants' state. A whole lot follows from that. . . . But still more. From our party program it follows that our state is a workers' state with bureaucratic deformations. We have to paste this—how shall we call it?—sorry label on it. That is the reality of the transition! . . .

Our present state is such that the organized proletariat must defend itself and we must utilize these workers' organizations for the defense of the workers against their state and for the defense of the state by the workers. (*Der Kampf um die soziale Revolution*, pp. 593f.)

What a decisive rôle Lenin assigned to the trade unions in this profoundly dialectical concept of the interrelations between the economic organizations of the workers and the *real*—not idealistically perfect—workers' state, a concept beyond the grasp of superficial minds accustomed to abstract and absolute categories. The trade unions are an instrument for the defense of the workers' state and for the defense of the workers from that state! And if the latter was necessary seventeen years ago, how infinitely more urgent is it today that the trade unions defend the workers from a régime in which the bureaucratic cancer has grown to monstrous, undreamed-of proportions? What, for example, has happened to the right to strike, solemnly recognized by the party congress in Lenin's time? Most likely it has not been abolished by law; only, the exercise of that right is rewarded by a prompt visit by the G.P.U.

The right to intervene in the question of hiring and firing and of management in general was taken from the trade unions, from the factory committee and from the party nucleus in the factory, in September 1929. The trade unionists and the unions themselves are silent in the face of the most abominable abuses of the factory directors. The bitterness of the average worker against the growing disparity between his wages and the salary of the industrial bureaucrat or the labor aristocrat who carries the title of Stakhanovite, is felt in the heart and muttered in the most discreet privacy, but is not expressed in or through the trade unions.

The trade union leadership is composed of case-hardened bureaucrats, appointed from above and removed just as easily. They know they have neither obligations nor responsibilities to the ranks; nor are they under their control. As a result the Soviet press is compelled to print countless depressing reports of wantonness, irresponsibility, embezzlement, brutality and degeneration among the trade union officialdom. The worker does not know today who will be the head of his trade union tomorrow; he is not consulted and, knowing quite well that he has a union in name only, he cares precious little. He is aware that the armed guard who watches over him in the mine pit, as described by Kléber Legay elsewhere in this issue, is far more real and far more powerful than the empty shell that was once the Russian trade union movement.

The first All-Russian congress of the trade unions met in Jan-

uary 1918; the second early in 1919; the third in April 1920. The 9th Congress met towards the end of 1928; the 10th Congress early in 1932. Since then—that is, for almost six crucial years—there has been no congress. If one knew nothing else about the Russian trade unions, the comparison between the two sets of dates would suffice to indicate the difference between a living movement, a real foundation stone in the structure of proletarian democracy—and a fiction. But behind the fiction stands the usurpatory bureaucracy.

THE SOVIETS.—The Russian revolution laid bare the Soviets—the councils of workers, soldiers, peasants—as the most natural, most democratic, most efficient form of proletarian state rule in the transition period between capitalism and communism. In all other countries where a revolutionary situation matured, Soviets, just like the Russian or slightly varied in form, developed spontaneously as the embryonic organs of insurrection and power, and not as a product artificially imported from Russia.

The original Soviets were a million times more democratic than any bourgeois republic precisely because they smashed the monopoly of the professional capitalist politician and bureaucrat whose relationship with the masses is confined to electoral campaigns once a year or less often. The Soviets made it possible for the masses to throw off the yoke of "voting cattle" which bourgeois rule imposes upon them, and to act as the direct, independent administrators of their own affairs. Unsatisfactory representatives could be recalled at will and replaced by others. Lenin saw especially in the right of recall not only one of the main pillars of Soviet democracy but also a guarantee of the peaceful settlement of conflicts and disputes in the country. Four weeks after the Bolshevik uprising, he said at a session of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee of the Soviets:

Various parties have played a dominant rôle among us. The last time, the passage of influence from one party to another was accompanied by an overturn, by a fairly stormy overturn, whereas a simple vote would have sufficed had we had the right of recall. . . . The right of recall must be granted the Soviets, which are the most perfect carrier of the state idea, of coercion. Then the passage of power from one party to another will proceed without bloodshed, by means of simple new elections. (*Izvestia*, No. 233, Dec. 6, 1917.)

The whole course of the Stalinist bureaucracy, climaxed by a "democratic election under the new democratic Constitution" which is gruesomely mocked by the never-ceasing purge, has proceeded by trampling under foot every one of the conceptions of the place and function of the Soviets which prevailed in the early years of the revolution. From the local Soviets to the Central Executive Committee itself, the administrations are appointed and removed at will by the corresponding party apparatus-bosses, and without the slightest intervention of the masses themselves. The right of recall exists, to be sure, but it is exercised only by the Stalinist bureaucracy. What Soviet institution, what mass organization or movement intervened, for example, to remove the recently condemned People's Commissars of White Russia, of the Ukraine, of Georgia, of the R.S.F.S.R., of the Soviet Union, and to put others in their place? Only the G.P.U., acting as administrative agent of the party secretariat. What "democratic" significance have the new constitutional rights of free speech, free press and free assembly when they are enjoyed exclusively (and even then limitedly) by the myrmidons of the bureaucracy who are themselves under the constant surveillance of the secret police? What value has the secret ballot when there is but one candidate to choose from, and he hand-picked by the apparatus? The elections to the Soviets and all other alleged legislative and executive bodies are classic examples of Bonapartist plebiscites; they are an abominable caricature of Soviet democracy, the very negation of it.

The bureaucracy has strangled the Soviets of the revolution. The political rule of the workers and peasants has been supplanted by the political rule of the bureaucracy and those social strata which are its direct props. What a revealing story there is in the social composition of the guaranteed-to-be-elected candidates to the Council of the Union! Of actual workers and peasants, there

are none or next to none. The overwhelming majority of the candidates is made up of party officials, factory directors, labor aristocrats (Stakhanovites), G.P.U. and army officers, well-to-do farmers, that is, the reactionary bureaucracy and its associated social layers. The Soviets were to make it possible, in Lenin's words, for any charwoman, for the lowest and most despised, to become the administrators of the state, so that it would no longer be, properly speaking, a state in the old sense of a bureaucratic apparatus of oppression with special bodies of armed men separate and apart from the people. The triumph of the Stalinist bureaucracy has been accomplished by the political expropriation of the charwomen, of the proletariat. It signifies the victory of the *political counter-revolution*.

* * *

THE FOREIGN POLICY.—At home, the bureaucracy has not yet been able to free itself from the confines of the economic basis achieved by the Russian revolution, about which more later. But abroad, it has a free hand, so to speak, and there its course is openly counter-revolutionary. It is the gendarme of law and order, of the *status quo* throughout the capitalist world. A comparison between the situation even in 1923, when the reactionary tumor was already apparent in the Soviet body, and 1937, when the totalitarian bureaucracy is celebrating its triumph, will indicate the profound change.

In 1923, when the German revolution was expected, the Soviet Republic stood at attention to aid it. The harbor of Petrograd was filled with grain ships ready to sail for Stettin so that the German Soviet republic would not be starved out by the Entente. Representatives of the Comintern and the Russian party were active on German soil, preparing for the uprising as best they could under the leadership of Brandler and Zinoviev. Specialists of the Red Army were assigned to give expert assistance to the German communists. The close diplomatic alliance existing at that time between the Soviets and the German bourgeois republic had not converted the International into the main prop of German capitalism—quite the contrary.

In 1937, all the diplomatic moves in Europe, all the aid sent by the Soviet Union to the Spanish loyalists (in the form of munitions, arms, military experts, G.P.U. agents, etc.), are directed towards crushing the proletarian revolution in Spain, preserving Spanish bourgeois democracy as an instrument in the hands of Anglo-French imperialism. The policy of Stalin in Spain is distinguished from that of Noske and Scheidemann in the Germany of 1919 only by its more systematic savagery.

All the policies of the Soviet bureaucracy are based upon its self-preservation. Abroad, at the very least, in the international labor movement and class struggle, it is indisputable that the interests of the Soviet bureaucracy come into head-on conflict with the interests of the working class. These interests produce not the policies of the Mensheviks of 1905, nor even of 1917, but of those Mensheviks who took up arms, in alliance with Anglo-French imperialism in 1918-1919, to overthrow the young Soviet republic. They are not just non-revolutionary policies, they are the policies of counter-revolution.

* * *

What remains of the Russian revolution? Why should we defend the Soviet Union in case of war?

A number of realities still remain. The conflict between German fascism (and fundamentally, also, of the capitalist world as a whole), and the Soviet Union, still remains no less a reality than, let us say, the conflict between fascism and social-democracy or the trade unions, regardless of how corrupt may be the leadership of the latter, regardless of how it may compromise and capitulate, regardless of how much it may seek to place itself under the protection of one capitalist force (as did the Austrian social democracy) against another. The conflict can be resolved only by the capitalist world being overturned by the working class, or by the

Soviet Union, its present bureaucracy included, being crushed and reduced to the status of a colonial or semi-colonial country, divided among the world's imperialist bandits.

Another great reality is the economic foundation established by the October revolution. Despite bureaucratic mismanagement and parasitism, we have the prodigious economic advances made by Soviet industry, the great expansion of the productive forces in Russia (without which human progress is generally inconceivable) in a period of stagnation and retrogression in the capitalist world, the principle and practise of economic planning. All these were possible only on the basis of the abolition of socially-operated private property, of the nationalization of the means of production and exchange, their centralization in the hands of the state which is the main prerequisite of an evolution towards the classless society of universal abundance, leisure and unprecedented cultural advancement.

Outraged by the brutality of the reactionary usurpers, by their blood purges, by their political expropriation of the toilers, by their totalitarian régime, more than one class conscious worker and revolutionary militant has concluded that nothing is left of the Russian revolution, that there are no more grounds for defending the Soviet Union in a war than for defending any capitalist state. The professional confusionists of the various ultra-leftist grouplets prey upon these honest reactions to Stalinism and try to goad the workers into a reactionary position. Some of these philosophers of ignorance and superficiality prescribe a position of neutrality in a war between the Soviet Union and Germany; others, less timid, call for the strategy of defeatism in the Soviet Union. At bottom, the ultra-leftist position on the Soviet Union, which denies it any claim whatsoever to being a workers' state, reflects the vacillations of the petty bourgeoisie, their inability to make a firm choice between the camps of the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, of revolution and imperialism.

Class rule is based upon property relations. Bourgeois class rule, the bourgeois state, is based upon private ownership, appropriation and accumulation. The political superstructure of the bourgeois class state may vary: democratic republic, monarchy, fascist dictatorship. When the bourgeois can no longer rule directly politically, and the working class is still too weak to take power, a Bonapartist military dictatorship may arise which seeks to raise itself "above the classes", to "mediate" between them. But it continues to rule over a *bourgeois state* (even though, as in Germany, it has politically expropriated the bourgeoisie and its parties), because it has left bourgeois property relations more or less intact.

The October revolution abolished bourgeois property relations in the decisive spheres of economic life. By centralizing the means of production in the hands of the state, it created new property relations. The counter-revolutionary bureaucracy, although it has destroyed the political rule of the proletariat, has *not yet* been able to restore capitalist property relations by abolishing those established by the revolution. This great reality determines, for Marxists, the character of the Soviet Union as a workers' state, bureaucratically degenerated, it is true, usurped and therefore crucially imperilled by the Bonapartists, but still fundamentally a workers' state. This great remaining conquest of the revolution determines, in turn, our defense of the Soviet Union from imperialist attack *and* from its Bonapartist sappers at home.

Because it is not a simple question, Lenin pointed out at the 9th Congress of the party in 1920, we must be careful not to sink into the morass of confusion.

Wherein consists the rule of the class? Wherein consisted the rule of the bourgeoisie over the feudal lords? In the constitution it was written: "in freedom and equality."—That is a lie. So long as there are toilers, the property owners are capable and, as such, even compelled, to speculate. We say that there is no equality there, and that the sated are not the equals of the hungry, the speculator is not the equal of the toiler. Wherein does the rule of the class express itself? The rule of the proletariat expresses itself

in the abolition of landed and capitalist property. Even the fundamental content of all former constitutions—the republican included—boiled down to property. Our constitution has acquired the right to historical existence, we did not merely write down on paper that we are abolishing property, but the victorious proletariat did abolish property and abolished it completely.—Therein consists the rule of the class—primarily in the question of property. When the question of property was decided in practise, the rule of the class was thereby assured; thereupon the constitution wrote down on paper what life had decided: “There is no capitalist and landed property,” and it added: “The working class has more rights than the peasantry, but the exploiters have no rights at all.” Therewith was written down the manner in which we realized the rule of our class, in which we bound together the toilers of all strata, all the little groups. The petty bourgeois proprietors were split-up. Among them those who have a larger property are the foes of those who have less, and the proletariat openly declares war against them when it abolishes property. . . .

The rule of the class is determined only by the relationship to property. That is precisely what determines the constitution. And our constitution correctly set down our attitude to property and our attitude to the question of what class must stand at the head. He who, in the question of how the rule of the class is expressed, falls into the questions of democratic centralism, as we often observe, brings so much confusion into the matter that he makes impossible any successful work on this ground. (*Russische Korrespondenz*, Nr. 10, July 1920, p. 8.)

Liberal apologists have distorted Lenin’s concepts into an argument for the compatibility of the bureaucratic dictatorship, and even a personal dictatorship, with a consistent development towards the new social order. “So long as industry remains nationalized and the productive forces expand,” runs their apology, “what does it really matter if Stalin maintains a bureaucratic despotism, which we civilized liberals would not tolerate but which is good enough for backward Russians?” It is of course quite true that Lenin saw no absolute incompatibility between proletarian democracy and “individual dictatorship” in industry under given conditions. A year before his quoted speech at the 9th Congress, he observed:

That the dictatorship of single persons in the history of the revolutionary movements was very often the spokesman, the carrier and the executant of the dictatorship of the revolutionary classes, is evidenced by the incontestable experience of history. . . . If we are not anarchists, we must acknowledge the necessity of the state, *i.e.*, of coercion, for the transition from capitalism to socialism. The form of coercion is determined by the degree of development of the given revolutionary class, furthermore, by such special circumstances as, *e.g.*, the heritage of a long, reactionary war, furthermore, by the forms of the resistance of the bourgeoisie or of the petty bourgeoisie. Therefore there is not the slightest contradiction in principle between Soviet (*i.e.*, socialist) democracy and the application of the dictatorial rule of individual persons. (*Sämtliche Werke*, Bd. XXII, pp. 524f. Ger. ed.)

But in order to make clear his real thoughts, he hastened to add the following indispensable supplementary statement, without which everything is one-sided and therefore false:

The more resolutely we now come out in favor of a ruthlessly strong power, for the dictatorship of individual persons in *definite labor processes* during certain periods of *purely executive functions*, the more manifold must be the forms and methods of control from below in order to paralyze every trace of a possibility of distorting the Soviet power, in order to tear out, incessantly and tirelessly, the weeds of bureaucratism. (*Ibid.*, p. 532.)

It is precisely those manifold forms and methods of *democratic control from below* which the bureaucracy has destroyed in its development towards despotic rule. In destroying proletarian democracy and the political rule of the working class, the bureaucracy has lifted itself beyond the reach of the masses out of which it emerged. Having abandoned its original class base, it must find a new one, for it cannot last long as a thin bureaucratic stratum hanging, so to speak, in mid-air. The social layers with which it has linked itself are the well-to-do farmers, the factory directors and trust heads, the Stakhanovite aristocracy, the officialdom of the party, the Soviet apparatus, the Red Army and the G.P.U. But none of these, nor all of them taken together, represents a *class*, with a distinctive function in the productive life of the country, or with specific property forms upon which to build a firm class and firm class rule. Their whole *tendency* is to develop into a new property-owning class, that is, into a capi-

talist class based on private property. Blocking the road to the realization of this yearning stands the still powerful reality of the nationalization of the means of production and exchange, centralized planning, and the protection of nationalized industry which is afforded by the monopoly of foreign trade.

The bureaucracy, closely interlinked with these restorationist strata of Soviet society and embodying their social aspirations, is now driven by inexorable forces to take its next big step backward. Hitherto, the reaction has been confined essentially to the destruction of the whole political superstructure of the workers’ democracy established by the revolution, and to the physical annihilation of all those who were the living connection between today and the revolutionary yesterday. From now on, the anti-Soviet bureaucracy will, and in a certain sense, must seek its self-preservation by an assault upon the economic foundations of the workers’ state: nationalized property, planning, the monopoly of foreign trade.

In our opinion, it cannot and will not succeed in establishing the rule of an independent, new Russian capitalist class, even if we arbitrarily exclude the possibility, *by no means exhausted*, of the crushing of the counter-revolutionary bureaucracy by a resurgent proletariat. The new strata of society gathered around the ruling Soviet clique *may* prevail over the Russian proletariat in the period to come. But we do not believe that they are strong or solidly rooted enough to develop into a national neo-bourgeoisie capable of resisting, on a capitalist basis, the infinitely stronger bourgeoisie of the foreign imperialist countries.

In other words, the Stalinist bureaucracy and its satellites are doomed regardless of the outcome. They cannot develop into an independent ruling capitalist class in Russia. Either they are defeated by the proletariat which carries through a political revolution for the purpose of restoring workers’ democracy and of safeguarding the economic basis of the workers’ state which still exists. Or they are defeated by powerful foreign imperialism, which would wipe out that old economic basis, reduce the Union to a semi-colonial country, and convert the restorationist strata not into a ruling capitalist class for Russia but merely into a compradore agency of world imperialism, occupying a position not dissimilar from that of the Chinese national bourgeoisie.

The class conscious workers will place all their hopes and bend all their efforts towards the realization of the former outcome of the struggle. The building of the revolutionary party to lead the Russian masses in the battle to save the Russian revolution is dependent upon the success of the revolutionary movement in the capitalist world. The depression and reaction in the ranks of the Russian proletariat was created by the defeats of the working class in the rest of the world, by the feeling of the Russians that they had no powerful allies in the capitalist world. The growth and victories of the Fourth International will galvanize the latent revolutionary strength of the Russian masses and set it into irresistible motion. Everything depends on the speed with which we accomplish our indicated task. * * *

The crisis of the Russian revolution has emboldened all the critics of Bolshevism, that is, of revolutionary Marxism—all of them, old and new. But all their hoary argumentation leaves the Marxist unrepentant for his solidarity with those principles and ideas which made the Russian revolution possible. For in abandoning these ideas, he would have to adopt others, and what others are there? Should he adopt those of the Mensheviks? It is true: had they triumphed, the proletarian revolution in Russia would not have degenerated into its Stalinist caricature for the simple reason that there would have been no proletarian revolution. Should he adopt those of the Western European confrères of the Mensheviks, the parties of the Second International? It is true: they did not let the proletarian revolution in Germany and Austria and Italy degenerate, and that by the simple device of crushing it in the egg and thus facilitating the consolidation of their famous

bourgeois democracy which brought the working class directly under the knife of Hitler and Schuschnigg and Mussolini. Should he adopt those of the anarchist politicians who have become so clamorous of late, especially about the Kronstadt rebellion? But the lamentable collapse of anarchist politics in Spain, the servile collaboration with the bourgeoisie, the heaping of capitulation upon capitulation and the yielding of one position after another without a struggle, are not calculated to attract us away from Marxism.

It is not in place here to dwell on the flawlessness of Bolshevism and all its policies in the great period of the revolution. Its defects may be freely granted. But the oppressed and exploited of the world have not yet been offered a scientific guide to action in their struggle for freedom which can even remotely claim to serve as a substitute for the party and principles of Lenin. In the face of enormous obstacles—not the least of which were created, with arms in hand, by the present-day bourgeois and reformist critics—Lenin and the Bolsheviks carried through the first conscious proletarian revolution. They laid the economic foundation for the new society without class rule, without iniquity or exploitation or oppression. They—and nobody else—gave us a picture of the truly breath-taking prospects for human advancement and human dignity which are open to us as soon as capitalism is sent to the rubbish-heap.

Rash indeed would he be who forecast the immediate future of the Russian revolution. But whatever it may be, its historical achievements are already imperishable. The first steam engine may not have been much faster than the old-fashioned stage-coach, if it was able to move at all. But the country's network of rails is today skimmed by speedy, advanced, stream-line locomotives, while the stage-coach can be found only in museums. The creation of the steam-engine was a monumental contribution to human progress. The creation of the first Soviet republic was an even greater contribution. History will give little place to the period of Stalinist counter-revolution, for it will treat it as a passing historical episode. But the Bolshevik revolution of 1917 and its enduring achievements will never be wiped out of the consciousness of man, for it sounded the knell of all class rule, marked the beginning of the end of man's pre-history, the inauguration of a new era for a new man. In this sense, Lenin and his party of revolutionary Bolsheviks could say with Ovid: *Jamque opus exegi: quod nec Jovis ira, nec ignes, Nec poterit ferrum, nec edax abolere vetustas.*

"I have now completed a work which neither the wrath of Jove, nor fire, nor the sword, nor the corroding tooth of time, shall be able to destroy."

Max SHACHTMAN

The Question of Trade Union Unity

THE GIGANTIC STRUGGLES and brilliant advances of the American workers, especially in the mass production industries, during the past two years constitute an extraordinary and very decisive chapter in the history of the trade union movement, one that might well be entitled "The Triumph of Industrial Unionism". Yet it represented more than a triumph of a trade union principle of organization. It constituted a series of class struggles that began as minor skirmishes and developed into an embryo civil war, pitting decisive sections of the American proletariat in desperate struggle against its class enemy in the strongholds of capitalism, the basic industries of auto, rubber, steel and the like.

Even a superficial glance over the industrial map of America offers impressive testimony of the advances made by the proletariat during this period. In Michigan, notorious open shop center of the auto industry, Detroit and Flint are strong union cities. Only Ford has been able to stave off the march of the union banner. In Ohio, Akron, rubber center of the world, is a union town. The feudal-like Pennsylvania steel towns, bulwarks of the Steel Trust dynasties, totter before the never-ending union activities and development.

In 1935 the American trade union movement rested primarily on craft unions, representing chiefly the aristocracy of labor such as the building trades unions. Less than a third of the 3,000,000 members of the American Federation of Labor were industrial workers, (coal miners, textile workers, etc.). The A.F. of L. Executive Council, which held a deadly grip over the membership, was a corrupt, reactionary and senile bureaucracy, utterly incompetent to carry out any serious campaigns of union organization.

Today, there are over 3,000,000 mass production workers enrolled under the banner of the Committee for Industrial Organization. Despite the fact that nearly 1,000,000 members left the A.F. of L. when the C.I.O. was forced to split from the parent body, the A.F. of L. reports over 3,700,000 in membership. If one adds to those figures the membership of the Brotherhoods in the railroad industry, and scattered unions, it can safely be said that organized labor represents 8,000,000 workers. The decisive section, more or less, of the American proletariat has been organized.

Although these sweeping organizational gains came in a period of general decline of American and world capitalism, the upswing in industrial activity, giving the appearance of "prosperity" (already disappearing, to be sure) offered the economic basis for the resurgence of the labor movement. Industrial profits grew high. Rising living costs squeezed the workers from one side, the demands of the industrialist for increased productivity pressed them from another side. Low wages, long hours, and the terrible strain of the speed-up made inevitable the coming of strike struggles to alleviate this pressure.

The utter failure of the A.F. of L. to retain the hundreds of thousands of steel, auto, rubber, and other mass production workers who had joined the union movement in the first flush of the N.R.A. in 1933-1934, made further organization or leadership under that body almost impossible. The A.F. of L. policy of hopelessly dividing the workers into numerous craft unions (22 in the auto industry, for example) was properly viewed by the workers as a deliberate attempt to split them in favor of the bosses.

In the eyes of the workers, the A.F. of L. symbolized sell-outs, betrayals and impotence. The harsh lesson of the Green-Roosevelt auto-truce agreement in 1934 which broke the huge auto workers' unions into pieces and caused the growth of independent unions, rankled in the minds of every conscious mass production worker. The crass betrayal of the steel workers, the sell-out Washington truce agreement shoved on the rubber workers—these glaringly exposed the real reactionary nature of the A.F. of L. bureaucracy.

Revolt against those hopeless policies was inevitable. It appeared in the October 1934 annual convention of the A.F. of L. Over 10,000 votes were mustered for a resolution demanding that the mass production industries be organized on an industrial union basis. Rubber worker and auto union delegates especially sought to organize a nation-wide caucus in the A.F. of L. to fight for industrial unionism. They turned, quite naturally, to John L. Lewis, president of the United Mine Workers, whose 400,000 members were united in industrial unions. It was here that the seed was planted which grew into the C.I.O. of 1936.

When the A.F. of L. Executive Council was finally forced into

accepting a compromise resolution which would permit certain mass production industries to be organized into industrial unions, with international charters, it stalled and delayed action as long as possible. But the rank and file was learning from its experiences. Green was forced to issue an international charter to the auto workers in August 1935, although he assumed control of the union through appointing its president, Francis Dillon, a henchman.

Traveling next to Akron, Ohio, Green attempted a similar *coup* among the rubber workers at their small convention to set up an international union. He received an astounding defeat. Progressive rubber workers threw out Green, his right-hand man, Coleman Claherty, and formed an international union based on the principle of industrial unionism and dedicated to a program of militant struggle to achieve the organization of that industry.

Meanwhile, the continued demands by rank and file workers throughout the country, and the jeopardy to their own unions if the basic industries remained open shop, caused Lewis, Sidney Hillman of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, David Dubinsky of the International Ladies Garment Workers, and others to form the Committee for Industrial Organization. These officials had sought to convince the other members of the A.F. of L. Executive Council to allow formation of industrial unions, but to no avail. Lewis and company then decided to promote the organization of industrial unions by using their power and prestige, and the backing of their membership, to aid the skeletons of the steel, auto, rubber and other mass production industry unions.

A spontaneous strike in the huge Goodyear rubber plants in Akron, Ohio, in February 1936 offered the first test and opportunity to the newly-developing industrial union movement. The C. I. O. was urged and decided to help the rubber workers win this struggle. The courage, determination and militancy of the workers brought success. It gave inspiration and impetus to the union movement everywhere, especially in the auto industry. The C.I.O. aided progressive auto workers in capturing control of the United Automobile Workers away from the A.F. of L. completely, and extensive plans for a nation-wide organizing campaign were adopted at this convention held in April 1936.

The lessons of the Goodyear strike enabled both the C.I.O. leadership and the unions to proceed with greater success. Mass picket lines, wide publicity of the strikers' grievances by use of radio, newspaper and other mediums of propaganda, gave understanding, won sympathy and dramatized the struggle in an appealing fashion. The drive to organize the steel industry employed all the new technique: Impressive union headquarters, publicity specialists, research directors, a huge staff of organizers. Campaigns in textiles, oil and other industries, also were mapped out.

Precisely at this juncture, in 1936, developed an unheard-of and unexpected weapon of strike struggle which changed entirely both the plans of the C.I.O. and the course of the labor movement. It was the sit-down strike. Little attention was paid to the stoppages of work in the rubber industry in the winter of 1935-1936 which a reporter dubbed "sit-downs" because the workers sat by their machines in protest against grievances until they were settled. Since fifty men in a key production department could tie up a whole plant of 10,000 workers, it gave the workers a new sense of power and it cost the companies so much money that sit-downs brought favorable results. After nearly 100 sit-downs in Akron, Ohio (most of them very successful) the idea gained ground. It caught the imagination of every kind of industrial and other worker when the French working class in May 1936 startled the entire world with the sweep and power and victory of the nation-wide sit-down strike wave that shook the very foundations of bourgeois France.

The ebbs and flows of the sit-down strike wave movement developed with intensity towards a major convulsion. A group of messenger boys here, waitresses elsewhere, steel workers, retail clerks, auto workers, even grade school children, used this weapon

of sit-down strikes to win concessions from their masters. Minor sit-downs disturbed the production flow in the auto plants. Soon these developed into the shut-down of the Flint auto plants. The six-weeks General Motors sit-down strike in February 1937 became a fact before the C.I.O. leadership understood what was happening. This struggle of the auto workers was the greatest strike—and the most significant—since the N.R.A. days began. Its direct effects were felt from Atlanta, Georgia, to Los Angeles, Calif. It involved over 130,000 workers. It laid bare the class nature of the capitalist state in a fashion seldom equalled. It threatened, because of the sit-down aspect, the very sacred concept of private property. Bitter street battles, vigilantism, the National Guards as strike-breakers, the double-crossing politicians; these indicate the character of the struggle.

Sit-down strikes as the most effective mass production industry weapon of the workers were vindicated a thousandfold. Again, the proletariat had demonstrated its ingenuity in finding new and invincible weapons of struggle against the ruling class when historic conditions demanded it. Despite the vacillating rôle of the C.I.O. leaders and the auto workers' union officials, the rank and file fought sturdily to gain the victory, even though the agreement itself was only a compromise. Union consciousness, and to some extent class consciousness, permeated the ranks of thousands of hitherto "backward" working class elements, although the Roosevelt régime, the Stalinists and the C.I.O. leaders did their utmost to soften and conceal the basic class antagonisms which leaped to the surface in the course of the battle.

Coming directly along with the General Motors strike as part of the C.I.O. success, the announcement that the U. S. Steel Corporation had signed a C.I.O. contract involving over 250,000 marked the high point of development of the new industrial union movement. The C.I.O. was generally viewed as the successor of the A.F. of L. as the main stream of the American labor movement. Certainly, it was the progressive section of the union movement. Both the C.I.O. leadership and the rank and file began to consider itself invincible—repeated warnings by revolutionary socialists wherever they had influence, as in rubber, were ignored as "pessimism". Achilles heel of the C.I.O. was its belief in class collaboration policies, its dependence on the government, specifically on Roosevelt. The union movement, by and large, failed to understand that the rubber and auto strike successes were possible only because, in action, the workers had adopted a policy of class struggle; that the power of the picket line and intransigence of the rank and file against bad compromise settlements had brought victory.

This inherent weakness of the C.I.O. (and of the A.F. of L., of course), namely its pursuit of a class collaboration policy whenever possible, revealed itself in the spring of 1937 at great cost to the workers, in the so-called "Little Steel" strike.

Refusal of the four independent steel companies, Inland, Republic, Crucible and Bethlehem, to sign a contract with the Steel Workers Organizing Committee (C.I.O.) in April 1937 made a strike inevitable. It appeared to the workers as a sure-fire success. The C.I.O. top leadership, Lewis, Philip Murray and others, were in direct charge. The Stalinists, with their usual pomposity, also predicted inevitable success. They had bootlicked their way into secondary leadership, and had considerable following because the rank and file considered them—what a ghastly illusion!—as Progressives.

The steel companies didn't waste any time. Terrorism, tons of false propaganda, injunctions, and all the other means of oppression were immediately employed against the strikers who shut down all the key plants. The steel workers had expected a fight. Years of brutality by the bosses had taught them that only a life-and-death struggle would bring victory. But the militant workers were cursed with the capitulatory leadership of the C.I.O. and the Stalinist fakers. Instead of mass picket lines, a militant counter-offensive against the steel barons' attacks, and a policy

of class struggle, the workers were influenced to a program of faith in government agencies.

It took the brutal shock of the Memorial Day massacre of 14 steel workers by Chicago police thugs to reveal the weakness of the C.I.O. policies, the danger of disastrous defeat unless the workers were given a program of action which had been tested and proven correct in the auto and other strikes. An aggressive campaign against the bloody murderers could have stirred into decisive action hundreds of thousands of workers in other industries. The rubber workers' rank and file demanded a general strike, as advocated by revolutionary socialists. The auto plants were seething with the anger of the union men. Mass action was the order of the day.

But the C.I.O. leaders, seconded by the treacherous Stalinists, turned instead to Roosevelt. He rebuffed them, as was to be expected, with the classic statement: "A plague on both your houses." Governor Earle of Pennsylvania, a political and personal associate of the C.I.O. leaders, double-crossed the steel workers and opened up the large Cambria plant in Johnstown. Governor Murphy, the "Roosevelt of Michigan" as Lewis called him, gave free rein to vigilantism in Monroe, Mich., but threatened to call the National Guard, if the workers defended themselves at a steel plant there. The C.I.O.-backed governor of Ohio, Martin L. Davey, was called by Lewis to stop the terrorism in Youngstown and Canton. He did. He broke the strike by opening the plants with the bayonets of the Guard. Davey substituted "legal" terrorism for the cruder form of vigilantism.

How little prepared the strikers were for these events was illustrated, most unfortunately, by the fact that the arrival of the National Guards was cheered by them, with the Stalinists and the C.I.O. leaders arranging meetings to welcome the khaki-clothed strike-breakers! Such betrayal demoralized the ranks of the steel workers. When they saw the consequences of the leaders' policies, the strikers returned to work, bitter, disillusioned, but not forgetting.

The rôle of the A.F. of L. leadership was that of strike-breakers during the "Little Steel" strike. They tried to sign contracts and to make deals with company unions. The A.F. of L. rank and file showed how it stood, however, by its support on the picket lines—in Youngstown, Ohio, for example, the A.F. of L. truck drivers' union called a general strike to support the steel workers. Taking advantage of the C.I.O. defeat, the A.F. of L. Executive Council ordered all Central Labor Unions to expel C.I.O. affiliates wherever the labor movement was still united. Splits were carried out in Akron, Cleveland, Detroit and other industrial cities, precisely when labor solidarity was indispensable to prevent the "Little Steel" defeat from turning into a rout. This indicates why the middle-west is the center today of a growing reaction against the labor movement which threatens to take away the gains of the past two years.

The character of the A.F. of L. national convention at Denver, Colorado, in September of this year, was partly determined by the C.I.O. defeats in steel and, subsequently, elsewhere. Moreover, the A.F. of L., for many reasons, had developed new life and strength during the period of the rise of the C.I.O. Victories in rubber and auto furnished impetus for all unions. The A.F. of L. was forced to conduct more aggressive organizing campaigns. In some sections, as in Minneapolis, the A.F. of L. is the progressive movement, (due there, of course, to the outstanding work of the revolutionary socialists in the truck drivers' union). On the West Coast, the maritime unions, affiliated with the A.F. of L. until recently, were continuing the forward drive started by the 1934 general strike victory. On the basis of the victories of its rank and file—against the official top leadership's policies—the A.F. of L. bureaucracy is now seeking to reestablish itself in the dominant rôle of the labor movement.

Meanwhile, the blows of the reactionary forces on both the A.F. of L. and the C.I.O. unions accelerated the development

recently of the unity movement in the ranks of labor. The decline in business activity with the attendant lay-offs and the disappearance of the concessions won from the capitalists in the recent struggles, have alarmed the entire trade union movement. The militancy of the workers is at a low stage because of these factors, and particularly because the bureaucracy subdued the progressive elements under the slogan of "union responsibility". The Roosevelt régime wants a unified labor movement behind its war-preparation program, and feels it can better control the workers under one banner, so pressure from the White House has been in that direction.

The most important factor for unity, however is the settlement of the splitting issue, industrial *versus* craft unionism, by the test of events in favor of the C.I.O. This is indisputable, as both the C.I.O. and A.F. of L. officials realize. An interesting light on the course of development of this question is shown by the fact that one of the bitterest opponents of the C.I.O., Wharton, president of the machinists' union, has organized his union on an industrial basis wherever possible. The dispute between the C.I.O. and A.F. of L. no longer rests on this basic question. Since the C.I.O. began issuing charters to craft unions, the jurisdictional aspects remaining have been aggravated, but nevertheless, the real issue, industrial unionism, has been settled basically.

A unity of the labor movement which curbs the serious and bitter internecine warfare would obviously be a progressive one. The present costly fight between the Stalinist-dominated C.I.O. unions and the reactionary Dave Beck controlled A.F. of L. unions on the West Coast is a crime against the working class, which bears the brunt of the blows. This deplorable situation on the West Coast is mentioned specifically because it emphasizes the problems facing labor in its movement towards unity.

Both the C.I.O. and the A.F. of L. leaderships must be condemned sharply for the lack of democracy within the unions. The high-handed action of Lewis in appointing Harry Bridges, Stalinist stooge, as West Coast C.I.O. director, played directly into the hands of that notorious labor czar, Beck. The entire set-up of the C.I.O. is bureaucratic by its very nature. A committee of fifteen, dominated by Lewis, is the sole policy-deciding body of the C.I.O., and the rank and file membership has no vote whatsoever. The steel workers haven't had a convention to elect their own officers after two years of existence. Lewis-appointed henchmen control the steel workers union. The growth of bureaucracy in the new C.I.O. unions like the Auto Workers is dangerous. Of course, the sins of the A.F. of L. union heads on this score would fill volumes. Democracy within the labor movement, autonomy of international unions, election of all union officials; these are some of the demands and serious problems before the rank and file. In these struggles, the revolutionary socialists must take first place as leaders of the workers' opposition to bureaucrats.

The general trend of the labor movement in America, because of the various factors indicated in this article, is towards unity. The revolutionary Marxist, above all, must pose the question of what kind of unity? There can be only one kind of unity which has real validity for the revolutionary socialist. It is unity of the workers against the bosses, under a program that advances the basic interests of the workers, namely a program of class struggle. Our task, in the coming period, consists in fighting for a unity of the labor movement which includes (1) democracy in all unions; (2) militant class struggle policies against the bosses; (3) recognition of the rights, if not the superiority, of industrial unionism. In struggling for these demands in the coming period, the revolutionary socialists can not only win to their ranks the militant and progressive workers but can prepare the working class for its historic mission—the revolutionary overthrow of American capitalism.

B. J. WIDICK.

The End of the Chinese Soviets

THE HISTORIAN who undertakes to trace and explain the abrupt about-face which projected the Communist International and its sections from the "Third Period" of adventurism and irresponsible phrasemongering into the "Fourth Period" of Popular Frontism, class collaboration and social-patriotic betrayal of the international proletariat, will encounter in his study of the Chinese political scene a record of what is probably the most crassly cynical treason ever to disgrace the pages of revolutionary history.

In the so-called democratic countries, the Stalinist about-face was marked by the abandonment of the dominant "theory of social-fascism" which led to the tragic defeat of the German and Austrian proletariat, in favor of diametrically opposite theories supporting the line of the Popular Front, organic fusion with the social democracy, and support of the bourgeois-democratic governments. But in China, the only country in the Far East where Stalinism has exerted any real influence during the past decade, the switch has been even more startling. Here the "new line" has involved, as an integral part of the act of theoretical and political self-repudiation, the voluntary abandonment of an armed struggle against the Kuomintang régime of Chiang Kai-shek which raged across the face of China for nearly ten years, a struggle which was declared by the Stalinists to be part and parcel of the struggle against imperialism.

Those who have made a practise of following the Stalinist press will not easily forget the extravagant language in which an expectant world was informed that a Soviet revolution, assuming the state form of a "democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry", had been victorious on a considerable portion of the territory of China. At the Thirteenth Plenum of the Executive Committee of the Communist International in December 1933, Wang Ming, Chinese representative, told his auditors that "the total area of the Chinese Soviet Republic is 1,348,180 square kilometers, while the area of the stable districts takes in 681,255 square kilometers". To emphasize the magnitude of this Soviet republic, the speaker declared that it was "vaster than any of the big capitalist countries of Western Europe". With such a head start, it was not surprising to find Wang Ming stating that the main political task of the Chinese Communist Party was the extension of the Soviet revolution to the rest of the country. Said he:

... we, of the C.P.C., consider the following to be our basic task: A struggle for the decisive victory of the Soviet revolution in all China, or in other words, in the words of Comrade Molotov, "the complete defeat of the enemy and the victory of the Red Army".

So that we may have clearly fixed in our minds who the enemy really was, let us listen to him further:

... our party is succeeding step by step in converting its slogans that "the overthrow of the Kuomintang régime is a condition of the successful prosecution of the national-revolutionary war against Japanese and other imperialisms" and that "the Soviet government and the Red Army of China are the only consistent fighters of the national-revolutionary war", from party slogans into slogans of the masses.

In making this declaration, Wang Ming reaffirmed what was written in the colonial thesis adopted by the Sixth World Congress of the Communist International in 1928, which states that "the party must explain to the masses the impossibility of a radical improvement in their position, the impossibility of the overthrow of imperialist domination and solution of the tasks of the agrarian revolution, without the overthrow from power of the Kuomintang and militarists and the creation of the rule of Soviets". This line was conceived, too, as having a great international significance, for at that same Thirteenth Plenum Wang Ming declared: "Therefore it is quite clear that one must realize that the question of defending the Chinese Soviets is the question of defending the world proletarian revolution. . . ."

That, however, was in December 1933. Without pausing to dwell on the vain Stalinist notion that elemental peasant uprisings and land seizures in a period of revolutionary ebb constituted a "Soviet revolution", let us note that today "Soviet China" and the "Red Army" have disappeared totally from the scene. Soviet China has become a "Special Administrative District" under the jurisdiction of the Kuomintang government at Nanking, and the Red Army is now the "Eighth Route Army" subordinated to the high command of Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek. No longer is it asserted that the overthrow of the Kuomintang régime is the condition of a successful national-revolutionary war. Indeed, anyone who ventures to state this elementary truism is branded as an "enemy of the Chinese people" and an "agent of Japanese imperialism". The policies of the class struggle and the agrarian revolution have been publicly jettisoned. Today, the keynote of the Stalinist position is the "People's Anti-Japanese United Front" embracing "all parties and groups" (which in practise means the C.P. and the Kuomintang), leading to the establishment of an "All-Chinese Government of National Defense".

The naïve, who still retain a measure of faith in Stalinist political probity, may ask: But does not the call for an "All-Chinese Government of National Defense" imply the overthrow of the Kuomintang régime, even if only as a distant aim? Perish the thought! Spokesman Wang Ming declares (*Communist International*, Vol. 14, No. 10, Oct. 1937) any such suggestion to be "an absolutely false and unfounded legend spread by pro-Japanese elements. . . . It is slander, provocation!" And to make the Stalinist position thoroughly clear, he adds: "We, Chinese Communists, openly declare that we support the Kuomintang and the Nanking Government, and will fight shoulder to shoulder with them against Japanese imperialism." Only practical, military support in the war against Japan? There is no hint of it. *Critical* support, perhaps? But what foundation can there be for revolutionary criticism when the Stalinists have furled the revolutionary banner and embraced Sun Yat-senism, which is the Kuomintang's own political doctrine?

Before proceeding to study the real factors which have made for the startling about-face of the Chinese Stalinists, let us examine the official motivations for the new line. It is not unusual to discover that Stalinist turns in the realm of policy are put over on a stifled party under the pretext of correcting "errors" in the carrying out of the "general line", and this regardless of the fact that, a little while previously, tribute may have been paid to the correct and unimpeachable carrying out of the line by the Communist party concerned. Thus Wang Ming, referring at the Thirteenth Plenum of the E.C.C.I. to the "Bolshevization" of the Chinese Communist Party, declared under the heading of "*The Unquestionable Loyalty to the Leninist General Line of the Communist International*", as follows:

This further Bolshevization finds expression, first, in the fact that the C.P.C. headed by its C.C. firmly and undeviatingly carried out its general line, which had been worked out and defined by the Fourth Plenum of the C.C. held on January 7, 1931, under the leadership of the E.C.C.I., and that it does not fear any difficulties or complications that may arise in its path. What is the content of our general political line at the present stage of the Chinese Revolution? The struggle for every possible timely combination of the revolutionary mass movement in Soviet and non-Soviet China under the uniform leadership of the proletariat to overthrow the rule of the imperialists and their lackeys, the Kuomintang, and establish the power of the revolutionary democratic dictatorship of the working class and the peasantry in the form of Soviets throughout all China.

Yet less than two years later the redoubtable Wang Ming was to discover that the Chinese Communist Party, far from carrying out the general line "firmly and undeviatingly", had for quite some time been committing very serious political errors. Addressing

the Seventh World Congress of the Communist International on August 7, 1935, he said:

Now it is clear to everyone that if the Communist Party had applied the tactics of the anti-imperialist united front in a really serious, consistent and correct manner . . . the political situation in China would have shaped itself even more favorably for the development of the revolutionary struggle of the broadest masses of the people against imperialism and its agents.

But had not the overthrow of the Kuomintang régime and the "struggle for the decisive victory of the Soviet revolution in all China" been the "basic task" of the party, from which flowed its entire strategy and tactics? Was it not precisely *that* struggle which was to insure the success of the national-revolutionary war against imperialism? What need was there for any kind of "united front" when the forces of the "Soviet revolution" were deemed ample to carry that struggle to fruition?

As a matter of fact, despite all their ballyhoo concerning "Soviet China", the Stalinists were far from feeling that its forces were ample for anything. That is why, during 1932-1933, the Chinese Communist Party, as Wang Ming stated at the Seventh World Congress, "repeatedly addressed itself to all the military units of Kuomintang China with offers of concluding a fighting alliance for a joint struggle against imperialism, stipulating only the following elementary, strictly business-like conditions: the cessation of the offensive against the Soviet districts, the extension of democratic rights to the people (freedom of the press and of speech, the right to have unions, the right to organize, to hold demonstrations, to strike, etc.) and the right to organize and arm volunteer anti-Japanese detachments". Appeals of this kind were clearly designed, not to pave the way for any surrender agreement with the Kuomintang, but, and quite properly, to tear the supports from under the Kuomintang, thereby relieving the pressure on the Soviet districts, promoting the anti-imperialist struggle, and preparing the vanquishment of Chiang Kai-shek's régime.

This was the sense of party policy at that time, a fact which Wang Ming himself confirmed at the Thirteenth Plenum of the E.C.C.I., when, referring to the anti-imperialist struggle, he emphasized the need for a vigorous class struggle policy having as its aim the overthrow of the Kuomintang régime, "especially today when on the one hand Chiang Kai-shek and the whole Kuomintang have completely unmasked themselves in word and deed as the open carriers of national betrayal and when on the other hand the further advance of the Japanese and other imperialists continues without a halt for the purpose of partitioning China". Interpretation of the united front tactics to mean, not practical agreements with anti-Kuomintang elements, but an unprincipled political deal with the Kuomintang itself, was to come later. The theoretical groundwork for the deal was prepared at the Seventh World Congress, at which, in accord with established rule, the Chinese Stalinists were discovered to have been in error. And their error was "first of all a consequence of the fact that many of our comrades did not understand and do not understand [They have, of course, been properly instructed since—L.F.J.] the new situation which has arisen in China in recent years. They do not understand how to advance the subject of the anti-imperialist front in a *new manner*" (Emphasis is by Wang Ming—L.F.J.).

What was the "new situation" which the Chinese Stalinists "did not understand"? According to Wang Ming it consisted, first, in the "universal indignation of the people" evoked by the "unprecedented national crisis" which, in its turn, was caused by "the Japanese expansion and the treachery of the Kuomintang". The whole Chinese population, it seems, was turning to the idea of "a national-defensive war . . . against imperialism". Wang also claimed that "a considerable section of the national bourgeoisie . . . are freeing themselves more and more from the illusions they held concerning the Kuomintang and are turning for a way out to the toiling masses who are carrying on the struggle against Japanese imperialism and its agents" (*Communist International*, Vol. 13, Special No., Feb. 1936).

Secondly, the Red Army had grown into "a mighty military factor throughout China" and therefore could not but be considered by "all the anti-Japanese and anti-Chiang Kai-shek political and military groupings . . . as the greatest factor in the armed struggle against Japan and against Chiang Kai-shek" who, incidentally, was referred to as "this arch-traitor to the Chinese people". Thirdly, "for the organization and the successful carrying out of the national-revolutionary war of the armed people against the Japanese imperialists, the participation in this war not only of the Workers' and Peasants' Red Army, not only of all revolutionary-minded, class-conscious toilers, but also of the various political and military forces, who are temporary, unstable and vacillating allies, is necessary and unavoidable".

The student of Stalinist metaphysics will be pardoned if he fails to discern in this mass of verbiage any real evidence of a "new situation". Public manifestations of popular indignation against Chiang Kai-shek's policy of non-resistance to Japan, were at their all-time high in 1931-1932 when Japan seized Manchuria. Could Wang Ming have failed to remember this at the 1933 Plenum? And was not the Red Army a much mightier military factor at the time of that Plenum than it was at the time of the Seventh World Congress, when it had already been driven from its stronghold in Kiangsi province and was wandering in the far interior without any fixed base? As for the national bourgeoisie, what "illusions" have they *ever* had concerning the Kuomintang? The Kuomintang is *their own* government and they learned in 1925-1927 that the only alternative to that government is a government of proletarian dictatorship. They have maintained it, despite the damage to their interests caused by sell-outs to Japan, because they know that whereas to imperialism they lose only a *part* of their wealth and privilege, to the proletariat they would have to surrender the *whole*. Illusions? Where?

In any event, the "new situation", mythical as it turns out to be, called for new tactics. How was the Chinese Communist Party to advance the anti-imperialist front (shortly due to be rebaptized as the "People's Anti-Japanese United Front") in a new manner? Let us page Wang Ming again. Said he at the Seventh World Congress:

In my opinion and in the opinion of the entire Central Committee of the Communist Party of China our tactics should consist in a joint appeal with the Soviet Government of China to all the people, to all parties, groups, troops, mass organizations and to all prominent political and social leaders to organize together with us an All-Chinese United People's Government of National Defense and an All-Chinese United Anti-Japanese National Defense Army.

"All parties . . . all prominent political and social leaders"—thus was the way prepared for surrender to the Kuomintang and to the "arch-traitor Chiang Kai-shek".

There was, as a matter of fact, a "new situation", although it bore no resemblance whatever to the one conjured up by Wang Ming. And this new situation had arisen precisely in the interval between the Thirteenth Plenum and the Seventh World Congress. It consisted in the expulsion of the Chinese Red Army from Kiangsi, the virtual extinction of the Chinese Soviet Republic which had its seat there, and—on the international arena—the growing isolation of the Soviet Union in a sea of fascist and military states. These were the real factors which precipitated the Chinese Communist Party into the "Fourth Period" of decline and degeneration.

What was the "Chinese Soviet Republic"? Shorn of the trimmings in which its true character was obscured by Stalinist propagandists, it was simply a peasant power erected on the foundations of what was essentially an agrarian revolution led by the Communist Party. It arose as a belated echo of the great revolution of 1925-1927, which Chiang Kai-shek and Stalin succeeded in strangling through the policy of the "bloc of four classes", earlier version of the "anti-imperialist united front".

In the remote, inaccessible interior of China the peasants rose,

seized the land, and banded themselves together into military formations for the purpose of defending and extending their conquests. Red armies emerged as the spearhead of the peasant revolt over wide areas of South and Central China, but the "Soviet districts" which they created suffered from the beginning from all the limitations of a peasant movement. Rising in the period of ebb following upon a crushing revolutionary defeat, they were cut off from the working class in the cities and remained confined within isolated, economically poor areas. The inaccessibility of these districts afforded a certain military advantage and enabled the Red armies, with a large measure of support from the peasant population, who formed themselves into auxiliary bands of partisans, to resist successfully over a period of years the repeated offensives of the Kuomintang. But this same isolation and inaccessibility created for them economic difficulties which they were powerless to overcome.

By enforcing a blockade, the Kuomintang was able in the end to cut them off almost entirely from certain vital supplies, to say nothing of military equipment, for which they were dependent upon what they could seize from their enemies. Within the Soviet districts, moreover, class contradictions were fuel for constant struggles and difficulties against which the Communist Party, whose own land policies reflected these conflicts, was powerless. The land of the landlords was confiscated and divided. The crushing burden of taxation was lifted and eased. But the chief advantage fell with relentless inevitability to the rich peasants (independent small landholders with a small surplus) whose land was left untouched, who continued to exploit agricultural laborers and poor peasants, and who managed to secure a dominant hold in the Soviet administrative organs themselves.

Lacking the indispensable aid and unifying leadership of a powerful labor movement in the cities, the peasant armies and Soviet districts were doomed to continued isolation and ultimate defeat, or, what amounts to the same thing, political degeneration. It proved only a matter of time before the Kuomintang, unchallenged by the proletariat, whose wounds were still unhealed, with an inexhaustible source of military supplies from the foreign powers, with the more effective use of aviation and the application of shrewder military tactics, was able to drive the hard-fighting, hard-pressed peasant armies from their embattled territories. In November 1934 the Red armies were finally expelled from Kiangsi, and the "Central Soviet District", their main stronghold, was liquidated. The retreating Red forces marched and fought their way thousands of miles through the heart of China. Those who were left after this gruelling trek finally established themselves in northern Shensi, where they are located today. But what still remained of "Soviet China" was shortly to be liquidated in the Comintern policies of the "Fourth Period".

In the style so well beloved by the "beloved leader", the exit of the Red armies from Kiangsi, far from being acknowledged a defeat, was heralded as a great victory by the Stalinists. For them, it was a grand move of pre-arranged strategy designed to remove "Soviet China" to a safer place and there prepare the "complete victory". Facts, however, are stubborn things which even the Moscow strategists have occasionally to recognize. At the Thirteenth Plenum in December 1933 Wang Ming could still speak boldly of an extension of the Soviet revolution to all China. But the indubitable defeat of "Soviet China" less than a year later had to lead to a change in policy. In which direction—towards a policy of revolutionary realism based on principle, or towards opportunist degeneration? The general direction of Stalinist policy on a world scale had inevitably to exert a decisive pull on the Chinese Communist Party as well. Thus the united front against Japanese imperialism which the Chinese Stalinists tried but were unable to construct on a principled basis in 1932-1933, in the heyday of their "Soviets", was realized after the "Soviets" had been wiped out—but then in the horribly distorted shape of abject political surrender to the Kuomintang.

As we have seen, the new policy of the Chinese Communist Party, as outlined by Wang Ming at the Seventh World Congress, called for a united front of "all parties" against Japanese imperialism. In accordance with this directive, the Chinese Stalinists started on a hunt for political allies. But under the military dictatorship of Chiang Kai-shek, as under the fascist dictatorships of Mussolini and Hitler and the totalitarian régime of Stalin, there existed only *one* party—the Kuomintang. True, there was the small underground organization of the "counter-revolutionary" Trotskyists, but with them a united front was simply unthinkable. Then there was the insignificant "Third Party", a small underground Populist grouping, and the various petty bourgeois "patriotic" societies. These, however, were of little account. What was left? Only the Kuomintang. "Soviet China" was now little more than a legend. Moscow's problem was to prevent bourgeois China from allying itself with imperialist Japan against the Soviet Union, and if possible to get China to fight Japan, so that Japan would be unable to make war on the Soviet Union. A new Communist-Kuomintang "alliance" was placed squarely on the order of the day.

Mao Tse-tung, chairman of the "Soviet Government" of China, and Chu Teh, commander-in-chief of the Red armies, made the first formal overtures in an appeal addressed to the Nanking government and the Military Affairs Commission (of which Chiang Kai-shek is chairman) on May 5, 1936. This appeal called for the cessation of hostilities between the Red Army and the Nanking troops and the summoning of a "peace conference in order to realize our common aim of resisting the Japanese". Chiang, having driven the Red Army out of Kiangsi into the relatively inconsequential region of barren Shensi, received these overtures coldly. He felt he had nothing to gain from discussing terms with a vanquished adversary. Moreover, despite the subtle suggestion that he held in common with the Stalinists the aim of "resisting the Japanese", Chiang in fact had no stomach for any such resistance. Had he not proved it by allowing Japan to take all Manchuria, Jehol and northern Chahar without lifting a finger to defend those territories? The Chinese Stalinists would have to do a lot more belly-crawling before they could get near enough to shake Chiang's bloodstained hand. This was not long in coming, for Moscow's insistence on Chinese "unity" grew with each passing day.

A few short weeks later, in a communication to the All-China National Salvation Association, a petty bourgeois "patriotic" body with headquarters at Shanghai, Mao Tse-tung announced:

We have already adopted a decision not to confiscate the land of the rich peasants, and, if they come to us to fight against Japan, not to refuse to unite with them. We are not confiscating the property and the factories of the big and small Chinese merchants and capitalists. We protect their enterprises and help them to expand so that the material supply in the Soviet districts, so necessary for the anti-Japanese campaign, may be augmented in this way.

To cap this, Mao added the assurance that the scattered Red Army guerilla bands who, not having heard of the new party line, might still be confiscating landlords' land, would soon be brought to heel.

In the language of revolutionary politics this declaration, obviously intended to reach Chiang Kai-shek and the Kuomintang, was nothing less than an open renunciation of the class struggle and abject surrender of all that the Communist Party had ever stood for. Wang Ming, quite unconsciously, gave a fairly adequate advance characterization of this ignominious capitulation when, at the Seventh World Congress, less than a year previously, he criticized the "opportunist leadership" of the Chinese Communist Party in 1927. His criticism, however, should have been directed against the Stalin-Bukharin leadership of the Comintern which furnished the opportunist directives followed at that time by the Chinese Communists. Said Wang Ming:

We know from the history of the struggle of the Communist Party of China that when the opportunists in its leadership, headed by Chen Tu-hsiu, counterposed the tactics of the united national front to the task of the class struggle at the critical moment of the revolutionary movement in 1927, when for the sake of retaining a united national front with a part of the national

bourgeoisie these opportunists renounced the revolutionary struggle of the working class in defense of their interests, renounced the agrarian revolution of the peasantry, renounced the struggle for winning over national revolutionary armies and for arming the workers and peasants and, finally, when these opportunists rejected an independent policy in regard to our temporary allies . . . they brought the 1927 revolution to defeat.

This accusatory passage is a deadly commentary on the current Stalinist line in China. It condemns the Stalinists out of their own mouths.

Consummation of the Stalinist "united front" with the Kuomintang was accelerated in December 1936 when Chiang Kai-shek was taken prisoner in Sian as the result of a plot by young officers in the ranks of the *Tungpei* (Manchurian) armies which had been driven into China proper by the Japanese invaders in 1931-1932. The first reaction which the Stalinist press (including the *Daily Worker*) manifested to this incident was to hail it as a sign of rising anti-imperialist sentiment in China. Then the Moscow wires started to hum and the seizure of Chiang was denounced as a Japanese plot. Today, Harry Gannes, "foreign expert" of the *Daily Worker*, in his newly-published book (*When China Unites*) is able to boast that the Chinese Red Army used "all of its great influence with the *Tungpei* to preserve Chiang and send him back as national leader to Nanking".

How were the "Reds" rewarded for this touching display of magnanimity towards Chiang? Gannes tells us Chiang promised "to modify his policies to conform to the program of national salvation by complete unification and anti-Japanese resistance".

Be that as it may, the Generalissimo, on his return to Nanking, remained decidedly cold to the Stalinist overtures. Nanking was bombarded with Stalinist telegrams. Political toadying could scarcely reach any lower depths. Says Gannes: "The Chinese Communists offered to support Chiang as leader of the Central Government in order to complete the united national front against Japan". But even this abject bootlicking brought no encouraging response. It was repeated at the plenum of the C.E.C. of the Kuomintang early this year.

The main resolution of the Kuomintang plenum, however, seemed like a veritable slap in the face for the kowtowing Stalinists. It affirmed that the government had done all in its power to resist the Japanese invasion and that there would be no change of policy in this respect. Referring to the "Red Army" and the "Chinese Soviet Government", it declared "the cardinal policy of the Central authorities must be to root out such elements". Nanking was still, we observe, a little skeptical of Moscow's intentions.

Nevertheless, negotiations between Nanking and the Stalinists were initiated. And why not? Had not the Stalinists themselves already done the "rooting out" which the Kuomintang demanded, by throwing their entire program overboard? In any case, Nanking calculated, the Stalinists were too weak to carry through any hostile maneuvers. Moreover, the legions of Imperial Japan were marching again, this time in Suiyuan. Perhaps Nanking would be unable to avoid fighting Japan. A deal with the Chinese Stalinists might, in that case, bring military aid from Moscow. As the price of "unity" Nanking laid down four conditions:

1. Abolition of the Red Army and its incorporation into the armies of the Nanking government.
2. Unification of state power in the hands of the Nanking government and the dissolution of the so-called Chinese Soviet Republic and other organizations detrimental to government unity.
3. Cessation of all Communist propaganda.
4. Stoppage of the class struggle.

The Stalinists hesitated only a short time before accepting these terms which involved the adding of their organizational surrender to the already-announced political surrender. The "deal" was made public in an Associated Press dispatch from Nanking on September 22 of this year, as follows:

The "Government of the Soviet Republic of China" dissolved itself today and ordered its armies, large forces that have disturbed China's internal affairs for ten years, to serve Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek of the Nanking Central Government.

In a manifesto the Central Executive Committee of the Chinese Communist Party announced support of and unity with the present Chinese administration. Reorganization of the Communist army as a Nationalist revolutionary army under General Chiang's Military Affairs Commission was announced.

"The Chinese Communist Party, realizing that the principles of Sun Yat-sen are indispensable to the reconstruction of China, has decided to abandon all measures aimed at the overthrow of the Kuomintang government by force, propagation of Communist doctrines and the forcible expropriation of the land," the committee's manifesto declared. (*N. Y. Times*, Sept. 22, 1937.)

And what of the grandiose perspective of a Soviet China, to which, through so many years, the Stalinists clung? Was it, perhaps, all a joke or—a "comic misunderstanding"? According to Harry Gannes it could scarcely have been anything else. In his book, he writes:

Kuomintang-Communist unity was first achieved during 1925-27. After reaching an unprecedented high point in effective anti-imperialist battles, unity was violently ruptured, but not without the foundation being laid for its reestablishment on an entirely different plane and for a more specific objective. The beginning of the destruction of the original national collaboration was already discernible in 1926, at the very first stages of preparation for the military campaign for national unification. And yet the seeds of a newer, stronger understanding were undoubtedly sown in the very split which concluded the first stage of Kuomintang-Communist unity in the latter part of 1927.

Thus the sanguinary undoing of the Chinese revolution in 1927, the countless battles of the heroic Chinese peasants to regain the land and consolidate their rights under a new social order, battles which cost many thousands of peasant lives and untold suffering and misery—all this was merely part of a pre-ordained plan which was to enable the Stalinist chieftains to grasp once again the hand of executioner Chiang Kai-shek!! And the ponderous Plenum speeches of Wang Ming, heavy with vainglory—what were they? Just grist for gullible followers to chew upon?

But is not Chiang Kai-shek nevertheless fighting against Japanese imperialism? Is not that war a progressive one which it is the bounden duty of all revolutionists to support? Are not the Stalinists right, then, in making a united front with Chiang Kai-shek and the Kuomintang? These questions demand an answer. Chiang is fighting against Japanese imperialism and, regardless of his motives for so doing, the war, being that of an oppressed semi-colonial country against an imperialist oppressor, possesses an unquestionably progressive character. The progressive character of the war is modified not one whit by the fact that the struggle is led and directed by Chiang Kai-shek, hangman of the Chinese revolution. Marxists, however, having studied the lessons of history (particularly those afforded by the recent history of China), do not believe that China can win true national independence under Chiang's leadership. The Chinese bourgeoisie and its government are quite incapable, principally because of their ties with imperialism and their fear of the masses, of carrying the war to a successful conclusion. They will compromise with Japan, or, what will amount to the same thing from the point of view of China's independence, make a deal with Japan's imperialist rivals.

It is the duty of revolutionists to support China's struggle by all means possible, including agreements of a strictly practical nature with Chiang Kai-shek and the Kuomintang—but by no means to abandon their own program, to dissolve themselves in a "People's Front", to relinquish the right of criticizing and condemning the Kuomintang's conduct of the war. The Stalinists, spurning the Leninist united front tactic, have done just this latter. Thereby they are aiding and becoming parties to the betrayal of China's struggle, which Chiang Kai-shek is already preparing through "friendly" powers. The Bolsheviks under Lenin's leadership "supported" Kerensky against Kornilov, while at the same time preparing to overthrow Kerensky and establish workers' power. The Chinese Stalinists, however, accord Chiang Kai-shek unconditional *political* support (without quotes) thereby betraying the revolution and the national struggle which is indissolubly bound up with it.

Just as in 1925-1927 Kuomintang-Communist "unity" (which meant the political subordination of the Communist Party to the Kuomintang and the workers to the bourgeoisie) led to the strangling of the Chinese revolution and the slaughter of the revolutionists, so today it is directed—this time quite consciously—against the infant beginnings of the new revolution. We have Wang Ming's assurance for that. Writing in the *Communist International*, Vol. 14, No. 10, Oct. 1937) he declares:

The Chinese people and world public opinion will judge of the degree of determination and readiness of the Kuomintang and Nanking government, and also of the local military and political authorities, to undertake the

armed struggle against the Japanese aggressors, by their attitude to all Japanese agents and national traitors and, in particular, to these Japano-Trotskyist fascist agents. The government and peoples of the U.S.S.R. are setting us an example of how to fight against foreign secret services and to purge the state, military and party apparatus of these vipers, thereby strengthening its defensive power and safeguarding the rear in the event of an attack by foreign aggressors.

Ominous words! Already there is evidence that the G.P.U. is operating with frame-up methods against the Bolshevik-Leninists in China, as it has done and is doing in the Soviet Union and in Spain. Let every revolutionist stand on guard!

LI FU-JEN

90 Years of the 'Communist Manifesto'*

IT IS HARD TO believe that the centennial of the *Manifesto of the Communist Party* is only ten years away! This pamphlet, greater in genius than any other in world literature, astounds us even today by its timeliness. Its most important sections appear to have been written yesterday. Assuredly, the young authors (Marx was 29, Engels, 27) were able to look further into the future than was given to anyone before them, and than, in all likelihood, will be given to anyone after them.

In their joint preface to the German edition of 1872, Marx and Engels already declared that despite the fact that certain secondary passages in the *Manifesto* were antiquated, they felt they no longer had any right to alter the original text inasmuch as the *Manifesto* had already become an historical document, during the intervening period of twenty-five years.

Sixty-five additional years have elapsed since that time. Isolated passages in the *Manifesto* have receded still further into the past. We shall try to establish succinctly in this preface both those ideas in the *Manifesto* which retain their full force today and those which require important alteration or amplification.

1. The materialistic interpretation of history, discovered by Marx only a short while before and applied with consummate skill in the *Manifesto*, has completely withstood the test of events and the blows of hostile criticism. It constitutes today one of the most precious instruments of human thought. All other interpretations of the historical process have been emptied of any scientific meaning. We can state with certainty that it is impossible in our time not only to be a revolutionary militant but merely literate in politics without assimilating the materialist interpretation of history.

2. The first chapter of the *Manifesto* opens with the following words: "The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles." This postulate, the most important conclusion drawn from the materialistic interpretation of history, immediately became an issue in the class struggle. Especially venomous attacks were directed by reactionary hypocrites, liberal doctrinaires and idealistic democrats against the theory which replaced "common welfare," "national unity" and "eternal moral truths" as the driving force by the struggle of material interests. They were later joined by recruits from the ranks of the labor movement itself, by the so-called revisionists, *i.e.*, the proponents of reviewing ("revising") Marxism in the spirit of class collaboration and class conciliation. Finally, in our own time, the same path has been followed in practise by the contemptible epigones of the Communist International (the "Stalinists"). The policy of the so-called "People's Front" flows wholly from the denial of the laws of the class struggle. Meanwhile, it is precisely the epoch of imperialism, bringing all social contradictions to the point of highest tension, that constitutes the supreme *theoretical* triumph of the *Communist Manifesto*.

3. The anatomy of capitalism, as a specific stage in the economic development of society, was given by Marx in its finished

form in *Capital* (1867). But already in the *Communist Manifesto* the main lines of the future analysis are sketched boldly, as with a graver's tool: the payment for labor power as equivalent to the cost of its reproduction; the appropriation of surplus value by the capitalists; competition as the basic law of social relations; the ruination of intermediate classes, *i.e.*, the urban petty bourgeoisie and the peasantry; the concentration of wealth in the hands of an ever diminishing number of property owners at one pole, and the numerical growth of the proletariat, at the other; the preparation of the material and political pre-conditions for the socialist régime.

4. A heavy barrage has been fired at the proposition in the *Manifesto* concerning the tendency of capitalism to lower the living standards of the workers, and even to transform them into paupers. Priests, professors, ministers, journalists, social democratic theoreticians and trade union leaders came to the front against the so-called "theory of impoverishment". They invariably discovered signs of growing prosperity among the toilers, palming off the labor aristocracy as the proletariat, or taking a fleeting tendency as universal. Meanwhile, even the development of the mightiest capitalism in the world, namely, U. S. capitalism, has transformed millions of workers into paupers who are maintained at the expense of federal, municipal or private charity.

5. As against the *Manifesto*, which depicted commercial and industrial crises as a series of ever more extensive catastrophes, the revisionists asserted that the national and international development of trusts would assure control over the market, and lead gradually to the abolition of crises. The close of the last century and the beginning of the present one were marked by so tempestuous a development of capitalism as made crises seem only "accidental" stoppages. But this epoch has gone beyond return. In the last analysis, truth proved to be on Marx's side in this question as well.

6. "The executive of the modern state is but a committee for managing the common affairs of the whole bourgeoisie." This succinct formula, which the leaders of the social democracy looked upon as a journalistic paradox, contains in fact the only scientific theory of the state. The democracy fashioned by the bourgeoisie is not, as both Bernstein and Kautsky thought, an empty sack able to contain any kind of class content. Bourgeois democracy can serve only the bourgeoisie. A government of the People's Front, whether headed by Blum or Chautemps, Caballero or Negrin, is only "a committee for managing the common affairs of the whole bourgeoisie". Whenever this "committee" manages affairs poorly, the bourgeoisie dismisses it with a boot.

7. "Every class struggle is a political struggle." "The organization of the proletariat as a class [is] consequently its organization into a political party." Trade unionists on the one hand, and anarcho-syndicalists on the other, have long shied away—and even now try to shy away—from the understanding of these historical laws. "Pure" trade unionism has been dealt a crushing blow in its chief refuge: the United States. Anarcho-syndicalism has suffered

*Preface to the first edition of the *Manifesto* ever to be published in Afrikaans, the language of the natives of the Union of South Africa.

an irreparable defeat in its last stronghold—Spain. Here too the *Manifesto* proved correct.

8. The proletariat cannot conquer power within the legal framework established by the bourgeoisie. "Communists openly declare that their ends can be attained only by the forcible overthrow of all existing social conditions." Reformism sought to explain this postulate of the *Manifesto* on the grounds of the immaturity of the movement and the inadequate development of democracy at that time. The fate of Italian, German, and a great number of other "democracies" proves that "immaturity" is the distinguishing trait of the ideas of the reformists themselves.

9. For the socialist transformation of society, the working class must concentrate in its hands such power as can smash each and every political obstacle barring the road to the new system. "The proletariat organized as the ruling class"—this is what the dictatorship is. At the same time it is the only true proletarian democracy. Its scope and depth depend upon concrete historical conditions. The greater the number of states that take the path of the socialist revolution, the freer and more flexible forms will the dictatorship assume, the broader and more deep-going will be workers' democracy.

10. The international development of capitalism has predetermined the international character of the proletarian revolution. "United action, of the leading civilized countries at least, is one of the first conditions for the emancipation of the proletariat." The subsequent development of capitalism has so closely knit all sections of our planet, both "civilised" and "uncivilised", that the problem of the socialist revolution has completely and decisively assumed a world character. The Soviet bureaucracy attempted to liquidate the *Manifesto* with respect to this fundamental question. The Bonapartist degeneration of the Soviet state is an overwhelming illustration of the falsity of the theory of socialism in one country.

11. "When, in the course of development, class distinctions have disappeared, and all production has been concentrated in the hands of a vast association of the whole nation, the public power will lose its political character." In other words: the state withers away. Society remains, freed from the straitjacket. This is nothing else but socialism. The converse theorem: the monstrous growth of state coercion in the U.S.S.R. is eloquent testimony that society is moving away from socialism.

12. "The workingmen have no fatherland." These words of the *Manifesto* have more than once been evaluated by philistines as an agitational quip. As a matter of fact they provided the proletariat with the sole conceivable directive in the question of the capitalist "fatherland". The violation of this directive by the Second International brought about not only four years of devastation in Europe, but the present stagnation of world culture. In view of the impending new war, for which the betrayal of the Third International has paved the way, the *Manifesto* remains even now the most reliable counsellor on the question of the capitalist "fatherland".

* * *

Thus we see that the joint and rather brief production of two young authors still continues to give irreplaceable directives upon the most important and burning questions of the struggle for emancipation. What other book could even distantly be compared in this respect with the *Communist Manifesto*? But this does not imply that, after ninety years of unprecedented development of productive forces and vast social struggles, the *Manifesto* needs neither correction nor addition. Revolutionary thought has nothing in common with idolatry. Programs and prognoses are tested and corrected in the light of experience, which is the supreme criterion of human reason. The *Manifesto*, too, requires correction and addition. However, as is evidenced by historical experience itself, these corrections and additions can be successfully made only by proceeding in accord with the method lodged at the

foundation of the *Manifesto* itself. We shall try to indicate this in several most important instances.

1. Marx taught that no social system departs from the arena of history before exhausting its creative potentialities. The *Manifesto* excoriates capitalism for retarding the development of the productive forces. During that period, as well as in the following decades, this "retardation" was, however, only *relative* in nature. Had it been possible at the end of the 19th century to organize economy on socialist beginnings, its tempos of growth would have been immeasurably greater. But this theoretically irrefutable postulate does not invalidate the fact that the productive forces kept expanding on a world scale right up to the world war. Only in the last twenty years, despite the most modern conquests of science and technology, has the epoch begun of out-and-out stagnation and even decline of world economy. Mankind is beginning to expend its accumulated capital, while the next war threatens to destroy the very foundations of civilization for many years to come. The authors of the *Manifesto* thought that capitalism would be scrapped long prior to the time when from a relatively reactionary régime it would turn into an absolutely reactionary régime. This transformation took final shape only before the eyes of the present generation, transforming our epoch into the epoch of wars, revolutions, and fascism.

2. The error of Marx and Engels as regards the historical dates flowed, on the one hand, from an underestimation of future possibilities latent in capitalism and, on the other, an overestimation of the revolutionary maturity of the proletariat. The revolution of 1848 did not turn into a socialist revolution as the *Manifesto* had calculated, but opened up to Germany the possibility of a vast capitalist boom. The Paris Commune proved that the proletariat could not wrest power from the bourgeoisie without having a tempered revolutionary party at its head. Meanwhile, the prolonged period of capitalist prosperity that ensued brought about not the education of the revolutionary vanguard, but rather the bourgeois degeneration of the labor aristocracy, which became in turn the chief brake on the proletarian revolution. In the nature of things, the authors of the *Manifesto* could not possibly have foreseen this "dialectic".

3. For the *Manifesto*, capitalism was—the kingdom of free competition. While referring to the growing concentration of capital, the *Manifesto* failed to draw the necessary conclusion in regard to monopoly which has become the dominant capitalist form in our epoch, and the most important precondition for socialist economy. Only afterwards, in *Capital* did Marx establish the tendency toward the transformation of free competition into monopoly. It was Lenin who gave a scientific characterization of monopoly capitalism in his *Imperialism*.

4. Basing themselves primarily on the example of "industrial revolution" in England, the authors of the *Manifesto* pictured far too unilaterally the process of liquidation of the intermediate classes, as a wholesale proletarianization of crafts, petty trade and the peasantry. In point of fact, the elemental forces of competition far from accomplished this simultaneously progressive and barbarous work. Capitalism ruined the petty bourgeoisie at a much faster rate than it proletarianized it. Furthermore, the bourgeois state has long directed its conscious policy toward the artificial maintenance of petty bourgeois strata. At the opposite pole, the growth of technology and the rationalization of large scale industry engenders chronic unemployment and obstructs the proletarianization of the petty bourgeoisie. Concurrently, capitalist development has accelerated in the extreme the growth of legions of technicians, administrators, commercial employees, in short, the so-called "new middle class". In consequence, the intermediate classes, to whose disappearance the *Manifesto* so categorically refers, comprise even in a country as highly industrialized as Germany about one-half of the population. However, the artificial preservation of antiquated petty bourgeois strata nowise mitigates the social contradictions but, on the contrary, invests them with an

especial malignancy, and together with the permanent army of the unemployed constitutes the most malevolent expression of capitalist decay.

5. Calculated for a revolutionary epoch the *Manifesto* contains (end of Chapter II) ten demands, corresponding to the period of direct transition from capitalism to socialism. In their preface of 1872, Marx and Engels declared these demands to be in part antiquated, and, in any case, only of secondary importance. The reformists seized upon this evaluation to interpret it in the sense that transitional revolutionary demands had forever ceded their place to the social democratic "minimum program", which, as is well known, does not transcend the limits of bourgeois democracy. As a matter of fact, the authors of the *Manifesto* indicated quite precisely the main correction of their transitional program, namely, "the working class cannot simply lay hold of the ready-made state machinery, and wield it for its own purposes". In other words, the correction aimed its barb against the fetishism of bourgeois democracy. Marx later counterposed to the capitalist state, the state of the type of the Commune. This "type" subsequently assumed the much more graphic shape of Soviets. There cannot be a revolutionary program today without *Soviets* and without *workers' control*. As for the rest, the ten demands of the *Manifesto*, which appeared "archaic" in an epoch of peaceful parliamentary activity, have today regained completely their true significance. The social democratic "minimum program", on the other hand, has become hopelessly antiquated.

6. To buttress up its expectation that "the German bourgeois revolution . . . will be but a prelude to an immediately following proletarian revolution," the *Manifesto* cites the much more advanced conditions of European civilization as compared with what existed in England in the 17th century and in France in the 18th century, and the far greater development of the proletariat. The only error in this prognosis was in the date. The revolution of 1848 revealed within a few months that precisely under more advanced conditions, none of the bourgeois classes is capable of bringing the revolution to its termination: the big and middle bourgeoisie is far too closely linked with the landowners, and fettered by the fear of the masses; the petty bourgeoisie is far too divided, and its leading tops are far too dependent on the big bourgeoisie. As evidenced by the entire subsequent course of development in Europe and Asia, the bourgeois revolution, taken by itself, cannot in general be consummated. A complete purge of society of feudal rubbish is conceivable only on the condition that the proletariat, freed from the influence of bourgeois parties, can take its stand at the head of the peasantry and institute its revolutionary dictatorship. By this token, the bourgeois revolution becomes interlaced with the first stage of the socialist revolution, subsequently to dissolve in the latter. The national revolution therewith becomes a link of the world revolution. The transformation of the economic foundation and of all social relations assumes a permanent (uninterrupted) character.

For revolutionary parties in backward countries of Asia, Latin America and Africa, a clear understanding of the organic connection between the democratic revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat—and thereby the international socialist revolution—is a life-and-death question.

7. While depicting how capitalism draws into its vortex backward and barbarous countries, the *Manifesto* contains no reference to the struggle of colonial and semi-colonial countries for independence. To the extent that Marx and Engels considered the social revolution, "in leading civilised countries, at least", to be a matter of the next few years, to that extent the colonial question was resolved automatically for them, not in consequence of an independent movement of oppressed nationalities but in consequence of the victory of the proletariat in the cosmopolitan centers of capitalism. The questions of revolutionary strategy in colonial and semi-colonial countries are therefore not touched upon at all by the *Manifesto*. Yet these questions demand an independent

solution. For example, it is quite self-evident that while the "national fatherland" has become the most baneful historical brake in advanced capitalist countries, it still remains a relatively progressive factor in backward countries compelled to struggle for an independent existence. "The Communists", declares the *Manifesto*, "everywhere support every revolutionary movement against the existing social and political order of things." The movement of the colored races against their imperialist oppressors is one of the most important and powerful movements against the existing order and therefore calls for the complete, unconditional and unlimited support of the proletariat of the white race. The credit for developing revolutionary strategy for oppressed nationalities belongs primarily to Lenin.

8. The most antiquated section of the *Manifesto*—not with respect to method but material—is the criticism of "socialist" literature for the first part of the 19th century (Chapter III) and the definition of the position of the Communists in relation to various opposition parties (Chapter IV). The tendencies and parties listed in the *Manifesto* were so drastically swept away either by the revolution of 1848 or the ensuing counter-revolution that one must look up even their names in a historical dictionary. However, in this section, too, the *Manifesto* is closer to us now than it was, say, to the previous generation. In the epoch of the flowering of the Second International when Marxism seemed to exert an undivided sway, the ideas of pre-Marxian socialism could have been considered as having receded decisively into the past. Things are otherwise today. The decomposition of the social democracy and the Comintern at every step engenders monstrous ideological relapses. Senile thought seems to have become infantile. In search of all-saving formulæ the prophets in the epoch of decline discover anew doctrines long since buried by scientific socialism. As touches the question of opposition parties, it is in this domain that the elapsed decades have introduced the most deep-going changes, not only in the sense that the old parties have long been brushed aside by new ones, but also in the sense that the very character of parties and their mutual relations have radically changed in the conditions of the imperialist epoch. The *Manifesto* must therefore be amplified with the most important documents of the first four Congresses of the Communist International, the essential literature of Bolshevism, and the decisions of the Conferences of the Fourth International.

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We have already remarked above that according to Marx no social order departs from the scene without first exhausting the potentialities latent in it. However, even an antiquated social order does not cede its place to a new order without resistance. A change in social régimes presupposes the harshest form of the class struggle, *i.e.*, *revolution*. If the proletariat, for one reason or another, proves incapable of overthrowing with an audacious blow the outlived bourgeois order, then finance capital in the struggle to maintain its unstable rule can do nothing but to turn the petty bourgeoisie ruined and demoralized by it into the pogrom army of fascism. The bourgeois degeneration of the social democracy and the fascist degeneration of the petty bourgeoisie are interlinked as cause and effect.

At the present time, the Third International, far more wantonly than the Second, performs in all countries the work of deceiving and demoralizing the toilers. By massacring the vanguard of the Spanish proletariat, the unbridled hirelings of Moscow not only pave the way for fascism but execute a goodly share of its labors. The protracted crisis of the international revolution which is turning more and more into a crisis of human culture, is reducible in its essentials to the crisis of revolutionary leadership.

As the heir to the great tradition, of which the *Manifesto of the Communist Party* forms the most precious link, the Fourth International is educating new cadres for the solution of old tasks.

Theory is generalized reality. In a candid attitude to revolutionary theory is expressed the impassioned urge to reconstruct the social reality. That in the Southern part of the Dark Continent our co-thinkers have for the first time translated the *Manifesto* into the Afrikaans language is another graphic illustration of the fact that

Marxian thought lives today only under the banner of the Fourth International. To it belongs the future. When the centennial of the *Communist Manifesto* is celebrated, the Fourth International will have become the decisive revolutionary force on our planet. COYOACAN, October 30, 1937. Leon TROTSKY

Homage to John Brown

JOHN BROWN WAS A revolutionary terrorist. There was nothing alien or exotic about him; he was a genuine growth of the American soil. The roots of his family tree on both sides reached back among the first English settlers of Connecticut. The generations of Browns were pious Protestant pioneers, tough and upstanding, and singularly consistent in their ideas, characters, and ways of life. John Brown was the third fighter for freedom of that name in his family and was himself the parent of a fourth. His grandfather died in service as a captain in the Revolutionary war. His father was an active abolitionist, a station-master and conductor on the underground railway.

Born in 1800, the pattern of John Brown's first fifty years reproduced the life of his father. His father has married three times and had sixteen children; John Brown married twice and had twenty children, every living soul among them pledged to hate and fight black bondage. Like his father, John, too, was "very quick on the move", shifting around ten times in the Northeastern states before his call to Kansas. He was successively—but not very successfully—a shepherd, tanner, farmer, surveyor, cattle-expert, real estate speculator, and wool-merchant. In his restlessness, his constant change of occupation and residence, John Brown was a typical middle-class American citizen of his time.

How did this ordinary farmer and business man, this pious patriarch become transformed into a border chieftain and a revolutionary terrorist? John had inherited his family's love of liberty and his father's abolitionism. At an early age he had sworn eternal war against slavery. His barn at Richmond, Pennsylvania, where in 1825 he set up a tannery, the first of his commercial enterprises, was a station on the underground railway. Ten years later he was discussing plans for the establishment of a negro school. "If once the Christians in the Free States would set to work in earnest in teaching the blacks," he wrote his brother, "the people of the slaveholding States would find themselves constitutionally driven to set about the work of emancipation immediately."

As the slave power tightened its grip upon the government, John Brown's views on emancipation changed radically. "A firm believer in the divine authenticity of the Bible", he drew his inspiration and guidance from the Old Testament rather than the New. He lost sympathy with the abolitionists of the Garrison school who advocated the Christ-like doctrine of non-resistance to force. He identified himself with the shepherd Gideon who led his band against the Midianites and slew them with his own hand.

A project for carrying the war into the enemy's camp had long been germinating in John Brown's mind. By establishing a stronghold in the mountains bordering Southern territory from which his men could raid the plantations, he planned to free the slaves, and run them off to Canada. On a tour to Europe in 1851 he inspected fortifications with an eye to future use; he carefully studied military tactics, especially of guerrilla warfare in mountainous territory. Notebooks on his reading are still extant.

However, his first assaults upon the slave power were to be made, not from the mountains of Maryland and West Virginia, but on the plains of Kansas. In the spring of 1855 his four eldest sons had emigrated to Kansas to settle there and help win the territory for the free-soil party. In May John Brown, Jr., sent the following urgent appeal to his father. "While the interest of des-

potism has secured to its cause hundreds and thousands of the meanest and most desperate of men, armed to the teeth . . . thoroughly organized . . . under pay from Slave-holders,—the friends of freedom are *not one fourth* of them *half armed*, and as to *Military Organization* among them it *no where exists in the territory* . . ." with the result "that the people here exhibit the most abject and cowardly spirit. . . . We propose . . . that the anti-slavery portion of the inhabitants should *immediately, thoroughly* arm, and *organize themselves in military companies*. In order to effect this, some persons must begin and lead in the matter. Here are 5 men of us who are not only anxious to fully prepare, but are thoroughly determined to fight. We can see no other way to meet the case. 'It is no longer a question of negro slavery, but it is the enslavement of ourselves.' We want you to get for us these arms. We need them more than we do bread. . . ."

Having already resolved to join his children in Kansas, John Brown needed no second summons. In the next few months he collected considerable supplies of arms and sums of money from various sympathetic sources, including several cases of guns belonging to the state of Ohio, which were "spirited away" for his use. In August he set out for Kansas from Chicago in a one-horse wagon loaded with guns and ammunition.

Upon arriving in Ossawatimie, John Brown became the captain of the local militia company and led it in the bloodless "Wakarusa War". Then he plunged into the thick of the struggle for the possession of the territory that gave it the name of "Bleeding Kansas". In retaliation for the sacking of Laurence by the Border Ruffians, Brown's men, including four of his sons, slaughtered five pro-slavery sympathizers in a night raid near Pottawatomie Creek. Brown took full responsibility for these killings; he fought according to the scriptural injunction: "An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth."

Reprisals on one side bred reprisals on the other. The settlement at Ossawatimie was pillaged and burned; Brown's son, Frederick, killed; his forces beaten and scattered. Thereafter John Brown and his band were outlaws, living on the run, giving the slip to government troops, launching sudden raids upon the pro-slavery forces. John Brown became a power in Kansas. His name equalled "an army with banners" in the eyes of the militant Free-Soil colonists; the whisper of his presence sufficed to break up pro-slavery gatherings. He continued his guerrilla warfare throughout 1856 until Kansas was pacified by the Federal troops.

His experiences in Kansas completed the transformation of John Brown into a revolutionist. "John Brown is a natural production, born on the soil of Kansas, out of the germinating heats the great contest on the soil of that territory engendered," wrote J. S. Pike, the Washington correspondent of the *New York Tribune* after the Harper's Ferry raid. "Before the day of Kansas outrages and oppression no such person as Ossawatimie Brown existed. No such person could have existed. He was born of rapine and cruelty and murder. . . . Kansas deeds, Kansas experiences, Kansas discipline created John Brown as entirely and completely as the French Revolution created Napoleon Bonaparte. He is as much the fruit of Kansas as Washington was the fruit of our own Revolution."

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Between 1856 and 1858, John Brown shuttled back and forth between Kansas and the East seeking support for the struggle

against the Border Ruffians. He received supplies, arms, and moral encouragement from many noted abolitionists, such as Gerrit Smith, the New York philanthropist, and numerous members of the Massachusetts State Kansas Committee, T. W. Higginson, Theodore Parker, etc. But there was no place for John Brown in the condition of armed neutrality that reigned in Kansas after 1856.

No longer needed in Kansas, John Brown reverted to his long cherished scheme of mountain warfare. To prepare for his enterprise he called a convention of his followers and free Negroes at Chatham in Canada and outlined his plans to them. One of the members of the convention reported that, after invoking the example of Spartacus, of Toussaint L'Ouverture, and other historical heroes who had fled with their followers into the mountains and there defied and defeated the expeditions of their adversaries, Brown said that "upon the first intimation of a plan formed for the liberation of the slaves, they would immediately rise all over the Southern States. He supposed they would come into the mountains to join him . . . and that we should be able to establish ourselves in the fastnesses, and if any hostile action (as would be) were taken against us, either by the militia of the separate states or by the armies of the United States, we purposed to defeat first the militia, and next, if it was possible, the troops of the United States, and then organize the freed blacks under the provisional constitution, which would carve out for the locality of its jurisdiction all that mountainous region in which the blacks were to be established and in which they were to be taught the useful and mechanical arts, and to be instructed in all the business of life. . . . The Negroes were to constitute the soldiers."

The revolutionary spirit of the constitution adopted by the convention for this projected Free State can be judged from this preamble: "Whereas, Slavery, throughout its entire existence in the United States is none other than a most barbarous, unprovoked, and unjustifiable War of one portion of its citizens upon another portion; the only conditions of which are perpetual imprisonment, and hopeless servitude or absolute extermination; in utter disregard and violation of the eternal and self-evident truths set forth in our Declaration of Independence: *Therefore*, we citizens of the United States, and the oppressed people, who, by a recent decision of the Supreme Court are declared to have no rights which the White Man is bound to respect; together with all other people degraded by the laws thereof, do, for the time being, ordain and establish for ourselves the following provisional Constitution and ordinances, the better to protect our persons, property, lives, and liberties; and to govern our actions." John Brown was elected Commander-in-Chief under this Constitution.

For all its daring, John Brown's scheme was hopeless from every point of view and predestined to fail. Its principal flaws were pointed out beforehand by Hugh Forbes, one of his critical adherents. In the first place, "no preparatory notice having been given to the slaves . . . the invitation to rise might, unless they were already in a state of agitation, meet with no response, or a feeble one". Second, even if successful such a sally "would at most be a mere local explosion . . . and would assuredly be suppressed". Finally, John Brown's dream of a Northern Convention of his New England partisans which would restore tranquillity and overthrow the pro-slavery administration was "a settled fallacy. Brown's New England friends would not have the courage to show themselves so long as the issue was doubtful". Forbes' predictions were fulfilled to the letter.

Convinced that "God had created him to be the deliverer of slaves the same as Moses had delivered the children of Israel", Brown overrode these objections and proceeded to mobilize his forces. Before he could put his plan into operation, however, he was compelled to return to Kansas for the last time, where, under the *nom de guerre* of Shubel Morgan, he led a raid upon some plantations across the Missouri border, killing a planter and setting eleven slaves at liberty. Both the Governor of Kansas and the

President of the United States offered rewards for his arrest. With a price of \$3,000 on his head, John Brown fled to Canada with the freedmen.

Early in the summer of 1859 a farm was rented about five miles from Harper's Ferry. There John Brown collected his men and prepared for his *coup*. On the night of October 16 they descended upon Harper's Ferry; took possession of the United States armories; imprisoned a number of the inhabitants; and persuaded a few slaves to join them. By noon militia companies arrived from nearby Charlestown and blocked his only road to escape. The next night a company of United States marines commanded by Col. Robert E. Lee appeared, and, at dawn, when Brown refused to surrender, stormed the engine-house in which Brown, his surviving men, and his prisoners were barricaded. Fighting with matchless coolness and courage over the body of his dying son, he was overpowered and arrested.

Ten men had been killed or mortally wounded, among them two of Brown's own sons, and eleven captured in the assault.

The reporter of the *New York Herald* describes the scene during his cross-examination: "In the midst of enemies, whose home he had invaded; wounded, a prisoner, surrounded by a small army of officials, and a more desperate army of angry men; with the gallows staring him full in the face, he lay on the floor, and, in reply to every question, gave answers that betokened the spirit that animated him." John Brown steadfastly insisted that a single purpose was behind all his actions: to free the Negroes, "the greatest service a man can render to God". A bystander interrogated: "Do you consider yourself an instrument in the hands of Providence?"—"I do."—"Upon what principle do you justify your acts?"—"Upon the golden rule. I pity the poor in bondage that have none to help them; that is why I am here; not to gratify my personal animosity, revenge, or vindictive spirit. It is my sympathy with the oppressed and the wronged, that are as good as you and as precious in the sight of God."

Indicted for "treason to the Commonwealth" and "conspiring with slaves to commit treason and murder", John Brown was promptly tried by a state court and sentenced to death.

During his stay in prison John Brown rose to the most heroic heights. His dignified bearing, his kindness won his jailors, his captors, and his judges. His letters from the prison where he awaited execution were imbued with the same resolute determination and calm, conscious acceptance of his sacrifice in the cause of freedom, as the letters of Bartholomeo Vanzetti, his fellow revolutionist. To friends who contemplated his rescue, he answered: "I am worth infinitely more to die than to live." To another he wrote: "I do not feel conscious of guilt in taking up arms; and had it been in behalf of the rich and powerful, the intelligent, the great—as men count greatness—of those who form enactments to suit themselves and corrupt others, or some of their friends, that I interfered, suffered, sacrificed and fell, it would have been doing very well. . . . These light afflictions which endure for a moment, shall work out for me a *far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory*. . . . God will surely attend to his own cause in the best possible way and time, and he will not forget the work of his own hands."

On December 2, 1859, a month after his sentence, fifteen hundred soldiers escorted John Brown to the scaffold in the shadow of the Blue Ridge Mountains which had for so many years held out to him the promise of freedom for the slaves. With a single blow of the sheriff's hatchet, he "hung between heaven and earth", the first American executed for treason. The silence was shattered by the speech of the commander in charge. "So perish all such enemies of Virginia! All such enemies of the Union. All such foes of the human race!"

* * *

"Let those . . . who have reproaches to heap upon the authors of the Harper's Ferry bloody tumult and general Southern fright,

go back to the true cause of it all. Let them not blame blind and inevitable instruments in the work, nor falsely malign those who are in nowise implicated, directly or indirectly; but let them patiently investigate the true source whence this demonstration arose, and then bestow their curses and anathemas accordingly. It is childish and absurd for Governor Wise to seize and sit astride the wounded panting body of Old Brown, and think he has got the villain who set this mischief on foot. By no means. The head conspirators against the peace of Virginia are ex-President Franklin Pierce and Senator Douglas. These are the parties he should apprehend, confine, and try for causing this insurrection. Next to them he should seize upon Senators Mason and Hunter of Virginia, as accessories. Let him follow up by apprehending every supporter of the Nebraska Bill, and when he shall have brought them all to condign punishment, he will have discharged his duty, but not till then. . . .

"Old Brown is simply a spark of a great fire kindled by short-sighted mortals. . . . There is no just responsibility resting anywhere, no just attribution of causes anywhere, for this violent attempt that does not fall directly upon the South itself. It has deliberately challenged and wantonly provoked the elements that have concentrated and exploded." So wrote the same journalist whose characterization of John Brown we have already quoted.

Little needs to be added to this historical judgment made in the midst of the events. The Compromisers who attempted to fasten slavery forever upon the American people against their will, and the representatives of slaveholders who prompted them were, in the last analysis, responsible for the raid upon Harper's Ferry.

John Brown expected the shock of his assault to electrify the slaves and frighten the slaveholders into freeing their chattels. His experiment in emancipation ended in complete catastrophe. Instead of weakening slavery, his raid temporarily fortified the pro-slavery forces by consolidating their ranks, intensifying their repression, and stiffening their resistance.

John Brown was misled by the apparent effectiveness of his terrorist activities in Kansas. He did not understand that there his raids and reprisals were an integral part of the open struggle of the Free-Soil settlers against the invasion of the slaveholder's Hessians, and were accessory and subordinate factors in deciding that protracted contest. That violence alone was impotent to determine its outcome was demonstrated by the failure of the Border Ruffians to impose slavery upon the territory.

John Brown's attempt to impose emancipation upon the South by an exclusive reliance upon terrorist methods met with equal failure. Other ways and means were necessary to release, amplify, and control the revolutionary forces capable of overthrowing the slave power and abolishing slavery.

Yet John Brown's raid was not wholly reactionary in its effects. His blow against slavery reverberated throughout the land and inspired those who were to follow him. The news of his bold deed rang like a fire-bell in the night, arousing the nation and setting its nerves on edge. Through John Brown the coming civil war entered into the nerves of the people many months before it was exhibited in their ideas and actions.

The South took alarm. The "acts of the assassin" confirmed their fears of slave-insurrection provoked by the Northern abolitionists and Black Republicans. Brown's personal connections with many prominent abolitionists were undeniable, and their disclaimers of connivance and their disapprobation of his actions did not make them any less guilty in the slaveowner's eyes, but only more cowardly and hypocritical. The slaveholders were convinced that their enemies were now taking the offensive in a direct armed attack upon their lives, their homes, their property. "The conviction became common in the South," says Frederic Bancroft, the biographer of Seward, "that John Brown differed from the majority of the Northerners merely in the boldness and desperation of his methods."

The majority of official opinion in the North condemned John Brown's "criminal enterprise" and justified his execution. Big Unionist meetings exploited the incident for the benefit of the Democratic Party. The *Richmond Enquirer* of October 25, 1859, noted with satisfaction that the conservative pro-slavery press of the North "evinces a determination to make the moral of the Harper's invasion an effective weapon to rally all men not fanatics against the party whose leaders have been implicated directly with the midnight murder of Virginia citizens and the destruction of government property". The Republican leaders, a little less directly but no less decisively, hastened to denounce the deed and throw holy water over the execution. Said Lincoln: "We cannot object to the execution," and Seward echoed, "it was necessary and just".

But many thousands rallied to John Brown's side, hailing him as a martyr in the cause of emancipation. The radical abolitionists spoke up most boldly in his behalf and most correctly assayed the significance of his life and death. At John Brown's funeral service, Wendell Phillips spoke these words: "Marvellous old man! . . . He has abolished slavery in Virginia. . . . True, the slave is still there. So, when the tempest uproots a pine on your hills, it looks green for months—a year or two. Still, it is timber, not a tree. John Brown has loosened the roots of the slave system; it only breathes—it does not live—hereafter." Longfellow wrote in his diary on the day of the hanging: "This will be a great day in our history; the date of a new Revolution—quite as much needed as the old one. Even now as I write, they are leading old John Brown to execution in Virginia for attempting to rescue slaves! This is sowing the wind to reap the whirlwind, which will come soon."

Finally, Frank P. Stearns, a Boston merchant who had contributed generously to John Brown's Kansas campaign, declared before the Senatorial Investigating Committee: "I should have disapproved of it [the raid] if I had known of it; but I have since changed my opinion; I believe John Brown to be the representative man of the century, as Washington was of the last—the Harper's Ferry affair, and the capacity shown by the Italians for self-government, the great events of this age. One will free Europe and the other America."

On his way to the scaffold John Brown handed this last testament to a friend. "I John Brown am now quite *certain* that the crimes of this *guilty land*: will never be purged *away*; but with blood. I had *as I now think*: vainly flattered myself that without *very much* bloodshed: it might be done." His prophetic previsions were soon to be realized.

A year and a half after his execution, John Brown's revolutionary spirit was resurrected in the Massachusetts volunteers, who marched through the streets of Boston, singing the battle hymn that four of them had just improvised: "John Brown's body". Their movements were open and legal; John Brown's actions had been hidden and treasonable. Yet the marching men proudly acknowledged their communion with him, as they left for Virginia.

There the recent defenders of the Union had become disrupters of the Union; the punishers of treason themselves traitors; the hangmen of rebels themselves in open rebellion. John Brown's captor, Robert E. Lee, had already joined the Confederate army he was to command. Ex-Governor Wise, who had authorized Brown's hanging, was conspiring, like him, to seize Harper's Ferry arsenal, and, as a crowning irony, exhorted his neighbors at Richmond to emulate John Brown. "Take a lesson from John Brown, manufacture your blades from old iron, even though it be the ties of your cart-wheels."

Thus the opposing forces in the historical process, that John Brown called God, each in their own way, paid homage to the father of the Second American Revolution.

Archives of the Revolution

DOCUMENTS of the HISTORY and THEORY of the WORKING CLASS MOVEMENT

Reminiscences of the October Insurrection

TROTSKY: I will begin my recollections with the session of the soldiers' section.

(I do not remember exactly which it was, the praesidium of the soldier's section or the Executive Committee of the Petersburg Soviet.)

In the course of this session, the news was received that the Staff Office of the military district demanded the sending to the front of something like a third of the regiments of the Petersburg garrison.

It was probably a session of the Executive Committee; there was the left Social Revolutionist, Verba, and of our people, Mekhonoshin, Sadovsky.

As soon as the news was communicated, we began to deliberate on it in a low voice, establishing the fact that what was involved was the removal of the most revolutionary, the most Bolshevik regiments. What mattered, therefore, was to profit to the maximum from this design, for the question of the armed uprising had already been decided by then. We declared that we were ready to submit to the exigencies of the war, but that it was necessary to investigate first if there wasn't a Kornilov trick behind it all. It was therefore decided to make a draft of a resolution looking towards the creation of a special organism able to check up, from the military point of view, whether those were really the requirements of the front, or a political stratagem was involved.

The soldier's section was the political organ of the garrison and it was not adapted to this task. Therefore we organized, for the purpose of the said control, a sort of counter-Staff Office, a purely military institution.

Thereupon, the Mensheviks interpellated us to find out if, with our organism, we were not breaking with the Staff Office of the Petersburg military district. We replied in the negative and said that we were letting our representative remain within it.

At this session was present the left Social Revolutionist Lazimir (who died later on the southern front of Russia), a young comrade who had worked in the Commissariat of the old army. He was one of those left Social Revolutionists who followed us from the word Go. At this session, he supported us and we clung to him. In this

On November 7, 1920, a "meeting of the participants in the October revolution at Petersburg" was held in Moscow. The stenographic record was published in October 1922, on the anniversary of the revolution, in the official review of the "Commission on the History of the October Revolution and the Communist Party of Russia", *Proletarskaya Revolyutsya*, No. 10.

The purpose of the meeting was to have the principal protagonists of the revolution exchange recollections on the circumstances in which the memorable event had occurred. In the period preceding the October and immediately following, nobody thought of stenographing the speeches and deliberations, of drawing up minutes, and leaving behind materials for history. It is only after the subsiding of the civil war that a beginning was made in recording the vicissitudes of the action, the evolution of the tactics, the elaboration of the ideas, not only for history's sake but above all for revolutionary education. The conditions of the October uprising in particular had long remained obscure and required clarification. The meeting in question was called for this purpose.

Among those present were: Olminsky, Kobosev, Smirnov-Deiman, Bogolepov, Kozmin, Koslovsky, Losovsky, Sadovsky, Trotsky, Bonch-Bruyevich, Trotskaya, Podvoisky, Elizarova (Lenin's sister), Lezhava, Krassikov, Demian-Bedny. The names are significant. During the meeting, Trotsky was called upon in turn to deal with some of the questions to elucidate. We reprint here a part of his souvenirs.

The conscientious reader will be struck immediately by the fact that in these recollections of 1920, printed in 1922 in an official party review, during Lenin's lifetime, Trotsky says exactly the same things that he repeated in 1923 and 1924, and down to the present day. But whereas no reproach was levelled at him in 1920 and 1922, when his remarks were considered as historical truth, the repetition of them today suffices to draw the abuses and calumnies of the Stalinist press, which carefully waited until Lenin was dead before discovering that Trotsky's version was animated by counter-revolutionary considerations.—ED.

way, the demand to create a Revolutionary War Committee had the air of coming not from our side but from that of a left Social Revolutionist. Old Mensheviks more expert in political matters began to say that all this was nothing but the organization of the armed uprising.

Among the latter there was a well-known old Menshevik, a former member of their Central Committee, who then exposed us with particular spitefulness. In short, we proposed to Lazimir to draft a plan of the Revolutionary War Committee, which he agreed to do. Did he surmise that it was a question of a plot, or did he merely reflect the amorphous revolutionary sentiments of the left wing Social Revolutionists? I don't know. I lean more towards the second supposition. However that may be, he applied himself to this job, while the other Social Revolutionists took an attitude of waiting and of suspicion, but without impeding him in his task. When he had presented his draft, we corrected it by concealing as much as possible its insurrectionary character. The next evening, the draft was submitted to the Petersburg Soviet and was adopted.

The question of founding a Revolutionary War Committee had been raised by the military organization of the Bolsheviks. In September 1917, when the military organization discussed the organizing of an armed uprising, it came to the conclusion that it was indispensable to create an extra-party Soviet organism to direct the insurrection. I notified comrade Lenin of this decision. The moment was especially favorable for us. In the apartment of one of the Rakhias, or in an apartment pointed out by comrade Rakhia, there was a session of the Central Committee, which M. I. Kal-

inin attended. (I was no doubt mistaken in saying that the day of the uprising had been fixed by the Central Committee; that the uprising would take place, nobody doubted, but the discussion of this question in the Central Committee did not take place until after the birth of the Revolutionary War Committee.) At this session, we discussed the question and, basing ourselves on facts, we came to the conclusion that if a fact as important as the shifting of the garrison could bring the conflict to the point of avowed revolution, then it was just this circumstance that would help us to establish a certain mode of revolution, for we had formed the plan to accomplish it by the simple road of a conspiracy.

This idea took hold quite naturally, all the more so because the majority of the garrison was won over to us and this state of mind had to be realized. At that moment, we had a purely military concatenation of a great conflict on the basis of which the intervention could be launched. Perhaps someone here remembers when the decision of the Central Committee on this subject was adopted? It must have been at the beginning of October, along about the 10th or maybe earlier.

PODVOISKY: The 9th, or a little later, after the 12th.

TROTSKY: No, for the second Congress of the Soviets was fixed for the 25th. I said that basically we had fixed the armed uprising for the 25th also, but then there seemed to remain still a fairly long time until that date.

KOZMIN: On the 18th there was the interpellation of Martov: *What is this Revolutionary War Committee?*—And you replied with the question: *Who has given Martov the right to interpellate us in this manner?*

TROTSKY: That's right. But I say that the session of the Executive Committee where it was decided in principle to organize the Committee was held even before the decisive session of the Central Committee; and if you say that the session of the Central Committee was held on the 10th or 12th, the decision might have been made on the 7th. That's only an approximation. As to the War Committee itself, if I were

asked to tell its composition, I would no longer be able to say, even on penalty of death, even though I played a big rôle in it. But that affair had become a bloc of three parties and, in short, each party supplied its people, sent substitutes who replaced those that were fatigued, so that it is very difficult to name the official members. The names might be established from the newspapers. Was comrade Joffe an official member?

A VOICE: He was.

TROTSKY: And Uritsky? He did a lot of work in it.

PODVOISKY: Unschlicht developed above all after the revolution.

TROTSKY: Lazimir did a great deal of work.

KOZMIN: I remember that after the 18th of October there were continuous sessions of the Council, that you kept on giving orders as to [arms] distribution. Perhaps you could tell us about that, about how it was all done.

TROTSKY: As to arms, here is how matters went. The first source of supplies in arms was the Siestrorietsk factory. When a delegation of workers would arrive stating that they needed arms, I said: "But the arsenal is not in our hands." And they would reply: "We have been to the Siestrorietsk factory." "Well?" They said: "If the Soviet orders it, we will give." That was the first experience. I gave an order for 5,000 rifles and they had them that very day. And all the bourgeois journals published the news. I remember very well how the *Novoye Vremya* spoke about it in an article, perhaps even in a leading editorial. And this fact alone legalized our orders for arms. Later on, everything moved at an accelerated speed. After the revolution, when we, the Revolutionary War Committee, began to name commissars in all the military institutions, in all the troop corps of the garrison and in all the commissariats where there were arms, our commissars transmitted the military organization to the party and the disposition of the arms passed naturally into our hands.

I still remember a not very important but picturesque incident. It was at the moment when we were attempting to organize ourselves militarily in the very building of Smolny. The machine gunners' detachment, charged with its functions by Kerensky, did not prove very useful, even though the machine gunners had become Bolsheviks at the moment of the revolution. Grekov was then the commandant of Smolny. He passed for a syndicalistic Social Revolutionist and was often imprisoned under the Bolsheviks. At that moment, he was very hostile to us. After a meeting at the Peter-and-Paul fortress, where I gained the certainty that we were not only moving towards victory but towards a victory almost without resistance, Grekov, driving me in an automobile, said to me: "*Certainly, you might perhaps make a coup d'Etat, but that wouldn't last long; you would be smothered.*" And he didn't want to tie up with us. But the commandant of the de-

tachment came over to me and said: "We're with you."

But when we began to examine the machine guns, we found them all to be out of commission. The soldiers were run down at the heel and likewise unfit for the struggle. We decided to introduce into Smolny some company of machine gunners or other, I no longer recall which. It was only at the dawn of the 25th that this company arrived. An insignificant number of Mensheviks and Social Revolutionists were still located at Smolny. At the break of day, none of us had yet had any sleep. Early in the morning, the air foggy, the nervous tension—and all of a sudden, in the corridor, those machine guns: rrrrrrr. . . . The Mensheviks looked at each other, pale, alarmed. The slightest noise created an alarm. And out in the corridors, the stamping of feet and general bustle. It is then that the Mensheviks evacuated Smolny for good.

On the 25th the Second Congress of the Soviets opened. That's when Dan and Skobelev arrived at Smolny and walked right through the room where I was staying with Vladimir Ilyich. The latter was muffled up in a handkerchief as if he had a toothache, wore huge glasses, a raggedy cap, and looked rather odd. But Dan, who had a trained, penetrating eye, looked all around when he had perceived us, nudged Skobelev with his elbow, winked at him, and went on. Vladimir Ilych nudged me with his elbow too: "They've recognized us, the blackguards!"

We continued the game of the Revolutionary War Committee with the Staff Office of the military district. We discussed the question of the relations to establish with the commissars so that there would be no friction between the soldiers' section and the garrison. They submitted the proposal that their commissar should likewise be commissar of the military district. The appointment of our commissars in the regiments did not vex them, provided that they obeyed their commissar.

PODVOISKY: The decisive session where Zinoviev and Kamenev protested against the insurrection was held on the 13th.

TROTSKY: This session took place in the apartment of the Menshevik, Sukhanov. It was the night of the 14th. But if that was the date, comrades, there remained very little time between the Soviet Congress and the session where Martov's address was delivered. No, it was earlier. The first time that the Social Revolutionists arrived from the Staff Office of the military district and announced that the order had been given to send off three regiments, was at the Executive Committee. Or perhaps it was at the Executive Committee of the soldiers' section?

SADOVSKY: I think it was at the præsidium. There was a session under the chairmanship of Zavadye.

TROTSKY: I did not attend the session of the responsible militants. I attended the preliminary meeting with comrade Lenin, to which Zinoviev and Kalinin came. When Kalinin was asked the question about whether the workers were ready for the

uprising, he answered in the affirmative, saying that we mustn't let the moment escape us. At the same time, the conversation with Vladimir Ilyich revolved rather around *the moment* when the insurrection had to be begun. A definite period was fixed until the beginning of the insurrection, by means of a military conspiracy, utilizing all events, the departure of the garrison included. For Vladimir Ilych, who had come from Finland, the events that were unfolding were not sufficiently clear, so that all we had were deliberations. This session took place after a council of responsible militants at Sukhanov's. Present: Lenin, Zinoviev, Kamenev, Lomov, Yakovleva, Sverdlov. From Moscow, Opopkov; Nogin, I believe, was not there; neither was Rykov; Stalin was there; Shaoumian, it seems to me, also. No minutes were taken down. Only votes were counted.

The discussions were over principles and the comrades who spoke against the armed insurrection were more numerous than had been expected. In their argumentation, they went so far as to repudiate the power of the Soviets. The objections boiled down to this: the armed uprising may get somewhere, but afterwards? Afterwards, we shall be unable to hold out for economic-social reasons, and so on. In this way, there was a fairly thorough discussion. Parallels were drawn with the July days, it was argued that the masses might not come down into the street, and that we would beat a retreat. Among other arguments, it was said that we would never be able to solve the food problem, that we would founder in the first fortnight, that Petersburg would remain a little island, that the Executive Committee of the Railroaders, the technicians, the specialists, the intellectuals, would have us by the throat. The discussions were very impassioned, but I find it difficult now to recall all the arguments. What was most striking, comrades, was that when they began to deny the possibility of an armed uprising, the opponents, in the heat of the discussion, came to the point of rejecting the idea of the Soviet power. We asked them: "*Then what is your position?*" They replied: "*Carry on agitation, propaganda, discipline the masses.*"—"And after that?"

I no longer remember the division of the votes, but I know that there were five or six votes against and something like nine votes for the insurrection.

I do not, of course, guarantee the exactness of the figures. The session lasted through the night. We separated at dawn. A few comrades and I remained behind to sleep.

There were two nuances with regard to the insurrection. On the one side, the Petersburgers (those who worked in the Petersburg Soviet) made the fate of the uprising dependent upon the conflict resulting from the garrison's evacuation of the city. Vladimir Ilych was not afraid of the uprising and even insisted on carrying it out, but would not let it depend exclusively on the development of the conflict in St. Petersburg alone. It wasn't even a nuance any longer, but rather a firm point of view.

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After Twenty Years

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ASSIGNMENT IN UTOPIA. By EUGENE LYONS. 648 pp. New York. Harcourt, Brace and Co. \$3.50.

RUSSIA: TWENTY YEARS AFTER. By VICTOR SERGE. Trans. from the French with an introduction by Max Shachtman. xii+298 pp. New York. Pioneer Publishers. \$2.50.

Some years ago Julien Benda wrote a striking little book called *The Treason of the Intellectuals*. The reference was to the literary prophets, the world reconstructionists and moral iconoclasts who noisily strutted their ideals in the security of peace, but in 1914 effortlessly prostrated themselves before the imperialist war machine. The Fabian exhibitionist Shaw toured the Western Front in the company of General Sir Douglas Haig; Wells entered the British Intelligence Service. Upton Sinclair discovered the messianic mission of Wilson. The German professors whitewashed the invasion of Belgium. But the treason of contemporary intellectuals has already outdistanced the infamy of their predecessors. Racing ahead of the very General Staffs themselves, they clamor for a Holy War to Save Democracy. And most conspicuous of the lot are the intellectual lackeys of Stalinism. The depths of their treason are still unplumbed.

Intellectuals who once professionally invoked 18-carat words like Truth, Humanity and Civilization have been converted to the Machiavellian morality of the O.G.P.U. The Moscow trials? It will take a hundred years to learn the truth. There may have been no convincing court evidence but the crimes imputed to the Old Bolsheviks were psychologically possible. If there was a frame-up, it is best for the sake of the Soviet Union to keep loyally quiet. Granted Trotsky is no terrorist, his program of world revolution is a menace to Peace and Democracy anyway. Whatever atrocities Stalin commits, still he is for the Popular Front, isn't he? When all is said and done, the Purges have only killed off a few thousand; over a hundred million Soviet citizens still go about their business. What if several million peasants did die of

starvation during Stalin's dizzy collectivization, they were only peasants, weren't they. You can't make an omelette without breaking eggs.

It is this school of Truth that the noble Feuchtwanger has joined. His book is the product of exactly ten days in Moscow made up of interviews conducted through the lucid medium of a translator. But Feuchtwanger is no ordinary tourist. He is a refugee whose property has been confiscated by the Nazis. His novels have dramatized the cause of Justice. He branded Nazi book-burning as a return to mediævalism. He has excoriated the *Gestapo*, mocked the Führer cult, and pilloried totalitarian art, science and literature. Ten days in Moscow and Feuchtwanger is sure that socialism is being built, the living standards of the masses are being raised, and everything else will inevitably follow. He is admitted into the illumined Presence of the Beloved Leader himself and finds that the Stalin cult is simply a naïve expression of the enthusiasm of the masses for socialism. The "confessions" of the O.G.P.U.'s victims he glibly accepts as genuine. The persecution of Soviet writers like Pilnyak for deviating from the Line is a matter of indifference. That no bonfire need be made of Trotsky's writings because they may be read only at the risk of deportation or death, is a small point. Feuchtwanger finds no censorship. Feuchtwanger says, Yes, Yes, Yes, and Feuchtwanger's works will be published by the State in waves of many thousands and the royalties will mount up. Feuchtwanger has become an "engineer of the soul".

That Feuchtwanger's début should coincide with André Gide's break with the Stalinist régime cannot have been accidental. It was necessary to counteract that blow at once. Gide is one of a number of intellectuals who either never lost or who have recovered their integrity. Since he published *Return from the Soviet Union*, he has been subjected to the usual virulent Stalinist barrage. But he has stood his ground manfully. His first book was a series of impressions. He was able to discount the honeyed pep-talk of the translators. The door was sometimes left sufficiently ajar for Gide to catch a glimpse of the underlying reality and what he saw shocked him into a candid reëxamination. His conclusions will be remembered: ". . . the spirit which is today held to be counter-revolutionary is that same spirit which first broke through the half-rotten dam of the Tsarist world. . . . I doubt whether in any other country in the world, even Hitler's Germany, thought is less free, more bowed down, more terrorized, more vassalized." The objection was then made that Gide was unduly preoccupied with the fate of the mind, and ignored the decisive criterion of economics. *Retouches* is mainly an answer to his critics, fortified by much

Ours was that of Petersburg, that is, that Petersburg would carry off the affair in that manner; but Lenin departed from the point of view of a general uprising in the entire country and did not accord such a big place to the uprising of the Petersburg garrison.

The date of the uprising was fixed for October 15.

PODVOISKY: As I recall, I believe the session was held earlier, otherwise there would have been a delay.

TROTSKY: The meeting of the responsible militants undoubtedly took place after the meeting of the Central Committee, when the question was already resolved. It was then that Zinoviev and Kamenev were authorized to defend their points of view. But the decision of the Central Committee was made. From that, I conclude that the meeting of the Central Committee took place at the beginning of October, the 3rd, I think, for I recall that the uprising was foreseen for the 15th at the latest. A nuance appeared precisely over the fixing of the date. I insisted that the Revolutionary War Committee be charged with preparing the moment of the uprising for the day of the Soviet Congress. This did not arouse a big discussion, but it was decided that the uprising would take place either at the end of October or the beginning of November.

KOZMIN: Was this decision made before or after the departure of the Bolsheviks from the Pre-Parliament?

TROTSKY: It was after. When did that departure occur?

PODVOISKY: In September.

TROTSKY: I said that it was after the Bolsheviks had left the Pre-Parliament. But I cannot say exactly. In any case, this decision was made after the session of the fraction where the question was being discussed: should we enter the Pre-Parliament or not? I was a supporter of the boycott. Rykov did not share my standpoint. Only later did we receive a letter from Lenin in Finland, in which he pronounced himself for the boycott. After that, the session of the Central Committee presented the character of an effort towards getting down to exact details, dotting the *i*'s. In the behavior of the party nuclei, in the regiments, among the commissars, we felt a good deal of indecision. . . .

An American Purge

The private lives of Stalinist functionaries are now to be investigated in preparation for a purge in the Communist Party, according to Earl Browder, writing in the *Daily Worker* (Dec. 3, 1937).

WE MUST begin to examine the private lives of all of our leading cadres as a necessary and unavoidable part of the guarantee of the political integrity of our Party. And this applies to everybody, from top to bottom. And to the degree that we find problems that cannot be corrected, let us know in advance that there is always a final way of guaranteeing the Party against dangers—that is, removing people from responsible positions . . .

reading and economic data from Soviet sources, and contrasting the actuality of Stalinism with the program of Leninism.

The significance of Gide's two books lies not of course in their accuracy as works of theory; Gide sets up no pretensions there. What is important is the man's integrity as an observer able to fight off the cloying fog of official adulation threatening to drug every writer who visits the U.S.S.R. The great "cultural front" that Stalinism built up during the years of the Five Year Plan is beginning to crack and the single biggest hammer-blow was struck by the Moscow trials. Stalin has been so successful in the art of "managing" the intellectuals either by flattery or bribery that he has become too contemptuous of them. The special privileges that writers enjoyed in the Soviet Union, the royalties, the salaries, the automobiles, the country-houses, were Stalin's crafty means of guaranteeing an airtight censorship. Deadened consciences made the task of the police easier. Gide shows that the human mind will survive even Stalin. There is still enough of the spirit of scientific research and respect for truth, of that idealism to which Trotsky paid tribute in Dewey, to encourage the hope that an increasing number of intellectuals will take their stand with the revolutionary working class against the totalitarianisms of both Hitler and Stalin.

One of the sources upon which Gide draws for confirmation is Yvon, a French worker who spent eleven years in the Soviet Union both at the bench and in a managerial capacity. Regardless of his conclusions which we find unacceptable, Yvon's pamphlet is valuable for the light it throws on the cold facts. These facts completely deflate the official myth that the Soviet Union has "already entered upon the final and irrevocable victory of socialism", a myth serving to justify the ends of unscrupulous reaction and the bloody suppression of all criticism and opposition. Especially do we recommend these facts to the "social worker" who becomes an expert on the Soviet Union on the strength of having peered at the inevitable crèche, to the visiting professor who avidly jots down notes for a book on progressive educational institutions that will be relegated to limbo by the time of his return home, and not least to the Webbs weaving their endless cocoons from official Soviet blue books.

It is not a pretty picture that Yvon draws of the housing, food, wages and working conditions of the Soviet factory worker. The new apartment houses photograph as impressively as the giant plants that inspired Miss Bourke-White's trick camera shots. The trouble with those magnificent photographs was that they didn't tell you whether the newly erected plant worked. The new apartments are reserved for the bureaucracy, specialists, army officers, soul engineers. Those still higher in the social scale live in "private pavilions". Personal servants of the bureaucrats have special quarters. The Stakhanovite has the newly built "common house". The prevailing system of housing for the "common worker"

is the wooden barracks whose single rooms contain from 25 to 40 beds. The furniture is of the meanest and ugliest. Ten percent of the worker's wages goes for rent. To graduate out of these barracks may entail years of probation as a "candidate tenant".

The ordinary Russian worker's daily menu consists of: Breakfast (before eight o'clock), tea and bread; lunch (at noon), factory meal or when not at work, tea and bread; dinner (5 p.m.), soup and kaska; supper (8 p.m.), tea and bread. Fish, butter, eggs, oil, rice and sugar are luxuries for workers who must make ends meet on a monthly wage ranging from 80 to 200 rubles. The incomes of the bureaucracy range from 1,500 to 10,000 rubles a month, and that applies equally to so-called "party" members. From his meager wages, the worker suffers further reductions in the form of taxes, loans and assessments running from 15 to 21 percent of his pay envelope. The piecework system drives him without regard to his nerves or muscles. "Produce in seven hours more than in seven," is the managerial slogan. The best sanatoria, rest homes, and pleasure resorts go to the officials and Stakhanovites. For their two weeks' holiday, the rank and file are herded and regimented in dormitories of the "barracks of rest".

Even more dismal, of course, is the recital of the deprivation of the workers' political liberties. The régime of the "internal passport". Never-ending surveillance by the O.G.P.U. Universal mutual espionage of Soviet citizens encouraged as the highest morality. The system of hostages. Re-introduction of military ranks. Totalitarian "elections" with the opposition eliminated by the firing squad. Capital punishment. Concentration camps. Liquidation of Soviets. Bureaucratization of trade unions. Stalinist absolutism.

Such were the conditions which another worker, this time an American, encountered. Fred Beal is of the authentic American proletariat, a mill-worker from his earliest youth. He led strikes, he marshalled picket lines, he organized demonstrations. He joined the Communist Party in the days before it was *de rigueur* for the Y.C.L. to scrub the statue of Nathan Hale and for Browder to lead in the singing of the "Stars and Stripes". For his part in the famous Gastonia strike, Beal was sentenced to twenty years. While out on bail, along with the other co-defendants he sought sanctuary in the Soviet Union. What he witnessed there made him revolt. He saw the degeneration of the once revolutionary Comintern at close quarters. He witnessed one of the great fake demonstration trials. He lived through the period of the Stalin-made famine of 1930-1933 and ran across graves with inscriptions: "I love Stalin. Bury him here as soon as possible". But when Beal, honest to his finger tips, expressed his mounting sense of horror he was told roughly and menacingly to hold his tongue. "This is not Union Square."

He determined "to make a complete break with the Stalin gang and return to the capitalist world, no matter what the

consequences would be". But not to make his peace with the capitalist world. He escaped to the United States where his twenty-year sentence in North Carolina may catch up with him any day. He is on the run. Yet a liberal conspiracy of silence has been built up around his case. The officials of the Communist Party would doubtless enjoy seeing Beal arrested. One of their scribblers, Joseph Freeman, has already tipped off the police. Friendless and hunted, Beal, no giant of tactics, made the mistake of prejudicing his situation by writing up his experiences in the Hearst press. But who are the one hundred percent Bolsheviks of the Civil Liberties Union to point the finger of scorn at Beal? What right have these petty bourgeois elements to treat Beal as a pariah? In the name of what revolutionary principles and activity do the well-padded ladies and gentlemen of the *Nation* and *New Republic* cast Beal into the outer darkness? Except that he is more articulate, Beal's experiences are shared by hundreds of workers who have returned from the Stalinist U.S.S.R., their hearts swept by disillusion. The country is studded with them, not softies who expected to wallow in Roman luxury, but hard-bitten, rugged, class conscious miners, lumberjacks and the like. They wanted no privileges, they fully expected the struggle for socialist construction. It is a slander that these men are counter-revolutionists. They come back empty and remain silent. But for the most part, they remain loyal to the Soviet Union. Only their closest associates know what has happened. And when they talk, the story is much the same as Fred Beal's, a story of proletarian degradation at the hands of an insolent, omnipotent bureaucracy in the years of Soviet reaction.

This whole period has been covered with great reportorial verve and brilliance in Eugene Lyons' *Assignment in Utopia*, a book that is as sure a product of Soviet reaction as John Reed's was of the revolutionary upsurge of October. Lyons was United Press correspondent in Moscow. Those who read the *Bulletin of the Russian Opposition* recall with bitterness the glib official news reporting that came out of the U.S.S.R. in those days under the names of Duranty, Chamberlain or Lyons. We knew that we were getting half-truths and lies. Read Lyons' chapter on the failure of the correspondents to report the great famine, to present a true picture of the "Five Year Plan in Four", of the dictatorship of R.A.P.P., of the show trials. Duranty is still cynically performing for Stalin in the *New York Times*, transcribing whole editorials from *Pravda* and *Izvestia* as "news". Chamberlain came back and once safely home wrote *Russia's Iron Age* in which he not only denounced the bureaucracy but renounced the whole of Socialism. His most recent work is entitled *Collectivism, a False Utopia*. Lyons, formerly a communist sympathizer, is now working for the American Labor Party.

Lyons' vivid and detailed account of the totalitarian Stalinist régime dovetails at all

points with the political study of the same period by Victor Serge, former collaborator of the Executive of the Communist International. Each from his own point of view illuminates the underlying theory and the processes of the utopian Stalinist attempt to achieve complete "socialism in a single country", upon the basis of its own inner resources and without regard for the development of the world revolution. Trotsky's economic platform of industrialization and collectivization were parts of a larger context of workers' democracy and revolutionary internationalism. Stalin's attempt to force this program into the strait-jacket of "socialism" in a single country was bound to lead to results that were the startling antithesis of everything Trotsky stood for. The economic adventurism of the "Five Year Plan in Four" against which Trotsky protested from exile, brought the country to the brink of ruin. The bureaucracy, surprised by the unexpected successes of the planned economy which they had first resisted, drunkenly proceeded as if there were no limits but the human will. The living standards of the workers, the most important of the productive forces, were callously sacrificed. Millions of peasants became victims of Stalin's administrative collectivization. Bureaucratic privilege and social inequality flourished apace. The human travail in the wake of Stalinism was immeasurable but the political consequences were no less reactionary. To unload responsibility for economic blunders and bureaucratic oppression, Stalin resorted to trumped-up sabotage and conspiracy trials. Not even Hitler's *Gestapo* tracked down communists more pitilessly than the O.G.P.U. Camouflaged in pseudo-parliamentary forms, a new despotism arose in the Kremlin. Stalinism produced a totalitarian régime by the side of which Hobbes' Leviathan would look like an anarchist utopia.

Yvon, Lyons and Serge all agree as to the facts. All arrive at different conclusions. No genuine revolutionist will be a party to painting up the situation in the Soviet Union. But neither is it sufficient to set down the stark figures of the poverty of the Soviet worker as Yvon has done, without seeing those figures in historical perspective, and without searching for the basic causes of the Soviet Union's degeneration as a workers' state. At no point does it occur to Yvon that without the October revolution the Russian worker's status would have approached that of the Chinese coolie, and Russia would have become a colony of Western capitalism. At no point does Yvon realize that despite the monstrous distortions of the bureaucracy, nationalized property relations and planned economy have even in this backward country celebrated the superiority of socialist over capitalist methods of production. Yvon is in too great haste to bury the revolution. For him nationalization is a "fiction" and the bureaucracy has become the real ruling class. One cannot very well get out an injunction prohibiting Yvon from characterizing the bureaucracy as a

"class" if he insists. But for Marxists a class is definitely fixed by its independent rôle in production and by its special and characteristic property forms. The Soviet bureaucracy or considerable sections of it don't appear to have even a reasonable tenure on bare life let alone on property and its assignment or transmission. Yvon confuses the social parasitism of the bureaucracy with class exploitation. So little is nationalization a "fiction" that after all the years of reaction Stalin has not yet been able to change the basic property relations of the October revolution.

It is only confusing when, in their hatred of the Stalinist frame-ups, honest intellectuals like Silone are led to talk of "Red Fascism". Despite all the gestures of the "Corporate State" the fascist military-bureaucratic state is what it always was, the praetorian guard of heavy industry and finance capital. The control of economic life is more firmly lodged in the grip of Big Business than it has ever been. The Soviet State has degenerated into a bureaucratic-police or Bonapartist dictatorship it is true, but it still rests on the foundations of October. The analysis of the dual rôle of the Soviet bureaucracy given by Trotsky in his *Revolution Betrayed* remains the only key to the explanation of the past decade of Soviet history. Whether the bureaucracy will extend its present political monopoly and attack the economic basis of the Soviet state, or the proletariat will overthrow the bureaucracy and restore workers' democracy, will be decided by the living struggle of forces. It will be decided moreover not merely by what happens in the U.S.S.R. but by the victory or defeat of the European working class. Serge sees this clearly. "At no point in its history can the socialist revolution in Russia be considered apart from the international labor movement—the victory of the bureaucracy was prepared by the defeat of the European revolution."

What has Lyons to offer as an alternative to Bolshevism? The politically shabby and threadbare garment of Social-Democracy! And not even the German social-democracy which once had a coherent

theory as well as masses, but the American Labor Party! It is true that Stalinism has betrayed the ideals of the October revolution, but the parties of Mr. Lyons' new creed betrayed the revolution long ago. Had Menshevism triumphed in 1917 the revolution would not have degenerated for the simple reason that there would have been no revolution. Mr. Lyons' present political friends have been consistently counter-revolutionary since 1914, or will he deny it? Instead of utilizing the post-war crisis for socialist reconstruction, the social-democrats worked to rebuild capitalist economy and preserve bourgeois democracy. They fulfilled the terms of the infamous Versailles Treaty. They transferred political power from the Workers' Councils to the Weimar Assembly. They restored the morale of the bourgeoisie by the coalition set-up. They deluded the masses with promises of gradual socialization. Well, what is the upshot? The German socialist party was not even able to save bourgeois democracy. The bourgeoisie rewarded its loyalty with the boot of fascism. The Scandinavian parties still administer the affairs of the capitalist state. The British Labour Party, after two trials in office, vegetates as His Majesty's Opposition, a miserable stooge for British imperialism. But has the social-democracy learned anything? They are again enthusiastically building up the old coalition under the mask of the new Comintern-varnished Popular Front.

The Russian revolution gave humanity its first glimpse of the workers' state. Neither its course nor its problems could have been charted in advance. Nor is there any gainsaying that its latter-day developments have had a profoundly depressing effect on the revolutionary movement. Stalin's crimes have served to throw discredit on the proletarian dictatorship and his Popular Frontism to prop up bourgeois democracy. But those who shrink from the proletarian revolution must ask themselves whether they will not be rejecting civilization itself because of its evil accompaniments.

The Great French Revolution was followed by the intellectual rehabilitation of Catholicism, Voltaire and Rousseau by De Maistre and Bonald. But who will deny that the struggle for bourgeois democracy, for free trade as well as parliamentarism, was once progressive? Nobody wants to idealize suffering or want. But imperialism and war and economic collapse are a harsh school of political manners and social morals. Ours is simply not an epoch of peace and tranquillity. It is as definitely an epoch of upheaval as the Reformation. Individuals can still find peace but not the masses. The revolution will offend the spirit of John Stuart Mill more than once. The issue of destiny is acquiescence with the course of the imperialists or, with all its hazards—the proletarian revolution. The revolution is not a streamlined Pullman to Utopia but the only, if thorny, road along which all mankind can reach freedom.

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CLIPPINGS

A Miner in Russia

Sent to Russia last year by the Friends of the Soviet Union with a large French labor delegation, Kléber Legay, a working miner for 31 years, President of the Administrative Council of the Miners' Union of the Department of the North and a national secretary of the Union, describes what he saw in Un Mineur Français chez les Russes (Éditions Pierre Tisné, Paris, 1937), from which the following pages are reproduced.

IN THE course of our visits to the mines, we were deeply surprised to see everywhere men armed with rifles.

The evening of our arrival in Gorlovka, we found some of them in the restaurant where we had our meal.

Was this for the purpose of preserving us from a possible attempt at assassination? . . .

We let the matter pass without asking for an explanation.

But the next day, upon visiting the pits, instead of the customary gateman of our mines, we find the gates of the grounds guarded by a man carrying a rifle and scrutinizing all those who enter and depart.

Inside the building serving as the gateman's office, is a group of men armed with rifles, like a guard-house at the entrance to a barracks.

We find them at various places, on the mine grounds, walking about with weapon slung.

At the bottom of the pit, my comrade Vigne discovers two more of them, carrying rifles, who, crouching in a corner, seemed desirous of escaping our sight.

These observations stupefy us, as will be easily understood.

Nor is this peculiar to Gorlovka. We observed it in all the mines we visited.

We asked our interpreter what it meant. The only explanation we received was this: "With us, all the mines and factories are guarded by armed men."

A vague reply, which did not explain to us the rôle that a man stationed at the gate of the grounds, in the guise of a gateman, a rifle in hand, might play eventually.

Although the big gate is open, no worker goes through without having presented himself to the man with the rifle.

Undoubtedly, it is only by examining a suitable paper that free passage is granted.

In the course of our voyage, we were always disturbed by this. An attempt was finally made to reassure us by saying that it was done in order to avert any counter-revolutionary action.

It's an explanation as good as any, but the two poor rifle-bearing fellows whom we saw at the bottom of the mine, what were they doing there? There is no doubt, for that matter, that they were not there alone.

Twenty years after the Russian revolution! You remain surprised at such a state of affairs and you ask yourself what point there is in having rifle-bearing men at the bottom of a mine or in a factory.

To prevent any act of sabotage? I find it hard to believe.

In any case, it produces a grievous impression on the foreigner who has been told time and again that the workers of this country are happy and proud of being the owners of their working tools.

If that unanimity of labor which the new régime is said to have won really prevails, what point is there in giving visitors the impression that the régime subsists because those rifles are there to maintain it?

I cannot very well see our French comrades submitting to such "protection".

And on the other hand, since all these men must eat, and are fairly numerous, it is in the last analysis those who work who assure them their subsistence.

Let us specify that they are neither old soldiers nor policemen, but able-bodied young men who would do much better in production than those 60-year-old workers whom we found still working in the mines.

I am not alone in being sickened by this forced labor of old men past the age of 60—because they are inadequately or not at all pensioned—while numerous men, young and strong, watch them work.

Nor can I stop asking over and over again what these men, armed with rifles, are doing at the place of work. I wait for somebody to give me the true explanation, in France, that they could not or would not give them over there.

It will be hard to make me admit that it is not a means of pressure upon those who might be tempted to doubt the delights of the Stalinist régime.

I know that by bringing these facts to the attention of the French workers, I shall be the object of the most scurrilous abuse. What does that matter, coming from those who have always concealed the truth for reasons which I consider unavowable?

I was sent to Russia to see and to tell what I was going to see. I have done it sincerely, impartially, and I challenge anyone to supply me with a valid reason justifying the presence of those men, armed with rifles, at the place of work.

The Palestine Events

In the French syndicalist review, *La Révolution Proletarienne* (Oct. 25, 1937), Robert Louzon makes the following commentary on the latest events in Palestine.

RIGHT after the war, Egypt, having energetically demanded its independence from England, the latter sent the leaders of the movement, particularly Zaglul Pasha, to meditate upon the beauties of British liberalism in a forgotten corner of the tropics.

That did not prevent Zaglul Pasha from returning to Egypt, that did not prevent his party, the Wafd, from becoming the most powerful, one might almost say the only party in Egypt, and Egypt from finishing,

after fifteen more years of struggle, by . . . recovering its independence.

Today, England is recommencing in Palestine what it once did in Egypt. It has just sent off to the Seychelles Islands, almost exactly below the Equator, the principal Mussulman leaders who opposed the deprivation of the traditional inhabitants of Palestine (Arabs and Israelites) of a whole portion of their country in order to give it to European colonists. (I say deliberately: *European* colonists. It is indeed only the Jews and anti-Semites who still believe that the Jews of Europe are Semites. See the remarkable lecture delivered on this question to the Saint-Simon Circle by Renan.)

Naturally, this barbaric and arbitrary deportation (arbitrary because carried out by administrative measure, without trial, in the manner of the G.P.U.), has led the Palestinians to take vigorous measures of self-defense reminiscent of those of the Irish Fenians.

And, naturally also, as in Morocco, as in Algeria, "the hand of Italy" is blamed. Just as "the hand of England" in Syria was blamed in France during the 1920's.

All this is patently false.

That Italy seeks to utilize the Palestinian revolt for its own designs, goes without saying! That she even supplies it with aid, is probably so! And that the Palestinians utilize against their direct enemy the aid the enemy of their enemy may bring them, is no less likely. To utilize the antagonisms of one's adversaries, is the A B C of politics.

But this in no way means that Italy is *the cause* of the Palestinian movement, any more than England was the cause of the Syrian movement. In both cases, the only cause is imperialism. The only culprit is Anglo-Zionist imperialism which has expropriated the lands of the natives and wants to deprive them now of a whole portion of their country to the profit of imported immigrants.

But the Asiatic Levant seems to be capable of offering European imperialism quite a different resistance from that which Africa offered. Syria has already made French imperialism fall back, in spite of the bombardment of Damascus, "the open city", by the Freemason, Sarrail; Palestine will make Anglo-Jewish imperialism fall back in its turn, in spite of the threats to dynamite its villages which have been made by the mandatories of the League of Nations. And the deportees of the Seychelles will one day return as victors to a single and independent Palestine.

Among the other articles to appear in the coming issue of THE NEW INTERNATIONAL will be a complete report of the Chicago convention of the left wing socialists during the New Year's week-end, at which the question of forming the new revolutionary party will be discussed and settled.

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