

**Anti-Semitism and the Polish Workers . . . By A. Rudzienski**

# **The New** \_\_\_\_\_ **INTERNATIONAL**

**JANUARY • 1947**

## **The Coal Strike: A Balance Sheet**

- **THE BANKRUPTCY OF "PURE AND SIMPLE" UNIONISM**
- **THE POLITICAL OFFENSIVE AGAINST LABOR**

*An Editorial*

## **The Politics of Psychoanalysis**

**Comment by James T. Farrell and Others • A Reply by Robert Stiler**

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**By Shirley Lawrence**

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## Business Manager's

## MEMO TO OUR READERS

To enable those agents of THE NEW INTERNATIONAL, who have been somewhat slow in starting their campaign for subscriptions to the magazine, to participate fully, the end of the campaign has been put forward to January 14, 1947. It is expected that this will enable many agents to complete their quotas and give sufficient time for Workers Party branches supporting the campaign to get going.

As of now, a total of approximately 200 subscriptions has been obtained. While this is disappointing in terms of our expectations, it is a definite step forward for the magazine. The Chicago Branch, under the capable direction of our friend Herman Mies, has done the best job to date, as is shown in the subscription totals. Not far behind is the Detroit Branch, thanks to the efforts of Sam Bach! Our friends in Baltimore have gone the highest over their quota of any assigned group, and are still promising to send subs in. The Reading Branch of the Workers Party has also gone far over its quota and obtained a total of eleven subs already. Most disappointing of all has been the extremely poor results obtained in New York City, where, aside from a sharp gain in newsstand circulation, barely any work has been done to get subscriptions.

Here is the standing as of December 23, 1946:

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Chicago .....	34	"
Detroit .....	19	"
Philadelphia .....	14	"
Reading .....	11	"
Baltimore .....	8	"
Cleveland .....	8	"
Newark .....	7	"
Los Angeles .....	7	"
Akron .....	4	"
San Francisco .....	4	"
Buffalo .....	4	"
Streator, Ill. ....	3	"
West Virginia .....	1	"
Seattle .....	1	"
Boston .....	1	"

The balance of the 200-odd subscriptions obtained are from miscellaneous sources—foreign, etc. Oh, Seattle and Boston—where are you? Remember that the campaign lasts until January 14, 1947, and that the \$1.00 special introductory subscription offer is good until that time.

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# THE NEW INTERNATIONAL

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VOL. XIII

JANUARY, 1947

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## EDITORIAL COMMENT:

### THE COAL STRIKE CRISIS—CIO CONVENTION

#### RETURN OF THE INJUNCTION

Blast furnaces tapered off production. Railroads went on reduced schedules. Freight movements were subjected to a priority rating. Electric power was curtailed and cities returned to war-time "brown-out" restrictions. Ford's River Rouge plant laid off some fifteen thousand workers. A million unemployed were predicted on a national scale by week's end. Schools closed down in many communities. Parcel post and express shipments were placed under size and weight limitations. Heat and hot water were rationed in many hotels and apartment buildings. A creeping paralysis had seized the vitals of American economy and was working its way out to the extremities. Few of the nation's inhabitants remained totally unaffected.

*The coal miners were on strike again!*

As the tumult in Congress, press and radio reached its howling crescendo, an alert news photographer, with an eye for the dramatic, snapped John L. Lewis sitting in a hotel lobby, his square bulk filling out a lounging chair, hat pulled down to his famous eyebrows, casually reading a newspaper. The picture faithfully caught the "business as usual" demeanor with which the unperturbed and, apparently, unperturbable miners' chief regarded the strike. If he gave any outward manifestation that he was even aware of the furies that raged about his head, it was only by way of deepening the scowl which bespoke his total contempt for his assailants.

His assailants in *this* crisis, however, were not to be ignored. Attorney General Clark had set the wheels in motion to secure judicial intervention. Federal Judge T. Allan Goldsborough had issued an injunction ordering Lewis to rescind his cancellation of the contract and to order the miners back to the pits. His failure to comply was followed by a summons to appear in court and stand trial on charges of contempt. During the trial, while his battery of high priced legal talent matched wits with the government attorneys, Lewis' silence remained unbroken. He did not appear on the radio to answer the charges hurled at him and the union. He called no press conferences to explain the miners' case. He sent no appeals to the organized labor movement to rally mass support. He made no effort to even state definitely what the miners were demanding beyond the general demand for shorter hours. It was only on the last day of the trial, when the verdict of guilty had been pronounced, that Lewis rose to speak out about the "deadly, brutal fifty-four-hour work week underground in American coal mines" and against the "ugly recrudescence of 'government by injunction.'"

Judge Goldsborough passed sentence of \$250,000 a day for the fourteen days during which his injunction was ignored, totaling three and a half million dollars, and a personal fine

of \$10,000 against Lewis. Organized labor rallied to the support of the miners. Both the AFL and the CIO spoke out in condemnation of the injunction and the fines. Militant auto union locals in Detroit spoke about a protest strike. On the other side, the capitalist press hailed the action as finally "putting Lewis in his place." But no miner bestirred himself to dig coal. The economic paralysis induced by the strike remained unaffected. The showdown still loomed ahead.

#### Initiative Passes to Government

The initiative, however, was now in the hands of the government. The fine could be repeated as long as there remained a cent in the treasury of the United Mine Workers. The court ruling had placed a time limit upon the stalemate. The next move was plainly up to the miners' union or, depending on what was done, organized labor as a whole. As the country held its breath, the strike was suddenly terminated by a statement from Lewis calling off the strike pending appeal of the injunction to the Supreme Court. Lewis had chosen to take notice of the state. The United Mine Workers were not a match for the United States government. The power to bankrupt the union could not be overcome by a continued refusal to mine coal. Lewis chose to retreat and transfer the battle entirely to the legal plane. A strike that was effective to the point of perfection was called off. The 100 per cent effective "pure and simple" economic strike proved itself totally unable to cope with the situation, which its own very effectiveness had created. This paradox signaled the changing character of the struggle between capital and labor in the United States as did few other events in the period since the war's end.

How explain this paradox? Why should a union's very power suddenly become its source of weakness?

Within the answer to this question lies the key to an understanding of the present stage in labor's development and the direction in which it is moving. It indicates why labor cannot go on in "the old way" and illuminates the impending change of an historic scope which it will undergo.

The essence of the paradox consists of labor's organized strength, specifically its numbers, on the one hand, and labor's social and political primitiveness, on the other. The paradox can, in a sense, be rephrased to say that organized labor has more strength *than it knows what to do with*.

To say that there are fifteen million organized workers in the United States today makes little impression when recited as a bald fact. To fully comprehend the tremendous implications of this fact it is necessary to grasp it in reference to historical retrospect and perspective. Those who have been part of the American scene since 1935 when labor began its steady expansion have difficulty in gauging the extent to which the emergence of a powerful trade union movement has brought

about what bourgeois sociologists have recently come to refer to as the "imbalance" between capital and labor. What they have in mind, of course, is that the "balance" that prevailed before 1935 has been upset. It is only by knowing what that "balance" consisted of that one gains a true measure of the change that has taken place. In a pamphlet issued by Brookwood Labor College in 1932 on *Our Labor Movement Today*, written by Katherine H. Pollak, the situation is summarized in the following words:

The most striking thing about the American labor movement in 1932 was not, however, its different shades of belief but its very small place in the American scene. The great masses of the American workers in steel, in autos, in oil, in food industries, were not touched to any degree by any of these movements and had no organization whatever to protect them against the widespread unemployment and wage-cutting that swept America.

The difference between the bare two million members of the American Federation of Labor in 1932 and the fifteen million organized workers represented by the AFL, CIO and independent unions today is more than a mere numerical one. If the Hegelian law of the change of quantity into quality has validity, it certainly is true in this instance. The two million organized workers in 1932 represented the peripheral odds and ends of the American proletariat. Today, the few million workers in industrial occupations *not* in trade unions represent the peripheral odds and ends of the class. In this sense, the reality contradicts what Rosa Luxemburg sought to establish in theory about the trade union movement when she maintained in her pamphlet on *The Mass Strike* that the trade unions could never organize more than the elite of the proletariat, always a minority.

### Strikes Without Picket Lines

Taking note of this development, the last convention of the Workers Party (June 1946) dealing with the American scene stated:

Never, in any country, have the trade unions been such a powerful force as they are today in the United States. The social weight and political significance of fifteen million organized trade unionists is only beginning to be comprehended, even by the Marxists. Its effect upon class relations in this country is profound. The labor movement represents a five-fold increase over that of the period immediately following World War I. The weight of such a movement thrown into the scales of the economic struggle in a period of high employment is overwhelming. The fact that the largest mass strikes were conducted without more than token picket lines in industries notorious for their bloody resistance, speaks for itself. The powerful bourgeois propaganda campaigns about the "unfairness" of the Wagner Labor Act and the tremendous drive being developed for legislation that will cripple the effectiveness of the unions indicates the inability of the capitalists to deal effectively with the labor movement in economic struggle at this stage. Nor has the expansion of the trade union movement run its course. On the contrary, all indications point to the continued growth of the trade unions in this period. (*Resolution on the United States.*)

Since the "no strike" policy was lifted after V-J Day, there has not been a single important strike called which has failed to completely paralyze the industry in which it took place. Auto, oil, maritime, steel, railroad, telephone, telegraph—the list is almost endless—have in turn been brought to either a complete stop or a degree of reduced activity as the union leaderships determined. The strike call alone has been sufficient to produce the stoppage. This is a far cry from the period when every strike call was a test of the union's ability to bring out the men and when every strike was a venture that jeopardized the very existence of the union.

Compared to the completely changed status of labor as a

force on the American scene, its social and political progress appears microscopic. Despite a whole series of advances in program and policy over the labor movement of 1932, the basic philosophy of the trade unions, including the CIO, is only a slight advance over the "pure and simple" trade unionism or wage consciousness sired by Samuel Gompers. The measure of success is still primarily the weekly pay envelope of the worker. Such policies as "Wage increases without price rises" have until now been identified only with the auto workers, the vanguard of the vanguard, and even they have embarked upon this course only a year ago.

Though the CIO has interested itself in a rounded program of social, political and economic demands, its policy of operating within the framework of bourgeois politics reduces the program to mere declarations of opinion about which it can do nothing beyond legislative lobbying. The organization of the PAC is a distinct advance over Gompers' formula of "Reward your friends and punish your enemies," but only in the sense that it seeks to cast a solid class vote on a national scale. Instead of endorsing the individual "friend of labor," PAC endorses the Democratic Party, or a wing of it, as representing the pro-labor bloc. This powerful force of fifteen million organized workers remains the gigantic "tail" which is wagged by the organized machines of professional bourgeois politicians.

However, compared to the philosophy of the CIO, and even to that of the railroad brotherhoods and some of the more progressive AFL affiliates, the philosophy of John L. Lewis has not budged an inch beyond the most narrow and orthodox Gompersism. Adam Smith's doctrine of *laissez-faire* never had a more fervent advocate and consistent practitioner than Lewis. He sees eye to eye with the National Association of Manufacturers in their stand upon "free enterprise" and against government "meddling" in economy. (Few now realize that as late as 1932 the AFL opposed unemployment insurance on the grounds that it would make workers "wards of the state" and rob labor of its independence!)

"Free enterprise" means, for Lewis, the right of the miners to get all they can. It means the "miners first, foremost and always and let everybody else look out for themselves." The beginning and end of the UMW program is "More money and less hours." The institution of the union health fund a year ago, seemed to represent a breach with this policy. But this program also was based upon the concept that it concerns only the miners and the operators and that the miners would look after their own.

As an essential and inevitable corollary of this economic philosophy, is Lewis' attitude that the more restricted the functions of government, the better. His brief honeymoon with the New Deal was not based upon its general program of political intervention in economy and social reform but rather upon the policy of "hands off" while labor organizes the mass industries. Basically Lewis' philosophy is closer to the Republicans and his life-long allegiance to that party is not accidental. His support of Roosevelt in 1936 marks his sole departure from the fold.

### Nature of Public Opinion

From Lewis' point of view, a coal strike is a private economic duel between the miners and the operators and interference on the part of anyone else is completely unwarranted. When this concept is carried into practice in an industry like coal, its effects are devastating. Only a strike in electric power, communications or railroads could affect the entire economy

more seriously. A coal strike cannot avoid being the "business" of more sectors of the nation than miners and operators. The effect of "public opinion" is, therefore, an immediate and decisive factor in determining the outcome of the strike. By its nature, a coal strike that effectively shuts down all production cannot be a protracted struggle. The weight of public demand will force one or the other side to yield; in the last analysis, by forcing the government to intervene. The consolidation of "public opinion" is therefore crucial. But from Lewis' point of view, "public opinion" has no business getting involved. He does not, therefore, crook a finger to effect it.

The nature of the much-discussed "public opinion" must, of course, be thoroughly understood. There is a real public opinion and a fake one. That is, there is the genuine interest in and concern for the outcome of a coal strike on the part of the people of all classes and there is the "public opinion" manufactured and interpreted by the capitalist press. If Lewis' contempt were solely for the latter, it would be magnificent in its dimensions and worthy of a revolutionist. But, unfortunately, Lewis' lack of interest in what other *workers* think, let alone white collar workers, farmers and small business people, is on a par with his attitude toward the press.

The result of Lewis' strategy, if it can be called such, is to irritate all classes with repeated national crises due to coal strikes without posing a bold program which promises to resolve the situation in a long-run sense. The tremendous sympathy for the miners which extends beyond the working class and into the middle class, is therefore frittered away and a wide-open field created for reactionary propaganda to mobilize opinion against the miners. In this sense, the procedure of Lewis is a specific instance of the historic effect of reformist struggles upon class relations. Such struggles pose no bold solutions and aimlessly seem to repeat the same round of stalemate, crisis and compromise until the middle classes, and even sections of the working class, throw up their hands in despair and seek the man or movement that promises to use a "firm hand" in imposing a solution from on top upon the contending parties.

### **Miners Need Social Program**

Not only is coal one of the few key industries where this process works itself out with such devastating results, but it is also one of the few industries in which "more money" contributes least to the solution of the problems of the workers involved. The problem of the miners is a *social problem* in the fullest, most rounded, and most direct sense of that phrase. Neither \$75 nor \$150 a week will permit the miners as individuals to overcome the obstacles to decent living, health, education, entertainment, housing, etc., represented by the coal communities. This is the case throughout the coal fields and advanced sections like southern Illinois differ only by degree with the really primitive coal communities that survive in West Virginia, Kentucky and parts of western Pennsylvania.

What the UMW needs is a bold and comprehensive program of reorganizing the entire coal economy as the basis of a new existence for the miners and their families. The basic demand must be for the nationalization of the mines and workers control of production. Upon this bedrock demand must be developed a full program of town and village planning, sanitation, housing, schools, community centers, roads, consumers co-operatives, a people's cultural movement, and other projects necessary to give the miner a full and rich life to compensate for the hours spent underground. Such a program must, of necessity, be a political program. It cannot be

realized by mere strike action. It must be fought for through a Labor Party, of which the UMW could be the initiator and spearhead in the coal-producing states. Such a Labor Party could quickly take over the municipal and county administrations in the coal fields and utilize them as points of support in the mobilization of the workers' political might.

But the entire philosophy of Lewis militates against such an orientation. Though the situation in the coal industry makes it possible to rally the most widespread popular support for the slogan of nationalization and, even, for workers' control, Lewis probably represents the most intransigent opponent of government ownership in the labor movement. To what extent his views are held by the rank and file of the miners is difficult to say since there has been no occasion to test out their sentiment. The farce of "government seizure" and the injunctive process has, no doubt, strengthened whatever prejudices exist among them against nationalization. If they confuse "government seizure" with genuine nationalization, it is only because of the attitude of the leadership toward nationalization and the absence of a revolutionary voice in the UMW to offset Lewis' reactionary views.

A campaign to win the miners for the slogan of nationalization must, however, take into account the miners' experience with "government seizure." The situation reveals clearly why the slogan of nationalization is dangerous when used without the accompanying demand for workers control of production. The miner feels that his experience has shown him that his lot does not change when the government takes over. Even if he were convinced that genuine nationalization would mean the replacement of the operators by government appointees he would validly demand to know how that would change his status on the job. He may even argue, in line with Lewis' outlook, that the union can lick a single operator or the association but cannot lick the government. In this instance, as is increasingly becoming the case throughout the world as a result of the tendency toward statification, the decisive question is not nationalization but *control of production*. It is the democratic voice of the workers in direction of the economy that changes their status, not the replacement of their owner-employer by a government bureaucrat.

It would have been possible to popularize the concept of workers control of coal production in the recent strike, despite the as yet undeveloped stage of political struggle in this country. The UMW would have found a widespread response had it boldly proclaimed "we will take over the mines and assure adequate coal supplies to the nation." Here at least would have been a program which the laid-off auto worker in Detroit, the freezing apartment-dweller in New York, the browned-out shop-keeper in Philadelphia and the delayed suburban commuter would have felt offered a way out.

### **Background of Injunction**

The "government seizure" of the mines last spring was a temporary solution to an insoluble deadlock. The entire reconversion program threatened to stall and collapse with a prolongation of the strike at that time. The government was unable to break the strike. Yet it could not sit by and permit the economic consequences the strike set in motion to develop to their full. The only alternative was to force a settlement upon the operators by means of "government seizure." When the miners again went out last month, the hand of the government was forced once more. The miners' strike was the opening gun in an inevitable second round of strikes in the mass industries brought on by the rise in prices within the last six

to eight months. To again back down and grant the miners their demands would have set a pattern for the rest of the unions. The mines were still "seized" and the wage question was directly up to the government. The area of maneuver had been reduced. The administration quickly realized that the chips were down. It took up Lewis' challenge and began to fashion its counter-attack—the injunction.

Were the injunction to signalize a return to the period of "government by injunction" that prevailed before the Norris-LaGuardia Act was passed in 1932, it would be fraught with profound implications for the nature of the class struggle in the coming period. However, the injunction against the miners introduced a procedure which went beyond the most reactionary injunction of the past. The heart of previous injunctions was that it enjoined a union, or its leaders, or specified individuals, or "all and sundry," from interfering with the operation of a business or coming within a mile of the premises, or publishing information about the existence of a strike, or visiting the homes of non-strikers, etc. In other words, the burden of the injunction stated what a union *could not do*. Such an injunction today would be meaningless in most industries, above all in the coal industry. The object of such an injunction is to protect scabs and facilitate the imprisonment of strikers, especially the strike leadership. Today, it is difficult to find the labor supply to replace strikers, aside from the fact that union consciousness is much higher and workers who are willing to scab far fewer. To find any considerable number of scabs to operate the mines is a sheer impossibility. Here we again see how labor's growth has forced the class enemy to use different tactics.

The government was helpless unless it was able to secure an injunction which told the union *what it had to do*. The injunction against the UMW, therefore, ordered the union to call off the strike. A violation was punishable by fines. The repetition of fines made possible the bankrupting of the union. What defense does a union possess against such an injunction? As mere collective bargaining agencies, *none*.

The injunction can be fought by a nation-wide campaign of mass pressure. That is why the Workers Party advocated the formation of local joint labor councils of AFL, CIO, Railroad and independent unions to organize such actions as demonstrations and demonstration strikes. But this road can become an exceedingly dangerous one. It can lead to a premature joining of the issue between the classes in this country with catastrophic results for labor. From what began as a purely economic strike the situation could be transformed in the twinkling of an eye into a general strike. If the crisis arising from the coal strike was paralyzing the country and creating an impasse that could not be resolved within the confines of strike action, a general strike could have catapulted labor into a crisis on an incomparably higher level, with much greater stakes involved. In this case, a devastating defeat for labor was the greater likelihood.

A general strike is a challenge to the ruling class in the most fundamental sense. It challenges its very right to rule. Every general strike on a local scale has plainly demonstrated this. Where would a general strike under the leadership of Lewis, Murray and Green have led, given the present weakness of the revolutionary forces in the United States and the low level of class consciousness? The General Strike in Great Britain ended in an orderly retreat, followed by the passage of the crippling Trades Dispute Act. A defeat of a similar strike movement in the United States at this time could have far more ruinous results.

This does not at all mean that labor may not be forced into a situation in this country where the general strike is the preferable and sole alternative to demoralizing capitulation. The aimless strikes for limited demands and the resulting irritation of the classes can precipitate such a premature showdown. But Marxists must gauge it from the long-range point of view, not from the utterly irresponsible concept that every sharpening of class conflict, at all times and under all conditions, must receive the support of the revolutionary wing of labor.

The injunction against the miners represents the third decisive event in the unfolding development of class relations since the end of the war. The *first* was the strike of the General Motors workers, with their advanced program of price control, and the resulting intervention of the administration with the "fact-finding" swindle. The *second* event was the railroad strike with Truman's demand of an hysterical Congress that the railroad workers be drafted and sent to work under conditions of forced labor. The coal strike, the injunction and the fine against the UMW represent the *third* event. Coupled with the defeat suffered by the Democratic Party in the recent elections and the concomitant shipwreck of the PAC strategy, the resulting upsurge of "third party" talk, the impending revisions of the Wagner Labor Act, the coal strike crisis has signalized, more than the preceding events, that *American labor has entered its hour of decision*. The "old way" no longer suffices. Wages and economic strikes are ever less the answer. The issue is shaping up to a major test between the classes. It is inevitable that it assume an ever increasing political form. The Goldsboro injunction may go down in history as the American counterpart to the Tiff Vale decision which completed the break between the British trade unions and the bourgeois parties and marked the beginning of the Labor Party as the voice of the entire trade union movement. We repeat: American Labor has definitely entered its hour of decision.

## THE CIO CONVENTION

In the present critical situation in the United States, the CIO convention, held in the middle of November at Atlantic City, offers a timely and valuable opportunity to observe the present stage of development of this, the most advanced section of the American labor movement. The convention, representing six million organized workers, was characterized as "dull" and "routine" except for the "Communist," i.e., the Stalinist, issue. This is true only on the surface. A sober examination of the convention and developments arising from it give us a revealing enough picture of the CIO, on which today hangs the future not only of the labor movement but, in large measure, of American society as a whole.

The convention was divided into two main tendencies, the so-called rights and the so-called lefts. This division, however, had no real meaning because of the fact that the Stalinists, helped by the bourgeois press, arrogated to themselves the title of left. Thus, Walter Reuther, president of the Auto Workers Union, would in any current alignment be called a *left* trade-union leader. In the convention reports, however, he was called a rightist, because of his anti-Stalinist position. On the other hand, R. J. Thomas, still an aspirant to the post of president of the UAW and with this aim, maneuvering with the Stalinists, was considered as one of the lefts. In reality, Thomas is admittedly one of the more conservative labor leaders in the UAW.

The most powerful of the so-called "left," i.e., Stalinist, unions, is the United Electrical Workers, which ranks as third in size in the CIO, coming after the UAW and the Steel Workers Union. The Stalinists dominate about a dozen of the 40 CIO unions; among them are the Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers, the National Maritime Union, Longshoremen, Fur Workers and Public Workers. Against these Stalinist-controlled unions are the Steel Workers, Automobile Workers (in the majority), the Textile Workers, Shipbuilding Workers, Amalgamated Clothing Workers, Rubber Workers, and Retail and Wholesale Clerks.

There were 305 delegates to the convention (omitting the delegates from local industrial councils). Of these the Stalinists controlled between ninety and a hundred. This gives an exaggerated picture of their real strength since the smaller unions, with membership up to 5,000, are allowed two delegates, while unions of over 100,000 get only eight delegates and one additional delegate for each 50,000 members.

The Stalinists incessantly claim or try to give the impression that everything progressive in the CIO is in some form or other their work. That is absolutely false. The great wage struggles of the past year were initiated by the UAW, the Steel Workers followed, and the United Mine Workers have borne the brunt of the burden last Spring and again recently. The wage struggles of the coming period are to be led jointly by the CIO "Big Three": the UAW, the Steel Workers and the Electrical Workers, with the decisive leadership in the hands of Murray and Reuther.

### The Political Resolutions

A mere glance at some of the most important resolutions passed will show how far the CIO today is from being a union confined to purely economic interests. The CIO declared its continued support to PAC and asked the unions to give it "special attention." It pledged itself to continue its "historic task" of organizing the South. It means that this is not purely a union drive but an attempt to accomplish a task long posed by history, the bringing of Southern labor, and particularly the Negroes, within the borders of the social and political liberties from which they have been excluded from the beginning of American history to the present day. The convention pledged support to the movement to oust Bilbo from Congress; promised to renew the struggle against the poll-tax, approved a seven-point program for struggle against all forms of racial discrimination, and condemned the Wood-Rankin Committee, the body by which Congress conducts its inquisition into the political opinions of radicals and smears whom-ever it disapproves with the label "Communist."

The CIO called for establishment of friendly relations with farmers and called for joint "farmer-labor" committees. It advocated the furtherance of equal rights for women, pledged support for the United Public Workers drive to organize the teachers, and demanded amnesty for conscientious objectors.

In foreign affairs it reaffirmed support of the World Federation of Trade Unions and pledged aid to the Greek workers in their struggle. It demanded the creation of a Jewish homeland in Palestine, called upon Britain to open Palestine to Jewish refugees and, what is more significant for American labor, *demanding admission of 100,000 Jewish refugees into the United States*. It demanded a "progressive foreign policy based on unity of the Big Three," but coupled with this liberal froth went a denunciation of peace time conscription. It called upon all the powers to withdraw from China.

### Timidity of Leadership

On the whole, although there was much that could not be supported by any revolutionary socialist, the general tenor of the resolutions is highly progressive. The CIO stands at the head of all mass organizations in the United States today, not only in its strictly economic demands but as a social and political force. All this has been achieved in ten years. One only has to look back to 1936 and recognize the significant strides that have been made by American labor toward social and political maturity. If the resolutions do not go further, it is due to the timidity and downright cowardice of the CIO leadership in the face of the tremendous problems pressing upon the workers from all sides.

Of the prevailing crisis Murray is well aware. But on every possible occasion he presented the same contradiction: militant, almost incendiary, language to appease the rank and file and pleading, capitulation, sometimes a maudlin sentimentality when faced with the necessity of defining action or a program. Murray's opening report to the convention contained the following sentences: "There is not an honest economist in America who does not predict a bust to follow our present boom. It is purely a question of when the bust will occur. The estimates range from the third quarter of 1947 to the early part of 1948."

So that according to him, at the outside, the workers face a collapse of the United States economy within at most fifteen months from the day the report was issued. In the face of this, he reminded the members that "one of the fundamental aims of the CIO is the establishment of the guaranteed annual wage in American industry in order to achieve full employment." He denounced the profits of capital and claimed that excessive profits was the cause of the impending crisis. One would have expected after all this, a rousing call to the delegates to mobilize for struggle. Instead Murray accompanied the concrete plans for the struggle of the "Big Three" by constant reiteration that "there was no strike in the offing." In fact it is rare for one labor leader to have uttered so many apologies in the course of a single convention. His speeches abounded in phrases such as these. The CIO policy on Communism "should not be misconstrued to be a repressive measure." The Stalinists are accused of threatening our institutions. "But what could constitute a graver threat . . . than this fiscal picture that I presented to you?" Was the United States using loans and relief for political purposes? Said Murray "It would indeed be regrettable and unfortunate." Perhaps the most nauseating (and the most significant in the light of after events) was his references to the victory of the Republicans. Listen to this, delivered on November 18, 1946.

Is there anyone in this convention hall, or any sincere thinking individual anywhere in the United States of America, who could believe in the innermost recesses of his heart, his conscience, his mind that the voters of the United States of America gave to the Republican Party a mandate to put a cross on the back of labor, march it to Capitol Hill, and there in public gaze witness the actual crucifixion of American labor?

Can anybody believe that? Does the Republican Party believe that? Do the leaders of that party believe that? If they do, they are making a grave mistake. No, they can't do that to the American people.

This was not only Murray's personal style. It was characteristic of the tone given to the convention by the leadership as a whole. It can be seen most clearly in the treatment of the conflict between the UMW and the government.

The convention was in session when the news broke that the government intended to prosecute John L. Lewis and the

UMW. The CIO unanimously decided to oppose the injunction and support Lewis. It could hardly do less. But the manner in which this was done merely underscored the general policy of the leadership.

Said Van Bittner, resolutions committee chairman: "We are not going into the merits of that controversy in any way except, as the report states, we are dealing with the issuance of an injunction in a labor dispute."

What a mentality is this! Van Bittner and Murray are both former officials of the UMW. If anyone knew what was at stake, they would. Yet they were not going into the merits of the controversy! How utterly wrong and false this attitude was could be seen within a few days. After the convention had dispersed, after the UMW had been fined \$3,500,000 (with threats of still greater fines to come), Murray found himself compelled to write the following: "It has become self-evident that there is a deliberate and monstrous movement under way to cripple, if not destroy, the labor movement of this country." What could be more serious than an attempt to "cripple, if not destroy the labor movement?" And if so, when did it become "self-evident"? The delegates to the convention had not been told of this "self-evident" truth. Instead Murray had been whining that the Republican Party could not, *could not* do "that" to the American people. Who were these "predatory interests" who "arrogantly refuse to engage in collective bargaining in order to provoke strikes." Who were these men of "evil design" who create "intolerable conditions" for labor.

All this came in Murray's letter to AFL President Green and the Railroad Brotherhood's Whitney. Yet only a few days before, Van Bittner, explicitly, and Murray, in all his actions, had declared that they were not in any way going into the merits of the controversy between the government and the UMW!

Now, although we agree with Murray about the "predatory interests," the "evil design," etc., we have to point out that there was one predatory interest, one inspirer and fomentor of hysteria, one proponent of vicious propaganda, one who aimed "to shackle labor," who stood out above all the rest. That was President Harry Truman, leader of the Democratic Party, persecutor and prosecutor-in-chief of the UMW, late actively vicious enemy of the Railroad Brotherhoods, and, according to Arthur Krock, so determined to break Lewis and the UMW that he was preparing to demand the use of the Army to protect strike-breaking miners. Every child knows this. But, just as in the convention, in Murray's letter appeared not one word against Truman and the administration.

### Whitney's Speech

To show the calculated pusillanimity of Murray, the hopeless position in which he finds himself because of his fear of independent political action, one only has to read extracts from the speech of Whitney, leader of the Railroad Brotherhoods. Whitney lashed out at Truman, in fact so scathingly that some of the Emily Posts who live in the labor movement found some of his remarks in bad taste. Said Whitney:

Trade unionism dies when militancy disappears. Some unions are satisfied with a small measure of success and think Utopia has been reached when an issue of the Wall Street press appears without an attack on labor.

The second danger which labor must be on the lookout for is the attempt to turn members against their unions and leaders. Through insidious propaganda they will seek to turn the workers against the men who represent them.

His [Truman's] appeal, however, fell to deaf ears, as the train, engine and yardmen of the nation have no more respect for him

than they have for the Pendergast cesspool from which he gained political recognition.

Whitney is a labor bureaucrat. We have no illusions about him, but his presence there and his speech show the movement toward labor unity and the bitterness which pervades the ranks of labor at the naked repression wielded by Truman. The CIO leadership assembled its delegates, pointed out to them the seriousness of the crisis in economic and industrial terms and then dismissed them, having as far as possible, riveted the chains which bind labor to the Democratic Party.

The same timidity characterized Murray's handling of the Stalinist menace. It is to be admitted that the problem as it presented itself at the convention was no easy one to solve. On the one hand, there is the pressure from the government and big capital to purge the labor movement of this support of Stalinist Russia in the United States. Allied with them are the genuine right wingers in the labor movement. On the other hand, Murray knows the unscrupulousness of the Stalinists and their readiness to ruin the CIO or the whole American labor movement if need be in pursuit of their ends. At this stage, a split in the CIO could ruin the struggle of the unions in the coming crucial battles over wages and against the strike-breaking Truman. A compromise was therefore arrived at. The Stalinists swallowed a resolution directed against them and a joint statement was agreed upon after days of debate. But if Murray finds himself in this position today, it is because of the ingrained opportunism of the CIO leadership. They are incapable of carrying out a firm political line which is both anti-Stalinist and simultaneously anti-capitalist.

All signs point to the fact that the great mass of the CIO workers show the freshness and eagerness of a proletariat which has not suffered serious defeats. The labor leadership, however, shows all the vices and senility of the most discredited of the European labor bureaucracies. To still further confuse the labor movement we have the Stalinists, corrupting all political issues and doing far more than the bourgeoisie to demoralize the understanding of both the workers and the general public. To the revolutionary socialist movement, the pattern is familiar. It is world-wide. It can be solved only by the development of the revolutionary socialist party in uncompromising opposition to the Murrays, the Reuthers and the Fosters.

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# Anti-Semitism and Polish Labor

## An Examination of Historic Roots

Poland, the land of tombs and crosses, is now an enormous cemetery of the Jewish people, exterminated in the crematoriums of Majdanek, Oswiecim, Tremblinka, etc. But it is a cemetery not only for the Jews, it is the sepulchre as well for millions of Poles and for all the peoples and races of Europe assassinated by the Nazis.

Amidst so much human tragedy, how is it that new pogroms occur, as in Kielce? To answer this question we must study, though briefly, the Jewish question in Poland.

The immigration of the Jews into Poland dates from the Twelfth and Thirteenth centuries when the Polish Princes wished to populate the cities of Poland devastated by the Tartars and the Germans, and stimulate, as well, the development of commerce and urban life. But immigration in large numbers dates from the Fourteenth and Fifteenth centuries, when the Italian Renaissance began to penetrate Poland. The great moving force of this renaissance, King Casimir, called at times, the King of the Jews and Peasants, gave to the Israelite immigrants all those guarantees which they lacked in other countries. The waves of emigration from Spain and Germany where the Jews were exposed to religious persecution were directed toward Poland. "Poland had always been extremely liberal in religious matters; witness the asylum of Jews found there while they are persecuted in all other parts of Europe." (Engels, *The Doctrine of Nationality Applied to Poland*, THE NEW INTERNATIONAL, July 1943.) In medieval Poland there were neither inquisitions nor pogroms, nor any other kind of religious persecution. When the Kingdom of Poland was united with the Grand Duchy of Lithuania in 1390, the Eastern territories embraced a variety of races (Lithuanians, Ruthenians, White-Russians, Latvians, Finns, Tartars, Germans) and a variety of religions, among which the Greek-Orthodox was the most important. The variety of races, languages and religions created an atmosphere of tolerance in which the Jews could develop freely. Their religious autonomy was guaranteed by the privileges granted by the Kings and, afterwards, by the parliaments. The Lutheran Reform did not bring to Poland the religious wars; there the biblical disputes took place in a tolerant atmosphere. Not even the victory of the Catholic reaction that was headed by the Jesuits at the beginning of the 17th Century changed this situation in any substantial way. Those of the Eastern Orthodox faith, the few Protestants and the Jews were treated tolerantly by the Catholics.

The Polish nobility was not anti-Semitic. It looked down upon the Jews with seignorial contempt, but with even more contempt did it look down upon its peasant-serfs. In its period of social and economic decadence, the nobility depended on the Jews to administer its wealth, buy its products, and lend money to ruined nobles. Thereby was born the Polish proverb, "Every noble has his Jew."

### The Development of Capitalism

The situation began to change with the development of capitalism in Poland. This development was carried out while the Polish ruling classes did not govern the country, while Poland was partitioned by three powers. The development took place in the intervals between wars and national revolu-

tions, while the liberal nobility and the nascent bourgeoisie, ruined and impoverished by the revolutions, wasted away in Siberia and the dungeons of the Czar. With the growth of industries and cities, the Jews, who replaced in large measure the Polish Third Estate (bourgeoisie), began to acquire more and more economic importance and leaped from social and cultural isolation to dedicate themselves to the active tasks of economic life. Toward the end of the Nineteenth century, the ruined nobility, the bourgeoisie, the intellectuals and the petty-bourgeoisie found themselves face to face with a powerful Jewish bourgeoisie, both commercial and industrial, and with an energetic Jewish middle class which demanded not only an economic role but a political and cultural role as well, in the national life.

The small Jewish industrialist and merchant was much more skillful in the economic struggle than the "noble" Pole who felt himself compelled to engage in commerce and industry. The small Jewish artisan, and the poor shopkeeper labored much more cheaply than the Polish artisans and shopkeepers, forcing a terrible competition on the latter. Here then was the "economic" source of modern anti-Semitism in Poland. Since the Jews, a considerable part of the population, dominated almost all of commerce, small and medium-sized industry and the banks, and since they were an energetic, skillful people dedicated to business constantly, the Poles, with their feudal traditions could not compete successfully with them in the economic life of the country. Marx said in *Capital* that the Jews were parasites of Polish society. This, however, did not apply to Polish capitalist society where the Jews played an active role as merchants, industrialists and artisans, taking the place of the weak and embryonic Polish bourgeoisie and middle-class. This fact inspired the economic struggle between the Jewish and Polish bourgeoisie, and above all between the respective petty-bourgeoisie. The struggle was intensified by the fact that the Jews adhered to the culture of the occupying powers; German in the Austrian and Prussian sphere, and Russian in the Russian sphere, while the Poles stubbornly combated these cultures, holding fast to the Polish language, culture and literature.

### Rise of Political Anti-Semitism

What was as yet missing was the "ideological" superstructure for the latent economic anti-Semitism. The historical tradition of national and religious tolerance in Poland delayed and "postponed" the development of racial anti-Semitism. But the development of the workers movement in Poland, beginning with the birth of the strong workers party, "Proletariat" in 1880-85, and later, the development of the Polish Social Democratic Party (SDKP) and the Polish Socialist Party (PPS), in the 1890's, forced the Polish bourgeoisie to organize the reactionary party of "National Democracy," which copied the anti-Semitic pogrom of Russian Czarism and transplanted it onto Polish soil. In 1905-6, when the democratic revolution broke out in Russia and Poland, Czarism unleashed the Black Hundreds in Russia and Poland in order to combat Socialism and divide the workers movement with a program of anti-Semitism. The Black Hundreds of the Czar won the active support and effective collaboration of part of the "National-

Democracy" which organized the pogroms against the Jews in Lodz and other Polish cities.

Polish Socialism immediately grasped the danger inherent in anti-Semitism in a country where the middle class was in its majority Jewish, and began to struggle actively against the National-Democratic reaction which organized the pogroms and inspired the slogans: "Don't buy from the Jew" and "Let national buy from national." The conscious and politically educated Polish proletariat always fought energetically against anti-Semitism, knowing from its own experience that the ranks of the factory proletariat and artisans were swelled by the impoverished strata of Jews in Lodz, Warsaw, Bialystok and other industrial cities and small towns in Poland. Furthermore, many of the leaders of the PPS as well as the SDKP were Jews. The main theoretician of the PPS, Feliks Perl, was a Jew. Rosa Luxemburg, Tyska Jogiches, Warski and Radek, leaders of the SDKP were Jews. To a certain degree, it is true, the PPS was infiltrated by anti-Semitism, due to the fact that its leading cadres were drawn from the impoverished nobility and the petty-bourgeois "intelligentsia." But it would be an exaggeration to affirm that the PPS was dominated by anti-Semitism. The PPS vigorously fought against the anti-Semitism of the bourgeoisie, since many of its prominent leaders and many of its militants were Jewish workers and intellectuals.

It is altogether false to assert that the creation of a Jewish workers party, the "Bund" was caused by the anti-Semitism of the Polish workers. Even if we admit that anti-Semitism infiltrated into the PPS by way of the petty-bourgeois circles, the SDKP was a thoroughly Marxist party, clearly international and proletarian in character which fought anti-Semitism and kept its doors open to the Jewish workers. The "Bund" was the product of the historic conditions in Poland where the Jewish workers lived in the Ghettos that Czarism favored and maintained, isolated from the national life and culture. When the capitalist development forced the Jewish poor to leave the Ghetto and become part of the proletariat, the Jewish workers did not know the Polish language and continued speaking "Yiddish." This was the reason for the growth of the Jewish Socialist Bund which put forward the program of cultural autonomy, a program against which Lenin, as well as the Polish SDKP, fought actively in the name of international solidarity. The "Bund" was criticized by the Bolsheviks and by the Polish Social-Democrats as a petty-bourgeois and opportunist party which fought against internationalism and always allied itself with the PPS against the Marxist wing of the revolutionary workers movement in Poland and Russia. Nevertheless the Jewish workers of the "Bund" and the Polish workers of the PPS fought arm in arm against the bourgeoisie in Poland. The Jewish workers who spoke Polish belonged to the SDKP and PPS, in spite of the "Yiddish" agitation of the "Bund." The "Bund," therefore, was not the product of anti-Semitism on the part of the Polish proletariat, rather was it the product of the Jewish Ghetto, the political backwardness of the country and the influence of the Jewish petty-bourgeois in the ranks of the Jewish workers.

Our thesis is confirmed by the development of the Jewish worker-Zionist organization, the *Poale-Zion*, and later of the *Left Poale-Zion*, when the "Bund" was no longer capable of satisfying the nationalistic aspirations of the Jewish petty-bourgeoisie in Poland, who turned to Zionism and raised the banner of a Jewish Palestine. With the growth of class-consciousness among the Jewish and Polish workers, the left wing of the "Bund" (Communist-Bund) and of the *Poale-Zion* became part of the Polish Communist Party (KPP).

## Anti-Semitism in the Polish Republic

The national revolution in 1918, which represented the delayed completion of the bourgeois revolution in Poland, granted to the Jews the full rights as citizens that Czarism had denied to them. The Jewish minority in Poland entered into the national life as a well organized force, and, by virtue of historical, economic and political reasons, independent of the Polish bourgeoisie. In the first parliament (1919) there was a Jewish fraction of 10 deputies, in the second (1923) 34 deputies, in the third (1928) 13 plus some Jews adhering to the Polish group around Pilsudski, and in the last parliament, 6 deputies. The Polish reaction, already experienced in the technique of the Black Hundreds, conserved it and perfected it in order to combat the growing workers movement, which in the years 1918-23 threatened a social revolution. It was during this period that various pogroms occurred, incited by the National-Democrats. However, to the degree that the new Polish state was stabilized, the pogroms disappeared and the Jewish minority incorporated itself more and more in the political and cultural life of Poland. The middle class and the cultured Jews in general rapidly discarded the superficial veneer of German and Russian culture and learned Polish, assimilating the customs and culture of the Polish bourgeoisie. The Jewish proletariat, in large measure, supported the Communist Party of Poland, playing an active role also in the PPS, the "Bund" and the *Poale-Zion*. Besides assimilating the Polish culture, the Jews developed a cultural and national life of their own. Unlike the Jews in other European countries and the United States, a majority of the Polish Jews did not consider themselves to be Polish but Jewish, in nationality. In spite of this, Jewish-Polish relations improved year after year, and even more after the coup d'etat of Pilsudski, who was considered by the Jewish bourgeoisie as a "pro-Semite." The economic crisis, which began in 1929 intensified the economic struggle between the ruined Jewish and Polish petty-bourgeoisie. In addition, the "Dictatorship of the Colonels" advanced a program of centralizing big business and industry and putting them under the control of the Polish State. Clearly, this program was directed against the middle classes, especially against the lower petty-bourgeoisie, which in its large majority was Jewish. Here was the source of the reactionary cry to "Polonize" the national economy that was directed against the Jews. In agriculture, where the Jewish bourgeoisie played no role whatsoever, there was no program of "Polonizing" the land economy, nevertheless the Bonapartist government sought to annihilate the Polish peasant for the benefit of the big landowner and the state. The expenses of the enormous and omnipotent Polish bureaucracy, inherited from Czarism, were borne above all by the small peasants and the Jewish petty-bourgeoisie. Polish anti-Semitism was the expression of the program of annihilating the middle classes in the interest of monopoly capital and its all-powerful state. Its political role as an instrument in the hands of the reaction in the struggle against the workers and peasants opposition was secondary.

With the coming to power of Hitler in Germany, the fascist tendencies and with them the anti-Semites, received a new impulse and their activity quickened in temper. The reactionary students, frightened by the perspective of unemployment and of competition with Jewish lawyers, doctors and other professionals, demanded "numerical clauses" in the universities, and created "university ghettos" for their Jewish colleagues. The Polish students who opposed this, were attacked together with the Jewish colleagues they defended. The writer passed

through many of these university struggles, defending his Jewish colleagues. The pogroms, organized by the Polish fascists of the National Party and the Nationalist Youth, began anew. The same Pilsudskiists, in spite of their democratic past, allied themselves with the Fascist-Nationalists and supported their anti-Semitic program. Only the final year of the Rudz-Smigly dictatorship saw the growth of the workers and peasants movement, and the easing of the Nazi and anti-Semitic pressure in a Poland confronted by the danger of the German invasion.

### **German Occupation of Poland and the Tragedy of Jews**

On occupying Poland, Hitler proceeded directly to form the Ghettos. The most important was the Ghetto of Warsaw. It is not necessary to describe here the tragedy and the extermination of the Jewish people in Poland, since there are more documented sources and there already exists an extensive literature on this tragic theme. Our interest lies in the Polish-Jewish relations during the occupation and the question of anti-Semitism. Aside from the isolated anti-Semitic actions instigated by the Germans in which criminal elements and Polish fascists took part, the Polish people displayed a great deal of dignity in its misfortune and showed much human solidarity with the Jews against the enemy. All the Nazi attempts to mobilize the Poles against the Jews and to use them as hangmen of the Jews, were defeated in the face of the national dignity and the cold hatred of the Poles for the invader. The hangmen of the ghettos, of the concentration camps were not the Poles, but German Nazis, Ukrainians and Lithuanians. This was recognized by all Jewish sources.

In the tragic uprising of the Warsaw ghetto, the Polish workers' movement lent all possible moral and material aid to the Jewish people. Even the military actions in the ghetto were, up to a certain point, directed by the military technicians of the Polish underground. We shall not cite the many documents directed by the Polish workers' movement to the insurgents of the Ghetto. In a proclamation of the "Underground Movement of the Working Masses of Poland (PPS)" of April 1943, issued in Warsaw, there are moving examples of the international solidarity of the Polish workers.

We send our fraternal greetings to the Jewish workers and professionals, who in the face of certain and inevitable death, have chosen to perish with arms in hand rather than submit passively to the executioner. We pledge solemnly to them that their deed will not be lost without an echo. It will join the heroic legend of fighting Poland; it will become the common heritage of the Polish people, a heritage that will provide a firm foundation for the structure of the future reconstructed Polish Republic. . . . Their action is not an isolated one, it is a link in the uninterrupted chain of resistance, that for four years has been carried on throughout Poland. (*Polish Workers*, by F. Gross. Roy. Publishers, New York.)

It is not necessary to cite further documents of the proletarian and human solidarity of the Socialist workers' movement of Poland. The organs of the bourgeois underground and the famous "Armia Kraiowa" (home army) also solidarized with the Jewish people in their misfortune. The underground organizations made every possible effort to save a majority of the Jews from the flaming ghetto. The peasants and even the Catholic clergy hid thousands upon thousands of Jews in their houses, convents and churches. A majority of the Jews who survived were saved by the Poles at the risk of their own lives. The Nazis did not find, not even in the Polish nationalists and anti-Semites, their allies in the extermination of the Jewish people. Without denying the anti-Semitism of the Polish petty-bourgeoisie we can assure our American readers that the anti-Semitic incidents on the part of the Poles themselves, under

the German occupation, were isolated and completely exceptional.

### **Anti-Semitism in Stalinist Poland**

How to explain then, after so much tragedy, after so much solidarity demonstrated in the struggle the recrudescence of pogroms in the "New," "Democratic," "Worker-peasant" Poland governed by a Kremlin that "condemns" anti-Semitism?

With the economic expropriation of the Jews by the Nazis and with the nationalization of all big industry and commerce, there no longer exist the economic bases for anti-Semitism in Poland. With the macabre extermination of three million Polish Jews in the crematoriums, there ought not to exist political or racial anti-Semitism in Poland. Nevertheless we see the pogroms take place once more in Cracow, Lodz, and, the latest and most naked outburst, in Kielce.

Undeniably the right-wing Nationalists, who held their anti-Semitism in check under the Nazi occupation, are now fomenting it as an instrument of struggle against the Stalinist government of Warsaw. The Nationalists use the argument that the Jews are lending themselves to the service of the government of occupation. It is true to a certain point that the remnants of the Jewish petty-bourgeoisie and intellectuals, seeing no other salvation, have turned very much pro-Stalinist. It is also certain that within the old Communist Party there were far more Jewish than Polish intellectuals. It is undeniable too, that because it lacks a sufficient number of Polish intellectuals whom it can trust, the Kremlin has handed many posts of trust and responsibility to the Jewish intellectuals, whom it does not consider infected by the Polish Underground. All this, plus the return of the Jewish masses from Russia, awakens discontent in the Polish petty-bourgeois, infected as it is with anti-Semitism. But this does not explain the causes of the anti-Semitic pogroms in Poland, where the workers and poor peasants combat anti-Semitism.

The declarations of the PPS in London and the Peasant Party in Poland condemn the pogrom of Kielce as a provocation of the secret police of Radkiewicz and present trustworthy and convincing proofs. Undeniably, the Polish Underground degenerates in some sectors, devoting itself to pillage and banditry. These bands are completely uncontrollable by the political organs of the Underground and at times they serve as instruments of provocation for the Stalinist police, first appearing as witnesses in the trials and then disappearing, annihilated by the GPU.

The Stalinist bureaucracy's use of anti-Semitism is veiled by the demonstrative trials and the shooting of the supposed pogromists; a tactic that is very old, very Stalinist, and very reactionary, and exposed long ago by Trotsky.

Stalinist Russia wishes to appear as the defender of the Jews in Poland just as the Russia of Catherine the II, "Semi-ranis of the North," "the most progressive country, home of liberal principles and champion of religious tolerance" (the irony is Engels'), appeared before the world as the defender of the Orthodox religion and of the White-Russians and Ukrainians who enjoyed much more liberty in Poland at that time, than in Russia, in order to justify before the world the partitioning of Poland.

The Russia, says Engels, that oppressed all the religions and nationalities, that tolerated no religion other than the Orthodox, "the same Russia entered Poland in the name of religious tolerance, because Poland was said to oppress the Greek-Catholics; in the name of the principles of nationalities, because the inhabitants of these Eastern provinces were Little

Russian, and ought, therefore, to be annexed to Great Russia; and in the name of the right of revolution, arming the serfs against their masters. Russia is not at all scrupulous in the selection of her means." (Engels-ibid.)

### How the Stalinists Use Anti-Semitism

This quotation from Engels takes on flesh and blood when applied to the Stalinist reaction of contemporary Russia and helps us greatly to explain the Kremlin's instigation of anti-Semitism in the interests of its policy of imperialist domination.

The policies of the Warsaw government foment anti-Semitism in accordance with the directives laid down by the Moscow Borgia to achieve the following ends: 1. To inspire Jewish emigration from Poland with the aim of causing pressure in Palestine against England. 2. To compromise the workers and peasants opposition and the entire Polish Underground before the eyes of the world as reactionary and anti-Semitic and to isolate it from the international workers' movement. 3. To justify the maintenance of the Russian Army of Occupation in Poland, in order to insure "democracy" and "progress." 4. To win the sympathies of the Polish reactionaries and nationalists for Russia because she frees Poland of the Jews, thus continuing the work of Hitler.

As the proof of our thesis, we point to the policy of concentrating the Jews in the new Ghetto in lower Silesia. The Jews, who return from Russia and those living in Central and Southern Poland (behind the Curzon line), are moved en masse to Silesia. Only the bureaucrats are permitted to live in Central Poland.

A more evident proof of the racist policy of the Warsaw government are the pogroms carried out in the light of day in the big cities, where there are strong Russian and Polish garrisons and many detachments of police and "workers militias," that could easily check the instigators of the pogroms in their

efforts to form mobs. The pogrom of Kielce was carried out at different hours, from eight in the morning till three in the afternoon, under the eyes of the militias and the army. The Jewish victims had been taken from the building by uniformed officials and handed over to the mob.

For this reason we affirm that the principal cause of anti-Semitism in Poland is Stalinist policy which foments it maliciously and cynically. The anti-Semitic tendencies of the bourgeoisie and the reactionary petty-bourgeoisie play a secondary role here, the principal role belongs to the Borgia of Moscow.

It is very much the fashion to affirm that the anti-Semitism of the Polish people is "biological," just as it is very much the fashion to assert that the German proletariat is "Nazi" by its traditions and national character. These opinions are quite skilfully spread by the Stalinists throughout the world, in the same breath which praises the Russian tyranny of Stalin. So too did the Proudnonists of the Nineteenth century propagate the cult of a "progressive" Czarist Russia, while they calumniated the Polish democratic emigrees of the period. The Stalinists are supported in these slanders by the nationalistic Zionists and the petty-bourgeois Jews generally.

We leave this kind of reasoning to the nationalist gentry, to the criminal and renegade Stalinists, and to the charlatan petty-bourgeois in the style of Laski, Ziliacus, etc.

We Marxists, armed with Scientific Socialism, know how to discover the causes of each historic phenomenon by its economic, political and social conditions; we know, too, that there exist neither "anti-Semitic" nor "Nazi" peoples by virtue of their national character, but rather that these phenomena grow out of given conditions. For this reason, knowing and discovering the true causes of the present pogroms in Poland, we accuse the Stalinist criminals of artificially fomenting them.

A. RUDZIENSKI.

# Origins of German National Traits

## Historic Roots of National Peculiarities

"... this taste for war, this adulation of power, this belief in German supremacy and in peace only if it is a German peace—these are not the private characteristics of a small group of corrupt or demented men. These are the common postulates of Germanism, so common that few Germans have even dreamt of examining them."<sup>1</sup>

In the light of a previous article concerning the distortions and vulgarizations inherent in the official theory of a "unique, brutal and aggressive German national character," we should like here to continue our discussion of the meaning of national character and challenge the prevailing myth of Germany's so-called "collective guilt." We believe there are no racial or national groups which exist as entities and which determine the characteristics of the group members. It is true that certain behavior traits may be more frequently found among individuals of one nationality than those of another, but the overlapping is great. We believe fur-

ther that the world is divided into nations, each with a typical cultural and historical background; that national characteristics among nations therefore differ as individuals interact with their respective environments; that, similarly, there are differences within each nation; that there are mores common to the whole of a nation and there are those common only to sub-groups.

\* \* \*

It would be interesting at this point to turn to Marx's theory of human nature implicit in his social philosophy in order to see what light it thrown on the entire problem. Marx not only propounded a social theory but strove to be effective in the practical world as well; he sought to influence widely variegated groups. Marx was aware that the socialist idea must be tested by its implied judgment of human nature. He once remarked that he who would pass on the social scene must "first become acquainted with human nature in general, and then with human nature as modified historically in every age." He believed in the dual aspect of human nature, in "generic" man and in "historical" man, the former embodying universal

<sup>1</sup> Mumford, Lewis—"Letter to a German Professor," *Saturday Review of Literature*, Dec. 8, 1945.

traits of human beings, the latter embodying the plastic constituents which change with the environment and hence with human activities.<sup>2</sup>

The concept of generic man as one and invariant enabled him to justify his social theory in terms of a set of traits belonging to a homogenous mass. Generic man is not English or Chinese, bourgeois or slave, black or white, ancient or modern man, but the qualities they have in common. But the concept of historical man as plural and changeable made it possible to explain the variety of traits in different ages and places. It provided the foundation for the contention that some old traits could be abolished and new traits developed in accordance with the requirements of progress. Man has always lived and acted, not in nature and society in general, but in specific, natural environments and in given societies. To the multifariousness of that environment he has reacted by improvising convenient habits, traits and customs.

Marx did not develop any blanket ideas on national traits, nor did he regard them as permanent and unchanging. National character must reflect the particular experiences and adjustments of a social group as it functioned within a particular physical and historical environment, the nation. Marx conceived of the modern nation as the complex product and function of environmental, economic, historical and other influences. The physical character of the environment, the degree and fashion of its development; the general features of the prevalent method of production, together with the special local divergencies and peculiarities; the number, functions and interrelationships of the important classes and *especially the character of the ruling or dominant class*; the institutional political experiences of the past; and the distinctive culture and traditions—all these factors affected the character and development of the nation.

### Marx Not Anti-National

Marx accepted national peculiarities and differences as substantial factors in history. He was equally impatient with conservative critics who regarded all radicals as anti-national and with those radicals who dismissed the importance of nationality. The *Communist Manifesto* answered the common taunt that the socialists proposed to abolish nationality as unworthy of serious consideration and that the charge was of a piece with the notion that socialism would abolish all personal property, put an end to liberty and culture and destroy the family. Far from wishing to uproot these values and institutions, Marx and Engels proposed to give them in life what they now were only in theory. What Marx foresaw was not the complete disappearance of all national distinctions, but specifically the abolition of sharp economic and social differences, economic isolation, wars and exploitation of one nation by another.

Nor did Marx's prediction of economic uniformity and interdependence involve the obliteration of all frontiers; economic uniformity would not necessarily bring in its wake political, cultural and legal uniformity. The same economic base might show infinite variations and gradations due to innumerable circumstances, natural conditions, group relations and outside historical differences. Thus Marx never established an automatic and even correlation between economic and non-economic factors. He felt that within the same type of economic structure, there are important differences from one country to another, and that there is room for variety in the

world even if its economic systems should approach uniformity.

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Out of this conglomerate picture we can say with some assurance that national character is not illusion, as some would have it, but reality. It can be considered a composite reflection of those factors embodied in the total development of each nation. Individuals are born into a particular society which has institutions, customs, norms and cultural patterns which are transmitted by the family and by others in authority, which the individual internalizes but upon which he can also react, or rather, can change. This cultural heritage consists of the dominant modes of reacting over a long period of time in a dynamic continuum and includes the historical, productive and social forces in a country. National character can change with social change; therefore in some respects it is transient. Other factors which determine national character besides the social structure, such as language, geography and various cultural traditions, can be said to be less susceptible to change and would probably continue after social changes took place. Thus there may be certain dominant social traits in the folkways of a nation, but they are never homogeneous. Inherent in the concept of national character is variation.

That the German have national characteristics different from American can readily be seen in this frame of reference. What is meant for instance by the American "go-getting" or Horatio Alger spirit, which is stereotyped to be sure and belongs actually to another era, but which still possesses some descriptive validity? It implies that the comparatively new, efficient and wealthy capitalist culture we live in, with its philosophy of free enterprise and *laissez-faire*, fostered such attitudes. We were a nation of boundless frontiers, and this produced an exuberant spirit of expansion and equalitarianism. Other peculiar aspects of American life have been its mobility, the stress on individual initiative, a belief in the "ladder of opportunity," the possibility of rising above one's position, emphasis on status and prestige, a certain standardization of ways of spending one's leisure time and of cultural pursuits in general, a kind of political naiveté and backwardness of the population, a rather marked degree of social conservatism and a hostility to radical political ideas and movements. Here we see various "cultural lags" operating. From *Middletown*,<sup>3</sup> an excellent study of personality in a typical American community of the twenties, we learn that earning a living is the dominant problem. The authors point to the almost universal "dominance of the dollar" and to the fact that people are "running for dear life to make the money they earn keep pace with the rapid growth of their subjective wants." Again all are not swept up in such attitudes.

In Germany (after 1870), the political doctrine of the ruling class was the monocratic state based on allegiance to a dynasty and a hierarchy which pervaded the whole structure of the nation. Its economic doctrine was patrimony, the benevolent state, with the economic interest subordinated to the political interest. Unlike the United States, where free enterprise flourished, the state intervened actively in the development of industry. Authority, duty, honor and the dictum that the individual is the servant of the state, were its social doctrines. The Bismarckian state combined the monarchical concepts of feudalism with the growth of a highly centralized capitalism.

During this era Germans have been characterized as meth-

<sup>2</sup> Bloom, Sol.—*The World of Nations*.

<sup>3</sup> Lynd, R. & H.—*"Middletown."*

dical, efficient, preoccupied with status, ethnocentric, of a philosophic bent, and have been said to have a characteristic belief in the importance of duty. Dependence on superiors was also been said to be a strong element in German life. Everyone was supposed to have had a calling or position and the nobility so common in America was rare. Centralization pervaded all spheres. But is all this something innate? Does it make the German less human? And does it really describe the range of his characteristics? We do not think so. We feel these traits which have become stereotyped and meaningless, and other traits, to the extent they existed at some time, some place or in some group, must be understood as flowing from the cultural and historical process interacting with individuals and groups. That the overfine theorizing and sentimental idealism of some philosophers and historians (Fichte, Treitschke, Nietzsche et al.) was tinged with fantasy and with an emphasis on heroic individuals and with theories of superiority, can then be seen as a reflection of the backwardness which Germany endured for so long. The backwardness of the country was rationalized into a species of superiority. This development is not uncommon among historically backward or oppressed nations.

National character is now seen as the product of the reciprocal relationships between individuals and an economic, historic and cultural tradition. This is not to say, however, that it plays the principal role in the historic process. For us the *fundamental* forces in this process are the interactions between the prevailing mode of production in every historical epoch, and the ensuing social and political organization. That is why classes occupying the same role in the productive process in *different* countries show greater similarity concerning organization, status and respective political roles than do different classes within the same country. Still the classes within one nation are similarly sensitized to distinctive habits, attitudes and prejudices, all encouraged by existing social norms. It is in this sense that Marxists accept national character to be in conformity with and not in contradiction to historical materialism.

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### How German Character Developed

In relation to the other nations of Europe, Germany in the middle of the nineteenth century was characterized by economic, political and social backwardness and by the lack of industrialization and unification. Several important characteristics set her apart from other Western countries: monarchical, aristocratic and feudal institutions had survived in powerful measure. Capitalism was still relatively undeveloped and the bourgeoisie and the industrial proletariat were still politically weak. The petty bourgeoisie, on the other hand, was uncommonly strong. Finally the country was politically disunited compared with other nations of Western Europe. No less than thirty-nine practically independent states were formally grouped in a loose confederation. (One may measure the distance separating her from England and France by Marx's view that the revolution of 1848 would begin as a German edition of the revolutions of 1669 and 1789, though he had unwarranted hopes that it would be shortly followed by a proletarian revolution.)

The roots of this condition reached deep into the past. The development of the centralized monarchy, which had done so much to consolidate France as a nation and to undermine feudal institutions, had not been accomplished in Germany. The epochal shifting of world trade routes from the

Mediterranean Sea to the Atlantic Ocean had dealt a heavy blow to Germany, for her position in the center of the continent had formerly been a great economic asset. The Germans were driven out of shipping by the Dutch and the English. No city acquired importance as an economic center of gravity for the whole country; Germany was, in a sense, landlocked. There was little internal mobility as travel from one principality to another was difficult. Consequently Germany was also extremely provincial.

The Thirty Years War which was fought by the great powers of the seventeenth century on German territory destroyed means of production as well as people and left the country prostrate for generations. The war confirmed the impotence of the Holy Roman Empire and Germany failed to develop the centralized state which Marx regarded as the concomitant of modern production. The same disunity blocked the way of effective revolutionary action on a national scale.

Though the bourgeoisie was weak and divided and the industrial proletariat was as retarded as the bourgeoisie, the petty bourgeoisie held an extremely important position in the country. Exceedingly increased because of the stunted development of the large capitalists and manufacturers, it formed a majority in the larger cities and dominated the smaller ones. "Humble and crouchingly submissive under a powerful monarchical government, the petty bourgeoisie turns to the side of liberalism when the middle class is in the ascendant; it becomes seized with violent democratic fits as soon as the middle class has secured its own supremacy, but falls back into the abject despondency of fear as soon as the class below itself, the proletariat, attempts an independent movement."<sup>4</sup> The oscillations of this considerable segment of the population had national significance.

The same historical facts thus affected Germany differently than they did the Western European nations. England and France achieved national unification in the sixteenth century; Germany, even as late as the middle of the nineteenth century was a conglomeration of hundreds of principalities. France and England were world empires and subjected to an intensive process of cultural diffusion; Germany was landlocked. Industrialization began in England in the last quarter of the eighteenth century and in France at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Germany did not undertake industrialization until the *middle* of the nineteenth century.

While the French and English form of liberalism failed to make any deep or lasting impression upon Germany, the nationalist sentiment readily conquered the whole country, leaving its mark also on the Socialists. The achievement of unification through the erection of a powerful military, dynastic state under William I and his able Chancellor, Bismarck, and the defeat of France in the War of 1870, strengthened rather than weakened German nationalism. Her economic growth was now phenomenal. She was now a great power in Europe. But side by side with her economic progress there remained the cultural and political institutions of an old militaristic, authoritarian era.

The growth of industry from 1871 to 1914 was to a considerable extent state inspired. Loyalty to the state, cooperation with compatriots and a desire for national greatness were all stimulants to economic growth. Monopolistic production came early; with the development of cartels and the swiftly growing power of the big banks, economic direction became

<sup>4</sup> Marx, K.—*Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Germany*.

more and more concentrated. Economic Germany was under the absolute power of a group of men barely fifty in number. In Germany, developments which in England spread over a century, and in America over forty years, took place in a decade or so. In America, power passed over ultimately from industrialists to bankers; in Germany, the banks had power almost from the beginning of modern industry.

Thus Germany's economic development showed a collective energy and skill such as no nation had previously displayed. The instability of this structure lay in the sudden change of habits of life from East Prussian agricultural subjection to the comparative emancipation of modern industry; in the case of large numbers of wage earners, from traditional, respectable poverty to sudden precarious luxury; among business men, from Lutheran God-fearing piety to the freedom of plutocratic Berlin. In countless hitherto simple families, this came about too quickly to be assimilated adequately. The result was a kind of hysterical intoxication and a belief in boundless possibilities of power and the superiority of everything German.

### Period of the Weimar Republic

After defeat in the war the German Republic was proclaimed and provided with a democratic constitution by the Weimar Assembly in 1919. Despite intense political and economic crises, it managed to survive for fourteen years. This period presented many new features for the Germans. For the first time a liberal régime was at the helm which freely accorded a wide range of democracy. A new liberal and socialistic spirit prevailed which reflected itself in extremely modern and progressive intellectual and cultural currents.

However, the economic foundations did not afford a base for political stability. The class struggle tore the Weimar Republic into shreds. It could not pursue any consistent policy even in respect to reforms. Unable to resolve the economic problems, it could not withstand the opposition which beset it from the nationalist right and the proletarian left.

Endangered by the proletarian revolution in 1919, the Social-Democratic ministers called upon the old army elements to restore order. As a result, "the Kaiser went, the generals remained." In addition to the generals, many more of the old régime remained. The conservative and loyal personnel of the state bureaucracy remained intact and the controls of industry and banking remained in the same hands. This gave the ruling class the springboard necessary for its complete return to power.

In Germany, which had put in its claim for a place in the sun too late and therefore found itself lacking raw materials and markets, capitalism could not even begin to extricate itself from the economic crisis without replacing the democratic state by a dictatorial state, which alone could strip the masses of all means of defense. "If the economic evils of our epoch, in the last analysis result from the fact that the productive forces of humanity are incompatible with private ownership of the means of production as well as with national boundaries, German capitalism is going through the severest convulsions just because it is the most modern, most advanced and most dynamic capitalism on the continent of Europe," wrote Trotsky in 1932.<sup>5</sup> Hitler became the favored candidate of the ruling class, of big business, for the position of leader of the nation in the renaissance of German imperialism.

In the face of a movement that threatened a coup d'état

the Social Democrats stood firm on the ground of constitutional legality! Yet their mass base remained all but intact. This raised an interesting question about the German proletariat which Trotsky posed and answered as follows:

In their lucid moments the leaders of German Social-Democracy must ask themselves, "By what miracle does our party, after all the damage that it has done, still lead millions of workers? Certainly, great importance must be given to the conservatism innate in every mass organization. Several generations of the proletariat have gone through Social-Democracy as a political school; this has created a great tradition. Yet that is not the main reason for the vitality of reformism. The workers cannot simply leave the Social Democracy in spite of all the crimes of that party; they must be able to replace it by another party. Meanwhile the German Communist Party, in the person of its leaders, has for the last nine years done decidedly everything in its power to repel the masses, or at least prevent them from rallying around the Communist Party.... The situation in Germany is as if purposely created to make it possible for the Communist Party to win the majority of the workers in a short time. Only, it must understand that as yet, today, it represents the minority of the proletariat, and must firmly tread the road of united front tactics. Instead of this, it has made its own a tactic which can be expressed in the following words: not to give the German workers the possibility of carrying on economic struggles, or offering resistance to Fascism, or of seizing the weapon of the general strike, or of creating Soviets—before the entire proletariat recognizes in advance the leadership of the Communist Party. The political task is converted into an ultimatum.

We see then that Hitler could never have set marching such forces if the proletariat had not previously been paralyzed by the policies of its two leading parties and conditioned for the Nazi conquest. The middle classes, victims of the crisis of capitalism, were discontented with their condition, material as well as moral. They dreamed of a radical change. They made a turn to the left in 1923 but the leaders of the working class parties showed themselves incapable of satisfying the concrete hopes of the masses. Fascism exploited the discontent of these various social strata and aroused them against the "Marxists," i.e., the organized proletariat.

The proletariat, however, remained loyal to its own parties. In the last free election in Germany in November, 1932, the overwhelming majority of the proletariat gave their allegiance to the Socialist and Communist Parties. The speedy growth of the Nazi Party came at the expense of the bourgeois parties, whereas the workers' parties maintained their following to the end.

The development of the German proletariat is one of the richest chapters in revolutionary history and a direct contrast to the popular myth of the German character. The Social Democratic Party, founded in 1869 under the leadership of Bebel and the elder Liebknecht, did not share the patriotic enthusiasm of the period and had in its first twenty-five years a wholehearted Marxist character. Gigantic historical forces—the continued success of the capitalist economy from 1870 to 1914, the consequent rise of an aristocracy of skilled labor and party and trade union functionaries which controlled the party, and the rise of an openly reformist wing—had transformed the party into one of liberal reform, an agency for the support of bourgeois reformism and of the First World War.

But this social patriotic disorientation was only temporary. The revolution of 1918 showed irrefutably the abyss between the ruling class and the proletariat, thereby disproving the propaganda which blamed the German people for the First World War. This revolutionary energy was crushed again and again by the opportunism of the leadership of the Social Democrats with its "legalism" and later by the disastrous theory of social fascism put forth by the Communist leaders. Fas-

<sup>5</sup> Trotsky, L., *Germany, What Next*, 1932.

cism became a big movement and came to power only when the working class showed itself incapable of taking into its own hands the fate of society. The working class did not struggle for it was numbed and exhausted after a series of defeats and betrayals.

### Roots of National Character

Enough is now known about the development of Germany; of the causes of her pursuit of a form of development different from that followed by the Western nations; and of the historical roots of German fascism—to pierce the mist enshrouding the fabulous monster erected by Allied propaganda in the course of two world wars. German national character is seen as a much maligned and vastly misunderstood concept, which in its contaminated form is strategically projected from time to time, whenever it serves the interests of the powers that be. The national characteristics of Germans (as of all national groups) are the result of the interaction of individuals with the peculiar economic, social, historical and cultural processes of their environment. The characteristics attributed to the Nazis are indeed brutal and terrible but they did not permeate the whole of the people.

In the course of this and a previous discussion we have attempted to illuminate several historical and psychological problems concerning national character.

Human nature everywhere displays much unity and much diversity. We do not agree that there are innate or universal "instincts" or character traits apart from their historical context. In Western civilization variations are to be found between nations and within a country as well. National charac-

ter implies the presence of large elements of repetition and coherence in the culture and involves the prevailing and dominant modes of reacting of a group over a period of time where the social norms are transmitted by those in authority. However, national characteristics are not homogeneous, for dissident elements necessarily exist. Thus certain traits are common to the entire country and some only to particular groups. National character implicitly denotes variation and change as well as uniformity.

We have sought to show that all Germans did not embrace fascism; that the proletariat supported its own parties but that their leaders failed them; that it was big business which subsidized Hitler's movement and the middle class which supplied its mass base and which sought refuge in fascist mysticism and social ideology as recompense for its economic misery; and that even under Hitler there was opposition. Likewise, fascism is not merely a German phenomenon but in essence is international—it is capitalism at its most brutal stage. *No country has a tradition or national psychology rendering fascism inevitable or impossible.* Germans therefore do not have a distinctive character which has always been evinced in authoritarianism, militarism or any of the other traits ascribed to them, for other nations share abundantly these traits. Certain dominant attitudes certainly mark the German character in each particular historical period, because of Germany's own peculiar development. These are not qualitatively different though from the characteristics of people of other nations, for all lie within the same range of human potentialities. There is room for variety in the world.

SHIRLEY LAWRENCE.

# Trotsky's Role in 1920-23

## A Reply to Irving Howe's Review of 'The New Course'

Irving Howe's article, "Reviewing the New Course" (*THE NEW INTERNATIONAL*, September 1946), sets itself the task of an historical criticism of Trotsky's role during the 1920-23 period in Russia "in order to learn certain lessons for the future..." The investigation of this crucial period of the Revolution in the light of subsequent historical development is long overdue and any student of Marxism who applies himself to this problem is to be commended for that fact alone. Unfortunately, in the case of Howe's article our commendations cannot go beyond this, for its results, as we shall seek to demonstrate, add little or nothing to our understanding of the problems involved.

This is all the more regrettable because of the vast importance which the 1920-23 period of Russian history has retrospectively assumed for all thinking Marxists and because, so little has been produced in the way of solid research and serious analysis, though there has been no lack of superficial and impressionistic comment.

The significance of this period arises from the fact that it covers the transitional years between the end of the Civil War and the beginning of Stalin's real domination, thus composing *the critical period of the Revolution*. The tendency toward limiting democracy in the party and the Soviets *before* 1920 can be traced to the necessity of an overriding centralism and an iron discipline without which the military victory would

have been impossible. The continued limitations of democracy *after* 1923 can be traced to the bureaucratic straight jacket imposed upon the party by the Stalin apparatus. The question that remains to be answered definitively is: what took place in Russia *between* 1920 and 1923 that prevented a relaxation of the exceptional discipline and extraordinary centralism which, as we now know, served the bureaucracy as points of support in the consolidation of power?

This appraisal of the 1920-23 period is not altered by the fact that the failure of the proletariat to take power in the advanced countries doomed the Russian Revolution regardless of its internal development. The only perspective for the Russian Revolution after 1920 was to maintain itself intact until such a time as a favorable situation would permit a successful revolution elsewhere. However, the very chances of a successful revolution in the West were dependent upon a revolutionary policy and leadership in the Communist International. The latter, in turn, was only possible if the leading party of the CI, the Russian, did not degenerate and deflect the international movement from its revolutionary course. We need but point to the effect which the newly created Stalin-Zinoviev leadership in the Russian party had upon the fatal course pursued by the German Communists during the 1923 crisis.

Compared to the Russian Revolution, the Paris Commune

of 1871 had even less possibility of maintaining itself. However, this did not detract from its immense value to Marxist theory as the first "laboratory case" of proletarian state power. The analysis of the Commune by several generations of Marxist thinkers richly fructified revolutionary theory and, in the case of the Bolsheviks, revolutionary practice.

The great value of the Commune for Marxist theory was not that it proved that the workers' power could not survive under the given economic and political conditions of Paris, of France, and of the international situation. It was, rather, that the experience of the Commune revealed what in the methods and policy of the Commune had *facilitated* its downfall. The pointed relevance of the 1920-23 period in Russia for our times consists in the fact that it, more than any other period of the Russian experience, has most to teach us about those aspects of the methods and policies of the Revolution which *facilitated* its strangulation at the hands of the bureaucracy. These are the "lessons for the future" of which Howe speaks. But the realization of this aim requires as a pre-requisite a serious analysis of the Russian experience, concentrating upon 1920-23. Our investigations to date can be said to have only scratched the surface when compared with the work done on the much more limited experience of the Commune.

One of the prime causes for the meager results obtained from the Russian events in the way of contributions to our understanding of the relationship of democracy to central authority in a workers' state is the *methodology* of most of the investigators. Seemingly so simple, the problem of learning lessons for the future is really a complicated pursuit, fraught with pitfalls for the unwary investigator. We need but refer to the fact that much of what the Bolsheviks did in Russia which is now under scrutiny was based on lessons they had learned from the Commune.

Howe begins and ends his article with a discussion of the methodology of historical investigation. He begins by stating that there are *two* approaches which can be used. One is to consider the subject (in this case, Trotsky's *The New Course*) in the context in which it was written. The other is a "projection *out of* the specific historical context; it can be a movement forward in time, away from the context of the book's creation and toward whatever relevance it has for new situations different from the original context." Howe then states that he proposes to use *both* methods and that "the two methods will yield slightly variant results." Just what is meant by the latter is not made clear. Nor are we told whether the use of *both* methods is incumbent upon every investigator or whether he can choose one or the other. Even if he uses both methods, he would have to choose between the "slightly variant results." Or is there some way in which these results can be synthesized? We venture to guess that the reason why the text gives no explanation of either how the results vary or of their relationship to each other was because the author was confused by the question of *method* and did not think it through to clarify his confusion.

In his concluding paragraphs, Howe once more returns to explaining his method. Though he now mentions that "it is necessary to understand both in and 'out of' context,"\* he seeks to explain *only* why an "out of context" method is permissible. This is not accidental for nowhere in the body of his article does Howe use any other method—*nowhere does he deal with Trotsky's role within the historical context.*

\*Why Howe decides at this point to enclose "out of" in quotation marks is not indicated. Is it, perhaps, that he began to doubt the validity or existence of an "out of context" method?

After having employed the "out of context" approach throughout the article and after having defended its use, Howe makes the following amazing admission: "In that sense, we try—*never successfully, for the effort is self-contradictory*—to move backwards in time and imagine ourselves in a situation of the past." (our emphasis—E. E.) But if it cannot be done successfully and if the effort is self-contradictory, of what value is it? Does not this sentence knock over Howe's entire construction of an "out of context" method and, consequently, prejudice the results obtained by this method?

Aware of this, but obviously very confused, Howe beats a hasty—but only momentary—retreat. In the very next sentence he writes:

Even in that limited sense, I believe what I have written is valid for the following reasons: 1) There *were* Bolsheviks† even then who had this—what I consider—superior political conception; in that sense, the previous criticisms are not merely second guessing.

We do not know what "limited sense" Howe has in mind. If the method is "never successful" and if it is "self-contradictory," how can it even have use in a "limited sense"? The reference to the alleged Bolsheviks who had a "superior political conception" is not a use of the "out of context" approach, not even in a limited sense. To speak of Bolshevik *contemporaries* of Trotsky who had a more correct political line is not to speak "out of context" but decidedly within it. (It is interesting to note that having failed to deal with Trotsky's role in its historical context throughout the body of the article, Howe gives his sole argument related to the context of 1920-23 in the course of defending his methodology! If what he alleges is true, it would constitute a real contribution to the question. Aside from the question of whether the point is valid or not—upon which we will comment later, Howe's method in this instance, however, is correct.) If these Bolsheviks had a superior political conception to that of Trotsky, why did not Howe review *The New Course* by counter-posing *their* political conceptions to those of Trotsky? Obviously, Howe does not know enough about them to permit this. But then how does he know that their conceptions were superior? It is far easier to counter-pose Howe's conceptions of 1946 (many of which were officially held by the Workers Party and some of which were accepted by Trotsky after 1923) to those of Trotsky of 1923.

### Howe's Carlylian Approach

But Howe is not satisfied in giving up so easily the "out of context" approach which he has used throughout the article. He, therefore, makes one last stab at justifying it. This last effort, however, proves his complete undoing, as we will demonstrate. Continuing to prove that the method has validity in a "limited sense," Howe makes his next point:

2) We are writing about one of the titans of modern history, Leon Trotsky, a man of consummate and universal genius from whom we expect and have a right to expect insight superior to that of most people. It does not seem absurd to ask why Trotsky didn't see what took ordinary mortals twenty additional years to see. The canons of criticism can be infinitely more severe in relation to a man of Trotsky's stature than toward some one else.

We submit that within the above quoted sentences is contained the whole of Howe's error in methodology, or, to put it differently, the above quotation carries to its logical absurdity the false approach used throughout the article. From his object of "learn (ing) certain lessons for the future," Howe

† See the discussions of the internal differences in the Left opposition contained in Cilliga's "The Russian Enigma." (Footnote in original.)

becomes sidetracked into an appraisal of how much Trotsky should have foreseen. Or is Trotsky's lack of foresight a "lesson for the future"? What does it teach us? Certainly not that genius is unreliable. No one, least of all Trotsky, ever asked that men accept his genius as proof of his political views. If Trotsky *should have* foreseen twenty years (1) and failed to, what was obviously at fault? The answer is inescapable: his political theories. But Howe makes no investigation of these.\* He takes refuge in what is a sheer Carlylian theory of the man of genius.

But why does Howe insist upon the genius of Trotsky? If Trotsky could see no further than ordinary mortals and less far than the alleged, but anonymous, contemporaries cited by Howe, is not his genius suspect? Does this not require that Howe be consistent in his Carlylianism and approach the question, not by arguing "since he was a genius he should have" but rather "if he were a genius he would have"?

Howe's attempt to learn lessons for the future by being more severe with the genius Trotsky than with ordinary mortals gets us nowhere. It is not merely ineffective; it is also dangerous. Why cannot the same approach be used in the case of Lenin? He most certainly was also a "man of consummate and universal genius." He should then have also foreseen. If Trotsky was expected to foresee the imminent possibility of unprecedented social development, should we not expect that Lenin should have at least foreseen that the Russian Revolution was doomed to isolation and defeat before he led the fight for power? To use Howe's "out of context" method, why not ask: "Should Lenin have led the Revolution if he foresaw its imminent possibility of defeat with such dire consequences for the world?" The method is either nonsense or it leads to the inescapable conclusion that the Russian Revolution was a vast mistake.

But how can a writer as familiar with the Marxist theory of historical materialism have ended up as an historical idealist in practice? In our opinion, Howe fell victim to the methodological error of seeking to give an interpretation to the historic period in question by means of an analysis of Trotsky's alleged mistakes rather than to consider Trotsky's role within the context previously established through an historical materialist interpretation of the period. Historical criticism—which Howe says is the purpose of his article—can have no status independent of and unrelated to an historical materialist analysis of the period. This is the source of Howe's confusion over the "in-context" and "out of context" problem.

### Question of Realistic Alternatives

To prove that a certain course followed by Trotsky, or certain specific decisions he made, played into the hands of the bureaucracy does not at all establish that we will not follow that course or make those decisions under similar circumstances. For it may turn out that Trotsky had no *realistic alternative* that would have given better results. By the same token, we may have none. A certain course cannot be judged incorrect, therefore, *merely* because the results were bad. It can only be judged incorrect when it was chosen instead of a given, realistic alternative, which, in our opinion, would have given better results.

Let us, for example, take the case of the abolition of factions in 1920. Most certainly this proved a tremendous weapon in the hands of Stalin in his efforts to gain dominance over the

\*Howe's point that "Trotsky was in the grip of a more or less mechanical conception of progress as measured primarily by economic productivity" may be true but is unrelated to Trotsky's estimate of the importance of productivity in Russia in 1920-23.

party machine. But this result *alone* cannot be the basis of judging the abolition of factions as incorrect. What if it could be proven that the *maintenance* of the right of factions would have destroyed the unity of the party and made possible the victory of the bourgeois counter-revolution? It is my opinion that this cannot be proven. Yet, this is only an opinion until established by an analysis of the total situation at the time. Only if it can be proven on the basis of such an analysis that the maintenance of factions was the superior alternative can we proceed to consider Trotsky's role in relation to it. Howe, however, proceeds from the assumption that since the abolition of factions strengthened Stalin, this *alone* proves that Trotsky should have waged a fight against it.

The danger of Howe's approach is that it leads the revolutionist to see every problem solely from the point of view of the danger of Stalinist degeneration. Howe's method leads to an *indiscriminate* rejection of everything that proved of value to Stalin in his fight for power. Implicit in this is the danger that the indiscriminate attempt to avoid the risk of bureaucratic degeneration can lead to disarming the revolution in the face of the bourgeoisie. The result would be that we would learn the lessons of bureaucratic domination so well that we would unlearn the lessons of internal weakness taught us at such cost by the Commune. That is why we must *first* make an analysis of the total situation at the time and then proceed to examine Trotsky's role on the basis of realistic alternatives.

But at this point another factor enters into consideration: the factor of "knowability." We cannot determine whether an alternative was realistic unless we consider what was "knowable" at the time.\* To construct an alternative course on the basis of *what we know today but could not have been known in the given instance* is not to counterpose a realistic alternative but to consider the situation "out of context" in the manner of Howe and with the same dire consequences.

If one were to discard the question of "knowability," the student of the Napoleonic campaigns could project himself backwards and, considering his subject out of context, could say: "If I had been in command at Waterloo, I would have sent an armored column to attack the flank." Howe will, no doubt, object that it is not valid to make this example analogous to his "out of context" criticism of Trotsky on the ground that tanks are the product of a *given* historical period and cannot enter into the consideration of another one. But are *ideas* any the less the product of their times? Since the ideas which Trotsky proceeded from in his battle against bureaucratism are at stake in this discussion, can we contribute to our understanding by criticizing the Trotsky of 1923 for not using the ideas of 1946 (or 1943, if we use Howe's standard of measure for genius)?

Is Howe not demanding that Trotsky use "tanks at Waterloo" when he asks that Trotsky in 1923 foresee bureaucratic collectivism?

There is a tremendous difference between identifying the early roots of a familiar phenomenon and identifying the roots of something that has not yet been definitely catalogued (in the case of bureaucratic collectivism, not even today, some twenty-three years later). Now that history has demonstrated the possibility of bureaucratic developments leading to a Stalinist growth, our task of identifying the Stalinist incubus is far easier. But even for us, the task is still extremely difficult. We certainly cannot fight every bureaucratic manifestation as

\*By "knowable" we do not mean only what could have been definitely established but that which can be reasonably expected to have entered into a calculation or prognosis of the future.

if it were full-blown Stalinism, nor as we have pointed out, can we shy away from every policy or method which proved of assistance to Stalin in gaining power. Howe would certainly not demand that Trotsky, even with the knowledge that bureaucratic collectivism was in the cards, have given critical support to Mikolajczyk against "Stalinism" in 1923. Thus even historical foresight would not have resolved the problem of what tactics to use in the fight against the Stalinism of 1923 (which, by the way, had not yet even formulated the theory of "socialism in one country").

Even if we definitely establish that Trotsky erred by choosing the inferior alternative in several specific situations, this knowledge alone would not forearm us in the least against a repetition of these errors. It does us little good to say "when we will be confronted by such a situation we will choose the other alternative," for how will we know that it is the same situation?

### Historic Experience as Check Upon Theory

What then is the value of studying historical experience at all, it may be asked. It has value only insofar as it leads to correcting our theories. That is why it is not enough to establish that Trotsky erred. It is necessary to discover *why* he erred. A political decision is not isolated from the ideological development that preceded it. Trotsky's decisions during 1920-23 were based upon theories which were moulded and shaped by preceding historical experience. The errors must, therefore, be traced back to flaws in Trotsky's theoretical conceptions. If we decide that Trotsky erred by underestimating the danger of prohibiting factions in 1920 and a further analysis reveals that this error flowed from his concept of the relationship of democracy to centralism, we must proceed to rectify our conception of this problem in line with historical experience.

For us to observe that the prohibition of factions in 1920 led to dire results and conclude that we must "pass a law" that we will never in the future prohibit factions is nonsense. Our future actions will not be guided by such a "law" or resolve, but only by our general comprehension of the relationship of factions to party democracy and by our evaluation of the latter in the scheme of things as a whole. That is why our cardinal aim in learning lessons for the future must be not to sit in judgment upon what people did, but rather upon the ideas which led them to do it.

It may be objected that this approach to history leads to a completely fatalistic interpretation which says that men act on the basis of their ideas which in turn merely reflect the historical background in which they were formed. There is nothing fatalistic in this approach unless we leave out of consideration the fact that history is fashioned by struggle, the highest form of which is the political one; i.e., the ideological expression of the conflict between tendencies, groups, factions, parties, blocs and classes. The role of Schiedemann-Ebert-Noske in 1918 is not to be explained by the blackness of their hearts. It can only be explained as a logical extension of the ideas of reformism.\* While it was inevitable that those who based themselves upon the theories of reformism play the role they did in 1918, it was *not inevitable* that the reformists triumph. Revolutionary ideas entered the process also, as did conserva-

\*Such an interpretation in no way exonerates either individuals, parties or classes from historical responsibility for the consequences of their role. Quite the contrary, it is only through such an approach that responsibility is made meaningful through relating it to ideologies and theories rather than the caprice of the individual. (Moral responsibility is another question and is not germane to our present discussion.)

tive, fascist and other ideas, each representing different social forces. History is *made* in the struggle and revolutionists take part in making it through all their activities, *including historical criticism*.

Howe's "out of context" approach, *does*, however, lead to a fatalistic interpretation of history. Though he speaks of Trotsky foreseeing the "possibility" of bureaucratic collectivism, the tactics which he thinks Trotsky should have used would make sense *only* if the emergence of a bureaucratic collectivist society were *inevitable*. We now know that the struggle in Russia during the 20's was between three tendencies: proletarian socialism, capitalist restoration, bureaucratic collectivism. It was not until the Kremlin safely passed over the terrible test of the first Five-Year Plan, including the liquidation of the kulaks, that the new bureaucratic class and its social system achieved firm dominance. What then is the meaning of Howe's view that Trotsky should have formed a bloc with the Right Opposition against Stalin? If it is granted that the Right Opposition represented a capitalist restorationist tendency (i.e., through the maintenance of the NEP at all costs), Howe's course would make sense only from the point of view that restoration could never be realized and that bureaucratic collectivism was *inevitable*. (To talk of a Trotskyist-Right bloc is, of course, fantastic as a realistic alternative. The Rights were in a firm bloc with Stalin from 1924 to 1929 and were the most rabid anti-Trotskyists in the party, along with all the illicit bourgeois tendencies outside of the party.)

One last point remains to be clarified before leaving the question of method. It may be argued that to rule out an "out of context" approach is the equivalent of saying that we should not utilize the accumulated evidence of history in its study. This follows only if we seek to subject a given policy to historical criticism without establishing a prior historical interpretation of the period (i.e., the context) in question. Obviously, our understanding of what took place during 1920-23 is vastly superior (and needs must be so) to that of *any* participant (even the men of genius). Having seen the end-product of Stalinism in the form of bureaucratic collectivist totalitarianism, we can now more accurately chart the stages of its development. But in probing the alternatives which confronted Trotsky and in relating his decisions to his theoretical views, we can only proceed on the basis of what *he* could have known.

### Trotsky's Contemporaries

We now wish to consider the one point of criticism against Trotsky which Howe bases upon a "within the context" approach. In Ciliga's *The Russian Enigma* he refers to Bolsheviks who, in the opinion of Howe, had a "superior political conception" to that of Trotsky. Howe's footnote refers us to the internal discussions among the Left Oppositionists who were in Stalin's prisons. In rereading this section of the book, one nowhere finds a *program* worked out which is superior to that of Trotsky's at the time. (That some oppositionists began to question the workers' state theory of Trotsky is true. However, this was during the early 1930's when the bureaucracy, which had triumphed over the proletarian opposition, began to direct its heavy blows against the capitalist elements and, thereby, to reveal that it could maintain itself upon its own economic base.) A "superior political conception" cannot be based merely upon a better policy upon one or several questions. What value does it have when the program as a whole is so inferior as to lead one astray? The system of ideas by which one arrives at an answer to a specific problem may prove more important for the political tendency

than the answer itself. If the question of democracy was "the one burning problem," as Howe asserts (but does not prove), were not anarchists, Left Social Revolutionaries, and Mensheviks correct on this question as against Trotsky? But where would their alternative courses have led to? This is the nub of the question. Even if we assume that their programs would not have led to Stalinism, was it preferable to risk a bourgeois counter-revolution? Would a Russian Gallifet (a Russian Himmler was more likely) have been preferable to a Yagoda?

It is my view that the specific questions which Howe deals with can only be examined profitably as part of a study devoted to the period of 1920-23. It is not possible to give them worthwhile treatment in a polemical answer to Howe's article for this would require answering upon the same (incorrect) grounds that Howe stands upon in raising them. I will demonstrate this contention in the following analysis:

Howe makes the following criticisms of Trotsky's role: 1) Trotsky proceeded within the framework of the bureaucracy in his fight; 2) Trotsky should have launched a fight for the right of all loyal factions and parties to exist legally; 3) Trotsky had a "negative" attitude toward the Workers Opposition of 1920 and similar groups; 4) Trotsky should not have feared to split in the early stages of the fight; 5) Trotsky should have made the question of democracy the "one burning problem" rather than subordinate it to economic questions; 6) Trotsky should have approached the Right Opposition for a bloc against Stalin on the question of democracy; 7) Trotsky should have formed a bloc of all opposition groups on the issue of democracy; 8) Trotsky should have understood that the question of progress was no longer dependent upon the factor of productivity; and 9) Trotsky should have foreseen "*the possibility of a new kind of society arising in Russia, what we have called bureaucratic collectivism. . .*" (our emphasis—E. E.)

The last point is *the pivot around which all others turn*. This is recognized by Howe himself when he calls the last point the "root of his (Trotsky's) subsequent difficulties on the Russian question." Then does not Howe's whole approach rest

upon his contention that Trotsky, as a genius, should have foreseen bureaucratic collectivism? If Howe could be convinced that it is absurd to judge Trotsky's role on the basis of his inability to foresee bureaucratic collectivism, would Howe still make the same preceding eight specific criticisms? He might, but certainly from a different method of reasoning. It is because of this that the question of methodology is so pertinent to this discussion.

A serious interpretation of what took place in Russia during 1920-23 remains one of the pressing problems for the Marxist movement. The Workers Party, as one of the few currents of international Marxism interested in living theory rather than in recitation of formulae, has concerned itself deeply with many questions that are relevant to the 1920-23 disputes. The very publication of Trotsky's *The New Course* and Max Shachtman's essay on it was not accidental. It arose out of the great interest of our party in the question of bureaucracy and party democracy. Our party has done much to demolish the dogma that took root in the movement which viewed everything done by the Bolsheviks up until 1923 and everything done by the Trotskyist Opposition after as a model to be followed. Historical Bolshevism has never been a closed book in our party. In this sense we have restored to historical inquiry the spirit of Rosa Luxemburg's remarks upon the Russian Revolution when she wrote:

The danger begins only when they make a virtue of necessity and want to freeze into a complete theoretical system all the tactics forced upon them by these fatal circumstances, and want to recommend them to the international proletariat as a model of socialist tactics. . . . What is in order is to distinguish the essential from the non-essential, the kernel from the accidental excrescences in the policies of the Bolsheviks. (*The Russian Revolution*.)

It is precisely because Howe's method makes it impossible to "distinguish the essential from the non-essential" that it permits the most arbitrary and limitless revisions which endanger our basic revolutionary theory. That is why it is his method that is at stake, in the first place, rather than his conclusions.

ERNEST ERBER.

# The Politics of Psychoanalysis

## Discussion and Rebuttal

The August issue of THE NEW INTERNATIONAL carried Robert Stiler's "The Politics of Psychoanalysis." We print below comment by James T. Farrell, Henry Newman and Richard Lange with rebuttal by Stiler. —Editors.

### From James T. Farrell

I should like to begin my critical comments of Robert Stiler's article, *The Politics of Psychoanalysis* (printed in THE NEW INTERNATIONAL August 1946) with a few personal remarks. A little more than twenty-two years ago, I read the first books which helped open the way to what emotional and intellectual liberation I have attained in life. These books were, *The*

*Psychopathology of Everyday Life* by Freud and *An Introduction to Psycho-Analysis* by Brill. I was then twenty. I did not gain a great understanding of Freudianism from these books. I was somewhat resistant; in fear of being too disturbed, I read these books with a certain defensive dishonesty of mind. Their implications carried too much threat for me. Yet, these books ate their way into my thinking, and even in periods when I have expressed anti-Freudian arguments, I have never been free of their influence.

I would say that the thinkers who have most influenced me have been Freud, Nietzsche, Dewey, Mead, Marx, Lenin and Trotsky. The first of these was

Freud. On and off for years, I have come back to various Freudian ideas. Frequently, I have struggled to find arguments which would limit their scope of application; refute them, reduce them to the point where they were pleasingly domesticated in my own mind, and thereby, shorn of their painful personal menace. Of all the ideas in the world today, the ideas of Freud and the ideas of Marx are the ones which meet with the most resistance. I doubt that any other thinkers have been subjected to as many attempts at "revision" as is the case with these two great minds. The ideas of both demand their own relevant kind of *praxis*. In order to come to terms with the ideas of either, one must change oneself. The be-

ginning of understanding in the modern world—if this understanding is to have any truly systematic character—must be found in coming to terms with Marxism and with Freudianism. Here are the roads to insight in our time concerning the problems which have such a disturbing and agitating character.

There is a peculiar character to the inner resistance which grows up when one first encounters the ideas of Freud. Analysts speak of this resistance when they treat their patients. But that resistance grows up in *almost* every reader of Freud, if not every reader. This fact is sufficient to suggest what I mean when I say that Freudianism demands some kind of *praxis*. One cannot merely read Freud and assimilate his concepts. If one does not submit to analysis, then one needs at least to go through the exceedingly painful and bewildering process of testing Freud's ideas on oneself. The assimilation of Freud demands that one try fearlessly and objectively to confront oneself with his ideas. No article, such as that of Robert Stiler's, can give readers any idea of the character or significance of Freud. It is an article which can only increase an already alarming condition of smugness among Marxists. It is an article which strongly suggests to me that the author fears to put his Marxism to the test by placing it face-to-face with Freudianism and it can only be, therefore, of disservice to the body of Marxist thought. If this were the best that Marxism could offer in relationship with Freud, then, Marxism is in a serious danger. The least a Marxist can do in discussing Freud is to exercise that same caution, care, strictness and methodological conscience which is so marked in all of Freud's writings. When one reads an article such as Stiler's one can only become embarrassed.

### The Universality of Freudianism

Basically, the work of Freud is therapeutic; it is directly concerned with discovering the genesis and the cure of psychoneurosis. It is based, primarily, on clinical observations. It has, however, implications which range over a wide field, and which relate, among other things, to art and politics. However, Freudian doctrine does not stand or fall on its relation to art or politics. It stands or falls on its diagnosis of psychoneurosis, and its therapeutic methods of cure. Stiler, however, would more or less create the impression that this is not the case. The heart of Freud is, to him, merely a crudely stated class phenomenon. In a sentence

which violates the historical conceptions of Marxism, Stiler would tell us that Freud's conception or hypothesis of universal instincts, a basic premise, was "arrived at by assuming that the various characteristics which he (Freud) correctly observed in the upper middle class in a particular time and social milieu, were inherent in all human beings, in all times, and in all social milieu." Freud did not observe universal instincts in a particular time, and a particular social milieu. No one can make such observations. Freud assumed and deduced instincts, and used this assumption as a hypothesis to aid in explaining what he observed. What he observed were traits of psychoneurotic behavior, the formation of symptoms, and with this, the same types of behavior in normal people, but in a different degree of intensity and significance. When Stiler, however, restricts the application of Freud's observations and conclusions to the bourgeoisie of a certain time, he really distorts and caricatures Marxism. The clinical observations of psychoanalysis are, largely, observations mainly concerned with the conduct of persons of the bourgeois strata. This is inevitable because the social system, both at the time of Freud and at present, is of such a character that only a few can afford to be treated psychoanalytically. As with many other things, the masses are also deprived of the benefits of psychoanalysis. *However, the deprivation of the masses does not warrant the assumption that it is only the bourgeois who becomes a psychoneurotic, or a psychotic. Mental illness knows no class, no race, no creed.*

The patterns of symptom formation in mental illness are universal, insofar as anything can be universal. There are general characteristics in dreams which do not change from class to class, and even the dreams of a Marxist will reveal those characteristics. The wealth of clinical observations which have been made by Freud and his successors leads to the necessity of forming some conclusions concerning "human nature." This is especially demanded by one of Freud's major contributions, his theory of infantile sexuality. If one takes specific traits or actions which Freud has explained, one will readily see that it is impossible to reduce the observations of Freud to a specific time and to a specific class. An example is infantile masturbation. Francis H. Bartlett, writing an article, *The Limitations of Freud*, in the Stalinist magazine, *Science and Society* (Winter 1939) attempted to prove precisely what

Stiler asserts in making his central (and crucial) mistake. The alleged limitations cited are that Freud's observations were based on the bourgeois, and that they have a bourgeois application, rather than a universal application in the sense that science teaches us what a universal application is. However, after attempting to clinch this criticism, we find Bartlett granting that infantile masturbation is an almost universal practice. Similarly, the behavior of children will reveal other practices which have a character that ranges beyond class. Further, we know really nothing as yet of the psychological implications of pre-natal development, but we can safely assume that these are also universal.

However, a dynamic conception of the human organism and its personality, demands that we credit significance to this period of our physiological and psychological biography. Here, we have an experience which is indubitably universal in character.

In addition, the human organism has certain universal structural characteristics. It lives in a common world. Its habits of perception have also a universal character. The sexual drive, instinct, aptitude, need is also universal. These facts are more than sufficient to warrant an assumption which would grant that we have "instincts" in some sense or other.\* The observations which Freud made, at a particular time, in a particular social milieu, and of particular people of a particular class led him to make other observations concerning sexual life in infancy. It also led him to make a number of other generalizations which compose a series of psychological constructions having a scientific status similar to that of Marx's abstractions concerning capitalism, i.e., "pure capitalism." Methodologically, Freud had the same kind of marvelous imagination as Marx; both were fertile in the use of abstractions and constructs. Finally, Stiler is wrong factually. For a few of Freud's observations concerned the dreams of non-bourgeois. There are a few dreams, for instance, in his book, *The Interpretation of Dreams*, of working class people, and these dreams do not reveal characteristics different from those of the bourgeois.

Stiler on the one hand asserts that the workers should study this new science,

\* "Instinct in general is regarded as a kind of elasticity of living things, an impulsion toward the restoration of a situation which once existed, but was brought to an end by external circumstances." Freud thus comments on his conception of instinct in his book, *Autobiography*.

and that, on the other hand, he limits its scientific status by telling us that it is really only relevant to the bourgeois, and that it has a specific historical location in time. He would have us believe that Freudian "human nature" is merely "bourgeois," and then, he would tell us, that this is not so, and that Marxists, if they free Freudianism from bourgeois limitations, will add it to the long list of man's conquests of nature. Thus, it is not solely bourgeois. It is a scientific contribution toward our understanding of the functions of the human mind. How can anyone—even a person who has not acquired the great benefits of Marxist "science"—be guilty of such a flagrant and confusing contradiction?

Stiler's article seems to rest on the assumption that there is, in contradistinction to a Freudian human nature, a "Marxian" human nature. His unstated assumption would seem to me to help explain his failure to understand "repression." Thus, he seems to equate the repression of capitalist society with "psychological repression." The repression practiced in capitalist society is based on force, and it is applied through deprivations which are made possible by the exploitation of man by man, and by the fact that, in the last analysis, the state is an instrument of force which can be used for class ends. Psychological repression is not at all the same thing. It is independent of these factors, and it has a dual character. On the one hand, the child represses on its own. "Infantile amnesia," which Freud describes in his *Three Contributions to the Theory of Sex* cannot be reduced to the status of being merely a class phenomenon.\* Even Marxists will find this happening in the

\*The category of society includes the category of classes. In other words, classes exist in society, and they mutually influence one another. One cannot understand class phenomenon if one does not see it as the data of class society in which classes are opposed to one another, and, at the same time, influence one another. Stiler here is crude and rigid in a way parallel to the crudity and rigidity of third period Stalinist discussions of literature. Similarly, human beings influence one another. This influence is not a purely formal or intellectual one. In this context, I would like to recommend to interested readers, Dr. Paul Schilder's book, *The Image and Appearance of the Human Body*, London, 1935. Schilder deals with the problem of the body image, and he studies this problem neurologically, psychoanalytically and sociologically. In this way, he brings Freudian ideas very close to the psychological implications of Marx. These implications would lead to a social conception of personality. At one point in his study, Schilder quotes Bukharin in this context, and shows how Bukharin has stated only an incomplete truth. Marxists, too often, state only incomplete truths when they discuss the social character of personality. Stiler formalizes an incomplete truth. In this way he is rigid and abstract.

case of their own children. On the other hand, it can be added quite flatly that Freud is correct in telling us that children must be repressed. The repression of children in a socialist society will be an absolute necessity. On the basis of Freudian psychology, we can assert that one of the aims of socialism is that of creating a society which permits the best possible and the most civilized manner of socializing aggressiveness. This statement can be connected further, with Trotsky's ideas. In *Literature and Revolution*, Trotsky speaks of socialist society in which the competitiveness between men will be raised to a higher level. To raise competitiveness to a higher level means that it must be made more social, that the consequences of competitiveness must not be those of increasing social miseries as is usually the case in capitalist society. But socialism gives no promise of eliminating the aggressiveness which we find so constant in the human animal. Connected with this same necessity of repression, it is essential to point out that the infant and the young child is egocentric. The child must learn, must acquire a social nature. The child must learn to act cooperatively by being taught. Without some repression how can this be accomplished?

However, the need of repression in children relates more directly to the sexual life. Freud points out, also in his *Three Contributions to the Theory of Sex*, that if the child is over-stimulated sexually, the dangers of neuroticism are likely to be increased. Sexual over-stimulation of children is very dangerous, and this is, in itself, sufficient to point out the need for, and the sense of, Freud's point that the child must be repressed. But this repression is different in character from the social repression practiced in capitalist society. Stiler's "dialectic" cannot explain the difference, and synthesize them as he imagines. For we do not have a problem in "dialectics" here, as Stiler would seem to believe.

In line with the above, Stiler also overstates the meaning of adjustment as this really applies in analytic therapy. To cure a psychoneurotic by analysis, to "adjust" him to society, does not mean that you adjust him to all of the facts of capitalism; to war, to imperialism, to "the peaceful warfare of competition." It means that you adjust him to himself, that you help him to release himself from the driving neurotic tendencies which cause him to act with a kind of compulsive stupidity. Similarly, to speak of psychoanalysis as an education does

not at all, and with any logical necessity, imply that this education must be a substitute for the acquisition of knowledge of society, and of its mechanisms. The intimate part of the education produced by psychoanalysis is self-education. The patient's own past is brought to light in such a way that he is released from acting out symptomatically and on a neurotic plane, the fears and traumatic experience of an earlier age. One can say that the psychoneurotic acts in the present and toward significant people of the present with the same emotions, but symptomatically, as he acted toward significant people of the past.

### Psychoanalysis and the Revolutionist

While he overstates the scope of "adjustment" here, Stiler also more or less implies that Marxism, the Marxist movement, the Marxist party, is a better cure for psychoneurosis than is analysis. This is dangerous. It can be asserted most emphatically that in most cases, a psychoneurotic cannot be a good revolutionary leader. If a person has a clear cut illness of a psychoneurotic character, and he is told to try and cure it by becoming a Marxist, the person who offers such advice is both playing with fire and tampering with human destinies. In the present world of Marxist lethargy, of the decline of Marxist theory, of the consequences of many defeats of socialism, where endless people are finding that they have personal problems, views of this kind are truly dangerous. Realizing this, one might suggest that Trotsky's friend and comrade, Joffe, knew better than this, and that he did not assume that the Russian revolutionary movement would relieve him of his inner disturbance; he went to a psychoanalyst. The result was that, even though he eventually committed suicide, he first found years of fruitful political activity.

A Marxist does not criticize a doctor for performing an operation which saves the life of a capitalist. He should no more criticize a psychoanalyst for treating a bourgeois, and helping that bourgeois to become cured of a psychoneurosis. Any contribution towards health must be assumed as a potential good. The healthy man is, at least, more amenable to reason than is the mentally sick man. The demand that the psychoanalyst take unto himself the functions of the Marxist is both a dangerous and a politically inept one. The patient must free himself not only of the thralldom of his personal past: he must, before he is cured, free himself of dependency on his

analyst. If the analyst halts that cure midway by making the patient into a revolutionist, it is likely or possible that he may only be giving an uncured psychoneurotic to the revolutionary movement. The Marxist making this demand is asking the doctor to do what he ought to do himself: he is mixing up frames of reference and creating confusion.

These criticisms should suggest that Stiler approached psychoanalysis from the wrong end. It must be seen first not as a basis for politics, not as a basis for a world view, but as a branch of medicine which is rooted in clinical practice. The clinical features of psychoanalysis are central. Freudianism is, first and foremost, clinical. It stands or falls on its clinical successes.

The vogue of Freudian thinking in many fields at the present time cannot be blamed on Freud, and many distinctions must be made. Any intellectual tendency—even Marxism—can be turned into a means of escape. The use of psychoanalysis for reactionary purposes is not necessarily the result of Freud's work and thought. Historical conclusions of Freud, himself, do not always and necessarily have the same status as Freud's clinical conclusions. But Stiler turns all of this around. He writes of the politics of psychoanalysis with the same crudity as Stalinists have: in fact, he shows even less breadth than one will sometimes find in Stalinist discussions of Freud and Marx. A Marxist implicitly proves that he has less than adequate confidence in his Marxism if he fears to put his ideas to the test by placing them against the ideas of all others. In doing this, he need further to state fairly, clearly and with discrimination, the ideas against which he is testing his own Marxism. This, Stiler does not do.

Finally, I would suggest that the reader compare Stiler's entire tone with what Freud said of his own contribution in his *Autobiography*.

"Looking back, then, over the patchwork of my life's labors, I can say that I have made many beginnings and thrown out many suggestions. Something will come of them in the future, though I cannot myself tell whether it will be much or little. I can, however, express a hope that I have opened up a pathway for an important advance in our knowledge."

One needs to approach Freud's ideas with something of this same spirit. For it is the true scientific spirit. It is far removed from the spirit of Stiler's article.

JAMES T. FARRELL.

## From Henry Newman

In his article *The Politics of Psychoanalysis* Robert Stiler remarks that "the Marxist movement would do well to supplement its knowledge of the laws of historic development with the best in this comparatively new science of psychoanalysis." His own article is a welcome beginning in the sense that it brings the subject into the columns of *THE NEW INTERNATIONAL*, though it can hardly be said to add to the arsenal of the revolution from the new insights of psychoanalysis. Rather than that the article is essentially a criticism of Freud from the viewpoint of historical materialism.

The *Politics of Psychoanalysis* exposes the reactionary way in which the epochal findings of Freud have been twisted to the support of exploiting capitalist society. The article further suggests that the root of Freud's own shortsightedness politically was that he knew little of man's pre-capitalist history and consequently generalized falsely about human nature on the basis of man's behavior under capitalism. A basically predatory society, capitalism develops the destructive, the aggressive in man. Freud observed these traits, declared them universal and eternal, and rejected the idea of socialism because it aims to develop man and to release him from the ugliness that capitalism fosters.

Stiler seems to make the case for socialism hang on the falsity of Freud's concept that there is a "death instinct," i.e., that man has some inherent destructive traits. What if this concept, despite Freud's unscientific basis for believing it universal, turns out to be valid? If men born into socialism retain some destructive tendencies, if the "death instinct" turns out to be an *instinct* and not just a culturally determined trait, socialist society will seek to minimize it, to divert it, and to prevent men from freely exercising the characteristic brutal aggression that capitalist society sanctions and rewards. We assert that a rational, free society will direct man's energy, including his will to assert himself, into socially constructive channels. There is no need dogmatically to deny the possibility that aggressive instincts exist, and are part of man's instinctual inheritances.

The advocacy of universal psychoanalysis as *the* way to a better world is a mistake made by some retired intellectuals who have given up revolutionary activity. Stiler unfortunately just turns the sleepers over without putting them up

onto their feet. Making the reverse error he advocates revolutionary activity as the *only* therapeutic treatment for neurotics. (It is understandable but quite unscientific that Stiler equates neurotics with revolutionaries!) In passing let me add that effective revolutionary activity is a demanding enough pursuit for the healthy, let alone the neurotic person.

Let us not forget that a neurotic is a person sufficiently helpless to require the aid of an analyst in getting straightened out. The aim of psychoanalytic treatment is recovery from the neurosis; that is, the analyst attempts to overcome and remove disturbances that have prevented the patient from making a normal adjustment to life. During one stage in Freud's treatment, according to the paragraphs quoted by Stiler, the patient—still neurotic and incapable of freeing himself—places a certain faith in the physician's *findings and views*. This act, says Freud, is a necessary part of the process of being cured. If the analysis is successful (and there is evidence that it often is) the patient recovers, the neurotic is no longer neurotic: he then faces the world with the ability to develop himself as a normal healthy individual. To be sure, no miracle takes place; the former patient has a long period ahead of learning, but he is at last free to grow.

A neurotic individual in capitalist society has two problems, and there is a connection between them. First he must become cured of his neurosis, which prevents him from functioning effectively in the world. Second, as a social minded man he must play his part in changing the world that so readily produces neuroses. Stiler confuses this set of relations when he advocates as a theory of *therapy* "to change the environment so as to be more in harmony with instinctual demands." The change he advocates is "therapy" in a very long-term sense only.

Referring to the psychoanalytic treatment, Stiler rejects what Freud considered an inescapable stage, but in no way explains how it can be dispensed with. This is the part of the analysis wherein the patient accepts the analyst's findings and views, having through a process of "transference" clothed the physician with authority.

## Personal and Social Therapy

These "findings and views" primarily concern the patient's personal neurotic adjustment to the world. Greater experience in behavior, detachment, and training enable the physician to interpret the behavior of the neurotic and to explain

it. The transference of faith enables the patient to take the necessarily painful step of accepting these findings as the basis for a complete change in his adjustment to the world around him.

Stiler misinterprets the phrase "findings and views," assuming that it refers primarily to the analyst's social views. It refers rather to views about the personality deformations of the patient. By falsely identifying the narrow social views of Freud with the analyst's psychoanalytic findings, Stiler is led to reject what is valuable together with what is valueless.

It would be foolish to deny that a particular analyst might attempt to foist his own social outlook on a patient. But this act should be condemned specifically, and not lumped with the essential aspects of analytic treatment.

However difficult it may be to achieve a relatively balanced personality in our times, it can be done. The job of the analyst is to help the neurotic reach this state now, not simply to wait until socialism does away with the conditions that cause neuroses. Stiler's arguments have not given him the right to add the exclamation point when he states "the therapeutical efforts of Freudian analysis are aimed at strengthening the ego to the point where it can establish harmony between the demands of the instincts and the environment, or more precisely, the existing social order!" We must understand the term "harmony" in a relative fashion to be sure; the individual needs a working harmony within this social order precisely in order to construct the next one. Capitalism will see to it that the harmony remains relative. From the social crisis will come the drive for change.

\* \* \*

Freud's theory of culture attempted to find the source of culture. It tried to answer the question, why do men turn their energies to the arts. In his technical jargon Freud stated that culture is the result of "sublimated repressed instincts." Throughout history man has had conflicting instincts, impulses, urges, desires. Instead of expressing certain of these instincts directly in action, man sometimes repressed them. He released the energy of the thwarted impulses, however, in the form of works of art—in the creation of culture.

Freud's limitation in the field of culture was his inability to explain cultural change, because he gazed far too narrowly at capitalist culture only. Marx was far

more successful in this respect. He showed how cultural changes are in the last analysis reflections of new ways of producing the basic things man needs. The two ideas are supplementary and not contradictory. If Freud explains the seed, Marx explains the growth, the roots and branches and flowering.

Stiler says that repression cannot be the cause of culture because repression "is part of capitalist culture, not its cause." He could with equal logic say that commodity production and surplus value cannot be the cause of capitalist production because they are part of capitalist production!

Freud was entirely wrong in his belief that the conflicts of man's instinctual life can be sublimated into culture only in a capitalist society, and *not* in a socialist society. Stiler is wrong too when he rejects Freud's explanation, looks rigidly at the economic "mode of production," and refuses to offer any explanations at all for the source of culture.

HENRY NEWMAN.

### From Richard Lange

The well-rounded Marxist journal has long been in need of articles of the Robert Stiler type in his *Politics of Psychoanalysis*. For several years now the left wing investigators in the field of psychology have noted the conservative conclusions of the orthodox Freudian theory.

On the whole Stiler's approach is correct but the concluding paragraph's of his article are far from satisfying since he permits a well-informed reader to suspect that he has not read thoroughly the works of those "analysts revising Freud" whom he annihilates in a few sentences. He does not even mention the names of the condemned ones but one can guess that they are Fromm and Horney and the members of their respective schools of thought.

Fromm is accused of writing a "psychological view of human history." If Fromm's book *Escape from Freedom* is read carefully such a conclusion cannot be reached with logical justification since Fromm continuously points out that he is writing about the social psychology of a problem which has its roots in the socio-economic structure of the particular historical period.

Stiler is right when he points out that Fromm has based his entire analysis on a questionable premise in that he assigns as a universal characteristic of mankind,

man's desire to avoid isolation. It is to be regretted that Fromm set up the argument that way. But if this same premise is altered slightly so as to read "Man's desire to avoid isolation arose out of the specific historical conditions of a changing feudal economy developing to capitalism," then Fromm's argument, as outlined in his book, is valid. The major point to note is that, without Fromm's explanation, the reaction of the middle and lower class to a developing fascism is left unexplained. Stiler has not proposed a counter hypothesis.

Stiler is wrong when he accuses Fromm and Horney of repeating "the basic error of Freud and all the others who attribute this decaying world to something in human nature, i.e., that the cultural, social and political superstructure of society is based on the mode of production within the individual." Among other places, Horney outlines her position on this point on pp. 121-3 of her little summary *Our Inner Conflicts*. Horney's crucial sentence is the following, "The main contention here was that neuroses are brought about by cultural factors—which more specifically meant that neuroses are generated by disturbances in human relationships."

RICHARD LANGE.

### Rebuttal by Robert Stiler

My article, *The Politics of Psychoanalysis*, was intended as the first in a series of four which would include a critique of the three prevailing schools of psychoanalysis insofar as they relate to politics, culture, and history, and a summary presenting, what I believe to be, an "historical materialist approach to the theory of neurosis."

Because I had this arrangement of material in mind I was very careful not to put forward any positive conclusions in my first article which only dealt with the Freudian school of psychoanalysis.

Unfortunately, this was not made clear at the time the article appeared and for that reason much of the critical comment is based on inferences, suggestions, and conclusions which, while they may have been logically drawn, could not possibly have been made had the reader known the direction in which I was aiming my remarks. Since I was writing for THE NEW INTERNATIONAL, however, I think it was correct to assume that any inferences drawn would be on the Marxist and not the Stalinist side of the ledger. Of the three answers to my article Henry Newman's and Richard Lange's both indicate

that, in spite of differences of opinion, they understand and appreciate what I was aiming at in my article.

That is why it is all the more astonishing to read James T. Farrell's comments and to find that he missed the point entirely. On the basis of his misunderstanding he attributes to me a theory which he recognized as characteristic of Stalinists and for which he feels embarrassed. A more careful and objective reading of my article would have spared Farrell the blush and the necessity of polemicizing against a point of view which I do not hold.

Farrell attributes to me the theory that neuroses are a class phenomenon and that, "It is only the bourgeois who becomes a psychoneurotic, or a psychotic." The basis for this assumption is the statement in my article that Freud arrived at the hypothesis of universal instincts by "assuming that the various characteristics which he correctly observed in the upper middle class in a particular time and social milieu, were inherent in all human beings, in all times, and in all social milieu." If you take this statement out of context you can also draw the conclusion that not all of the bourgeois are subject to neurosis, but only the upper middle class section of it. That is, if you are looking real hard for an argument. But, if you are interested in an objective scientific discussion you cannot escape understanding that, when I speak of "universal" instincts I do not mean universal in the sense of applying to all sections of society but that I use the word in the absolute sense, applying to all of history, i.e., universal in the sense of time. I think I made it very clear in what sense I used the term "universal instincts" when I wrote, "Freudian psychoanalysis is based on the premise that there exists throughout history an unchanging, universal group of instincts which are constantly seeking gratification." . . . "Essentially the theory boils down to a conflict between the absolute, immutable, unchanging instincts and the environment in which the ego plays the role of arbitrator." It seems to me the meaning here is obvious. It is rather disappointing that Farrell feels compelled to spend so much of his comment convincing us of the obvious fact that "mental illness knows no class, no race, no creed." Such profound platitudes are not worthy of Farrell either as a writer or as a psychoanalyst!

#### **Not All Psychoanalysis Freudian**

At the outset I want to clarify termi-

nology. Farrell's failure to do this leads to much of the confusion apparent in his reply. We must distinguish between psychoanalysis in general and a particular school of psychoanalysis. When we speak of Freudianism we do not mean all of psychoanalysis. If we refer to a particular school of psychoanalysis it is necessary to mention it by name. Otherwise we will be led into the kind of confusion Farrell gets himself involved in when he says, "Freudian doctrine does not stand or fall on its relation to art or to politics. It stands or falls on its diagnosis of psychoneurosis, and its therapeutic methods of cure." On the face of it this statement is true. But it leads to confusion. If Farrell would substitute the word, "psychoanalysis," for "Freudianism" it would help to clarify our thinking on the subject for it is apparent that not *only* Freudianism, — but Reichism, Horneyism, Adlerism, Jungism — all of them — are able to effect cures. Once we take this important step, we are in a position to arrive at a significant conclusion, i.e., Psychoanalysis does not stand or fall on Freudianism! Or to put it more concretely the basic premise of universal or absolute instincts, the working hypothesis of Freud, is not essential to the psychoanalytical therapeutic method of cure.

Farrell's failure to recognize this important fact and make this necessary distinction permits him to say that Freud's observations led him to make a number of other generalizations which compose a series of psychological constructions having a scientific status similar to that of Marx's abstractions concerning capitalism, i.e., "pure capitalism." If we understand Farrell to mean the Freudian theory of instincts when he speaks of "generalizations" then the statement is 100 per cent wrong. Marx's analysis of capitalism was based on the historical materialist premise. No one has succeeded in approaching his successful analysis of capitalism, by rejecting or revising historical materialism. It is indispensable for the analysis of capitalism. The same cannot be said of the Freudian premise and psychoanalysis. Therefore we must reject Farrell's point of view that both these premises have equal scientific status. If Farrell's generalizations do not refer to Freud's basic premise but the general theory of psychoanalysis, then he is not polemicizing against my article but indulging in a meaningless and unnecessary defense of psychoanalysis in general.

Once we understand that psychoanalysis does not stand or fall on the Freudian

premise of absolute instincts and, we reject the theory of instincts as applied to history and culture because historical materialism is a superior instrument for understanding them, we still do not necessarily have to reject the theory of instincts as applied to clinical psychoanalysis. At the same time, since it is a fact that the theory of instincts is not a necessity even for clinical psychoanalysis, it is incumbent upon us to examine the possibility of placing psychoanalysis upon a historical materialist basis, and achieving the same measure or greater success clinically. If that is possible, and I believe it is, then Marxism will have made an invaluable contribution to psychoanalytical theory. Progressive analysts have already begun to do this.

Farrell accuses me of fearing to put my "Marxism to the test by placing it face to face with Freudianism." It is characteristic of a great many Marxists that they accept Freud and Marx even though they are aware of the contradictions between them. Many live together with both of them and never make a genuine effort to solve or explain these contradictions. I haven't the space to analyze this peculiar state of mind although I am very familiar with it because I possessed it for a number of years. My new point of view is a result of a reevaluation; I think the mere fact that I wrote an article for publication, and the contents of that article itself, show without a shadow of a doubt that I am putting my "Marxism to the test." It is my belief that only so long as you resist putting your Marxism and Freudianism to the test can you live together with such flagrantly contradictory views of history and culture and ignore the obvious reactionary character of some of Freud's therapeutic views.

I hope in later articles to deal in some detail with these contradictions. For the purpose of this polemic, however, it is necessary for me to indicate here what some of them are.

First, and foremost, there is the contradiction between the Freudian and Marxian conception of human nature. Farrell writes: "Stiler's article seems to rest on the assumption that there is, in contradistinction to a Freudian human nature a 'Marxian' human nature." We will give Farrell the benefit of the doubt and consider this another misunderstanding rather than a distortion. To pose the question as Farrell says I do is ridiculous on the face of it. The mere wording defeats it. It is so obviously stupid. But if you change it slightly, and re-

store it to the form in which the assumption can be gleaned from my article, it will read "there is a contradiction between the Freudian *concept* of human nature and the Marxian *concept* of human nature." Now you touch a profound problem and the heart of the difference between Marx and Freud.

### Two Theories of Human Nature

The Freudian concept of human nature is based on static, immutable, absolute instincts. Although Marx has never written a treatise on human nature as such there is much in his writings that enable us to form a definite opinion of his conception that there is no such thing as an absolute human nature, there are only "human natures" which must be understood within the context of the material conditions determining their production.

The second contradiction is that between the Freudian and Marxist interpretation of history. For Freud the history of man and the different kinds of society he has developed are but the different ways he has tried to solve the problem of meeting the demands of his immutable instincts. How can one fail to recognize the contradiction between this and Marx's point of view, "that the history of humanity must always be studied and treated in relation to the history of industry and exchange."<sup>1</sup>

Farrell speaks of the "aggressiveness which we find so constant in the human animal." It is a fact that all the recorded history of man shows this aggressive characteristic. If we accept the Marxian interpretation of history and understand why "The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles," then we can place the phenomenon of aggressiveness in its proper perspective and say, "because of this, aggressiveness has been constant in the human animal." But if we accept the Freudian view we must stand the above on its head and say, "Because of the aggressiveness which we find so constant in the human animal, the history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles." I do not think any Marxist can accept that view of history. A Freudian is compelled to.

The third contradiction is that between the Freudian and Marxian view of culture. I am speaking of culture here in the broad general sense of ideology, morals, religion, etc. Again Freud's view is based on his theory of absolute instincts. Culture to Freud is the result of subli-

mated repressed instincts. How can this be reconciled with Marx's view of culture as being related to the mode of production. According to Freud there has not been thousands of generations of religious experience but one generation of experience repeated thousands of times. If anyone doubts that these two views differ profoundly let him compare Freud's view of the development of Monotheism<sup>2</sup> and the Marxist interpretation given by Kautsky.<sup>3</sup>

I am aware that I have not dealt with culture in the narrow sense of art, and with the corresponding problem of repression which both Farrell and Newman discuss. But it deserves more than a few paragraphs for an adequate answer. I ask my critics to be patient until I can write more fully on this question.

### Aims of Therapy

Finally, but by no means least important, is a contradiction involving certain aspects of Freudian therapy, i.e., that the therapeutical efforts of Freudian analysis aim at adjusting the individual to the existing social order. Both Farrell and Newman polemicize against this by denying there is a contradiction. Farrell says, "To cure a psychoneurotic by analysis, to 'adjust' him to society does not mean that you adjust him to all of the facts of capitalism, to war, to imperialism, to 'the peaceful warfare of competition.' It means that you adjust him to himself." . . . Newman repeats this argument in another way when he says, "Comrade Stiler misinterprets the phrase 'findings and views' assuming that it refers primarily to the analyst's social views. It refers rather to views about the personality deformations of the patient. By falsely identifying the narrow social views of Freud with the analyst's psychoanalytic findings, Comrade Stiler is led to reject what is valuable together with what is valueless." Both my critics maintain that a Freudian analysis is not aimed at adjusting an individual to society, but to "himself." That means that a person can be analyzed and still struggle against war, imperialism, capitalism, etc.

It is a strange and yet significant fact that both Farrell and Newman either do not know or do not consider it important that Freud and the analysts who follow him consider revolutionary activity as a form of neurotic behavior! A person who chooses a career of "professional revolutionist," or a person who engages in revo-

lutionary activity against the "facts of capitalism, or war, or imperialism, or 'the peaceful warfare of competition'" is exhibiting a neurotic "revolt against the father" according to Freudian psychoanalysis. This is by no means a social view of a particular analyst but is a view about the "personality deformation of the patient" held by the entire Freudian school. Consequently, part of the "cure" consists in getting the patient to give up his revolutionary or "neurotic" behavior.

Farrell says I must not, "criticize a psychoanalyst for treating a bourgeois, and helping that bourgeois to become cured of psychoneurosis." That is true. But I think I have every right to criticize a Freudian analyst for treating a revolutionist and "helping" that revolutionist become "cured" of his revolutionary activity, especially when other schools of psychoanalysis accomplish cures without making this demand.

Another aspect of this question is raised by Farrell's and Newman's assumption that I consider the Marxist Party a better cure for psychoneurotics than analysis. I do not think there is any basis for drawing that inference from my article. The Marxist party certainly has its share of neurotics. Anyone with a passing knowledge of psychoanalysis can recognize that. But I do believe that if psychoanalysis were given a historical materialist premise, analysts could not possibly view revolutionary behavior as neurotic and it would enable every analyst to provide his re-educated patient with greater security in the sense of understanding the march of events. But for this, it is necessary to reject the basic Freudian premise of psychoanalysis.

### Basis of Psychoanalytic Bias

It is my contention that there are three factors responsible for giving the inherently revolutionary science of psychoanalysis its reactionary bias. The first is the characteristic of "immutability" that it attributes to biological human needs (instincts). The second is its failure to understand the correct relationship of the various component parts (the sexual and life preservative) of these needs, to the development of history. Marx enumerates the three aspects or "moments" of human existence which determine the course of history as: the production of material means; the production of new needs; and the reproduction of mankind. The first two relate to the life preservative needs or instincts and it is clear that they play the decisive role in history. The third, the sexual

1. German Ideology, Marx and Engels; page 18.

2. Moses and Monotheism, Sigmund Freud.  
3. Foundations of Christianity, Karl Kautsky.

need or instinct, is given primary importance by Freud. You cannot help seeing at once that two different theories of history arise out of the fact that the emphasis in the case of Marx is placed on the struggle for material means and in the case of Freud, on the need for sexual gratification. For Freud the sexual component is the greatest and most decisive factor. Even eating and drinking are brought under the influence of the sexual instinct in the oral stage of infantile sexuality. For Marx, however, "life involves before everything else eating and drinking, a habitation, clothing and many other things. The first historical act is thus the production of material life itself."<sup>4</sup> And further, "that the multitude of productive forces accessible to men determine the nature of society, hence that the history of humanity must always be studied and treated in relation to the history of industry and exchange."

A later development of Freudian theory is the placing of a greater emphasis on the aggressive drives of man but these are attributed to the highly dubious death instinct.

The third factor contributing to the reactionary character of psychoanalysis is its failure to understand the relation-

4. German Ideology. Marx and Engels; page 16.

ship between individual psychology and mass psychology. Here, if I may call Farrell's attention to it, "dialectics" does help. Fundamentally, it is the failure of all analysts to understand the law of quantity changing into quality. For psychoanalysts mass psychology is nothing more than the sum total of the psychology of all the individuals within the mass. It is not only true of the Freudian school, but of Horney-Fromm, and Wm. Reich, as well. Fromm says, "Any group consists of individuals and nothing but individuals, and psychological mechanisms which we find operating in a group can therefore only be mechanisms that operate in individuals."<sup>5</sup> It is this that leads him from the authoritarian need of individuals to the conclusion that the working class of Germany desired Fascism. It is this that imbues his otherwise progressive theories with a predominately "psychological" view of human history.

I believe that a group or a mass develops psychological laws of its own which are more than the sum total of the psychology of the individuals within it; and that these laws lie in the realm of social science, not in individual psychology. While in a mass strike a great many

5. Escape from Freedom, Eric Fromm; page 137.

individuals may participate because of a psychological revolt against the father (Freudian theory), this factor plays a minimum role, and the psychological attitudes of the entire mass are not determined by this but by social factors. These in turn create mass psychological attitudes which are themselves social factors.

I hope to be able to develop the above views further in subsequent articles and show their relationship to the various schools of psychoanalysis. The Freudian school contains all three of the contributing factors giving psychoanalysis its reactionary bias. The School of Reich contains the second and third. Fromm and Horney have freed psychoanalysis from its Freudian premise but have not yet freed themselves from the third factor, the failure to grasp the relation between mass and individual psychology.

Although I am not an analyst and consequently any attempt on my part to make a critical evaluation of the clinical aspects of psychoanalysis would be an arrogant presumption, I believe that it is incumbent upon every Marxist to continually submit to Marxist analysis every science insofar as it relates to social science. Only in this way do we constantly test our Marxism.

ROBERT STILER.

# The Nature of the Russian Economy

## A Contribution to the Discussion on Russia

### PART II

Trotsky dismissed the idea that Russia might be a state capitalist society on the ground that, although *theoretically* such a state was conceivable, in reality:

"The first concentration of the means of production in the hands of the state to occur in history was achieved by the proletariat with the method of social revolution and not by capitalists with the method of trustification."<sup>20</sup>

It is true, of course, that *historically* state property appeared as *workers'* state property, but that is no reason to identify the two, and in no way justifies Trotsky's transformation of that historic fact into a theoretic abstraction.

#### 1. History and Theory

In the early years of existence of the Soviet state, Lenin fought hard against those who, instead of looking at "the reality of the transition," had tried to transform it into a theoretic abstraction. In the trade union dispute with Trotsky<sup>21</sup> Lenin warned the lat-

ter not to be "carried away by... abstract arguments" and to realize that it was incorrect to say that since we have a workers' state, the workers primary concern should be with *production*. Lenin insisted that the workers had a right to say:

"...you pitch us a yarn about engaging in production, displaying democracy in the successes of production. I do not want to engage in production in conjunction with such a bureaucratic board of directors, chief committee, etc., but with another kind."<sup>22</sup>

We must not forget, Lenin continued, that "All democracy, like every political superstructure in general (which is inevitable until classes have been abolished, until a classless society has been created) in the last analysis serves production and in the last analysis is determined by the production relations prevailing in the given society."<sup>23</sup>

This stress on the primacy of production relations in the analysis of a social order runs like a red thread through all of Lenin's writings, both theoretically, and in the day-

Party and the Trade Unions, ed. by Zinoviev. Lenin's position has been translated into English and can be found in his *Selected Works*. Vol. IX. to which work we refer.

22. *Ibid.*, p. 19.

23. *Ibid.*, p. 52.

to-day analysis of the Soviet Union. In his dispute with Bukharin on the latter's *Economics of the Transition Period*, he strenuously objected to Bukharin's assumption that the capitalist production relations could not be restored and therefore his failure to watch the actual *process of development* of the established workers state. Where Bukharin had written: "Once the destruction of capitalist production relations is really given and once the theoretic impossibility of their restoration is proven..." Lenin remarked: "Impossibility' is demonstratable only practically. The author does not pose *dialectically* the relation of theory to practice."<sup>24</sup>

So far as Lenin was concerned, the dictatorship of the proletariat, since it was a transitional state, could be transitional "either to socialism or to a return backwards to capitalism," depending upon the historic initiative of the masses and the international situation. Therefore, he held, we must always be aware that (1) *internally* there was "only one road... changes from below; we wanted the workers themselves to draw up, from below, the new principles of

24. Lenin's Remarks on Bukharin's *The Economics of the Transition Period* (in Russian, in his *Leninski Sbornik*, No. 11).

20. *Revolution Betrayed*, pp. 247-8

21. Trotsky's position does not, unfortunately, exist in English. It can be found in Russian, along with all other participants in the dispute, including Shlyapnikov, in: *The*

economic conditions"<sup>25</sup>; and (2) *externally*, we must never forget "the Russian and international markets with which we are connected and from which we cannot escape." All we can do there is gain time while "our foreign comrades are preparing thoroughly for their revolution."

After the death of Lenin, Trotsky himself was the first to warn against the possibility of the restoration of capitalism. Not only did he insist that an unbridled continuance of the NEP would bring about the restoration of capitalism "on the installment plan," but even after private concessions were abolished and national planning instituted, he mercilessly castigated the Left Oppositionists who used this as a reason to capitulate. He subscribed to Rakovsky's statement:

"The capitulators refuse to consider what steps must be adopted in order that industrialization and collectivization do not bring about results opposite to those expected. . . . They leave out of consideration the main question: what changes will the Five-Year Plan bring about in the *class relations in the country*."<sup>26</sup>

Rakovsky saw that the conquests of October would not remain intact if economic laws were permitted to develop by any other plan than one in which the workers themselves participated, for only the proletariat could guide it into a direction advantageous to itself. That is why he warned prophetically that a ruling class other than the proletariat was crystallizing "before our very eyes. The motive force of this singular class is the singular form of private property, state power."<sup>27</sup>

This clarity of thought and method of analysis were buried in the process of transforming statified property into a fetishism.

## 2. The Fetishism of State Property

Trotsky continued to speak of the possibility of a restoration of capitalist relations, but it was always something that *might* or *would* happen, but not as a *process* evolving "before our very eyes." The reason for this is two-fold: Firstly, the counter-revolution in Russia did not come in the manner envisaged by the founders of the proletarian state. That is, it came neither through military intervention, nor through the restoration of private property. Secondly, the victory of fascism in Germany presented a direct threat to the Soviet Union. Thus precisely when history demonstrated that statification of production can occur by counter-revolutionary means as well as by revolutionary methods, the concept of statified property=workers state was transformed into a fetishism!

We did call for the formation of new proletarian parties everywhere, including Russia. But our break from the past was not clean-cut. Our turn was stopped short by the elaboration of a new theory, to wit, that the building of a proletarian party aiming for power in Russia aims, not for *social*, but only for *political* power.

Like all fetishisms the fetishism of state property blinded Trotsky from following the course of the counter-revolution in the rela-

tions of production. The legitimization of the counter-revolution against October, the Stalinist Constitution, Trotsky viewed merely as something that first "created the political premise for the birth of a new possessing class." As if classes were born from political premises! The macabre Kremlin purges only proved to Trotsky that "Soviet society organically tends toward the ejection of the bureaucracy!"<sup>28</sup> Because to him Stalinist Russia was still a workers' state he thought that the Moscow Trials weakened Stalinism. Actually, they consolidated its rule.

The dilemma created by continuing to consider Russia a workers' state is not resolved by calling the bureaucracy a caste and not a class. The question is: what is the role of this group in the process of production? What is its relationship to the workers who operate the means of production? Calling the bureaucracy a caste and not a class has served as justification for remaining in the superstructural realm of property. This has only permitted exploiters to masquerade as mere plunderers. How far removed is that from the petty bourgeois concept that the evils of capitalism come not from the vitals of the capitalist system, but as a product of "bad capitalists"?

In her struggle against reformism, Luxemburg brilliantly exposed what the transformation of the concept of capitalist from "a category of production" to "the right to property" would lead to:<sup>29</sup>

"By transporting the concept of capitalism from its productive relations to property relations, and by speaking of simple individuals instead of speaking of entrepreneurs, he [Bernstein] moves the question of socialism from the domain of production into the domain of relations of fortune—that is, from the relation between Capital and Labor to the relation between poor and rich."

Trotsky, on his part, substitutes for analysis of the laws of production, an analysis of the distributive results. Thus he writes:

"The scarcity in consumers goods and the universal struggle to obtain them generate a policeman who arrogates to himself the function of distribution."<sup>30</sup>

But what produces the "scarcity of consumers goods"? It is not merely the backwardness of the economy since the same backwardness has not prevented Russia from keeping, approximately, pace with advanced capitalist lands in the production of means of production. The relationship of means of production to the means of consumption, characteristic of capitalism generally, including Russia, is: 61:39. That, and not the "scarcity of consumers goods" is the decisive relationship. That is so because this relationship is only the material reflection of the capitalist's domination over the laborer through the mastery of dead over living labor.<sup>31</sup>

28. *In Defense of Marxism*, p. 13.

29. *Reform or Revolution*, pp. 31-32.

30. *In Defense of Marxism*, p. 7.

31. The whole dispute on Marxist fundamentals within our party has centered precisely on this relationship. Cf. the following Workers Party Bulletin: *Production for Production's Sake* by J. R. Johnson; *The Mystification of Marxism* by J. Carter; and *A Restatement of Some Fundamentals of Marxism* by F. Forest.

To Trotsky, however, the existence of nationalized property continued to define Russia as a workers' state because, to him, "the property and production relations established by October" still prevailed there.

Which relations: production or property? They are not one and the same thing. One is fundamental, the other derivative. A property relation, which is a legal expression of the production relation, expresses that relationship, sometimes correctly and sometimes incorrectly, depending upon whether the actual production relationship has been validated by law. In periods of revolution and counter-revolution, when the actual production relations undergo a transformation while the legal expressions are still retained in the laws, production relations cannot be equated to property relations without equating revolution to counter-revolution!

The Marxian law of value is not merely a theoretic abstraction but the reflection of the actual class struggle. The correlation of class forces in Russia in 1917 brought about the statification of production through the method of proletarian revolution. But, as Engels long ago noted, statification in and by itself, "does not deprive the productive forces of their character of capital":

"The more productive forces it [the modern state] takes over, the more it becomes the real collective body of all the capitalists, the more citizens it exploits. The workers remain wage-earners, proletarians. The capitalist relationship is not abolished; it is rather pushed to an extreme. But at the extreme it changes into its opposite. State ownership of productive forces is not the solution of the conflict, but it contains within itself the technical conditions that form the elements of the solution."<sup>32</sup>

Neither the particular method of achieving statification—socialist revolution—nor the creation of the "technical conditions which form the elements of the solution" to the conflict of capital and labor could assure the real abrogation of the law of value, once the Russian Revolution remained isolated. However, the isolation of the Russian Revolution did not roll history back to 1913. Just because the bourgeois revolution was accomplished by the proletariat who proceeded to make of it a socialist revolution, the bourgeois revolution, too, was accomplished with a thoroughness never before seen in history. It cleared away centuries-old feudal rubbish, nationalized the means of production and laid the basis for "the technical conditions" for socialism. Hence the power of Russia today.

However, socialism cannot be achieved except on a world scale. The socialist revolution is only the beginning. The greater and more arduous task of establishing socialist relations of production begins *after* the conquest of power. That task, as the leaders of October never wearied of stressing, cannot be accomplished within the confines of a single state. Without the world revolution, or at least the revolution in several advanced states, the law of value reasserts itself. The new "technical conditions" began to dominate the Russian laborer, once he lost whatever measure of con-

32. *Anti-Duhring*, pp. 312-3.

25. *Selected Works*, Vol. VII, p. 277.

26. *Opposition Bulletin*, No. 7, 11-12/29. Russian.

27. *Ibid.*, No. 17-18, 11-12/30.

trol he had over the process of production. In this unforeseen manner, Marx's theoretical abstraction of "a single capitalist society" became a historic reality.

Since then Germany had achieved the statification of production through fascist methods; Japan through totalitarian methods began its Five-Year Plans. Both these methods are the more recognizable capitalist methods of achieving the extreme limit of centralization. Since World War II Czechoslovakia has achieved statification through "democratic" means. No one, we trust, will call it a "workers' state," degenerate or otherwise. What then happens to the identification of statified property with workers' statism? It falls to the ground. So false to the roots was that method of analysis of the nature of the Russian state and the policy of unconditional defensism which flowed from it that it led the Man of October to call for the defense of Russia at a time when it was already participating in an imperialist war as an integral part of it!

### 3. Bureaucratic Imperialism and Bureaucratic Collectivism

The counter-revolutionary role of the Red Army in World War II has shaken the Fourth International's theory of Russia. A break with the policy of unconditional defense was made inevitable. But how explain the imperialist action of the Army of a "workers' state," though degenerate it be? Daniel Logan searches seriously for the answer:

"However," he writes, "the Stalinist bureaucracy manages the Soviet economy in such a way that the yearly fund of accumulation is greatly reduced. . . . Thus, the bureaucracy finds itself forced, lest the rate of accumulation fall to a ridiculously low level or even become negative, to plunder means of production and labor power, everywhere it can, in order to cover the cost that its management imposes on Soviet economy. The parasitic character of the bureaucracy manifests itself, as soon as political conditions permit it, through imperialist plundering."

His explanation has all the earmarks of confinement within Trotsky's theory of Russia as a workers' state bureaucratically managed. The error in it reveals most clearly that it is not so much an error of fact as an error in methodology. It is not true that the yearly fund of accumulation is greatly reduced; on the contrary, despite usual periods of stagnation, it is growing. Within the stifling atmosphere of degenerated workers' statism, however, it was natural to identify the decrease in the rate of accumulation with the decrease in the yearly fund because to grasp clearly the distinction between the two would have meant to be oppressively aware of the fact that decrease in the rate of accumulation is characteristic of the whole capitalist world. It is a result, not of the bureaucratic management of the economy, but of the law of value and its concomitant tendency of the rate of profit to decline.

It is not "the parasitic character of the bureaucracy" that causes the decline any more than the growth in the rate of accumulation in the early stages of world capitalism was caused by the "abstinence" of the capitalists. The present world decline, which

is the reflection of the falling relation of surplus value itself to total capital, is a result of what Marx called "the general contradiction of capitalism." This general contradiction, as is well known, arises from the fact that labor is the only source of surplus value and yet the only method of getting ever greater masses of it is through the ever greater use of machines as compared to living labor. This causes at one and the same time a centralization of capital and a socialization of labor; a decline in the rate of profit and an increase in the reserve army of labor.

The decline in the rate of profit brings to the overlords of production the realization that the method of value production carries within it the germ of its own disintegration and sends them hunting for "counter-acting measures." They plunge into imperialism, go laboriously into statification of production, or into both. Imperialist plundering is just as much caused by the objectives of value production.

Trotsky left the Fourth International a dual heritage: the Leninist concept of the world proletarian revolution and a Russian position which contained the seeds of the present dilemma and disintegration. The Fourth International, trapped in his Russian position, wishes to escape its logical political conclusions, but wishes to do so without breaking with Trotsky's premises. That, it will find, is impossible.

Trotsky always insisted that the virtue of the nationalized economy was that it allowed the economy to be planned. The adherents of Trotsky's defensism continue to see in the perpetual degeneration some progressive element of planning. Others who have broken with defensism (including both those who expound the theory of bureaucratic imperialism on the one hand, and bureaucratic collectivism on the other hand), still remain prisoners of Trotsky's basic method of analysis. This method, in fact, paved the way for bureaucratic collectivism, although Trotsky himself considers it a theory of "profoundest pessimism."

Basing itself upon Trotsky's characterization of nationalized property as progressive, the Workers Party has labelled Russia a bureaucratic collectivist society, a part, though mongrelized, of "the collectivist epoch of human history."<sup>33</sup> To this collec-

33. The official party position on bureaucratic collectivism, along with the Carter-Garrett position on it, as well as the Johnson position of state capitalism, are all included in *The Russian Question*, a documentary compilation issued by the Party's Educational Department. The party thesis, written by Shachtman, states: "Bureaucratic collectivism is closer to capitalism so far as its social relations are concerned, than it is to a state of the socialist type. Yet, just as capitalism is part of the long historical epoch of private property, bureaucratic collectivism is part—an unforeseen, mongrelized, reactionary part, but a part nevertheless—of the collectivist epoch of human history. The social order of bureaucratic collectivism is distinguished from the social order of capitalism primarily in that the former is based upon new and more advanced form of property, namely, state property. That this new form of property—a conquest of the Bolshevik revolution—is progressive, i.e., historically superior, to private property is demonstrated theoretically by Marxism and by the test of practice." (This resolution has also been printed in *The New International*, October 1941, p. 238.)

tivism has now been added the concept of "slave labor" as the mode of labor characteristic of the bureaucratic collectivist mode of production.

What is the relation of this "slave labor" to the economic movement of this "new" society? What social development would lead these "slaves" to revolution? What distinguishes them from capitalist proletarians, in, say, a fascist state? What are the problems (if any), of accumulation?

All these questions remain unanswered, and indeed it would be difficult to make any coherent theory of a social order which is part of the collectivist epoch of human society but rests on slave labor. Beginning with their theory as applicable only to Russia, some of the proponents of bureaucratic collectivism now threaten to cast its net over the whole of modern society. This could only end, as Trotsky pointed out, in the recognition that the "socialist program, based on the internal contradictions of capitalist society ended as a Utopia." Bureaucratic collectivism has forced those Fourth Internationalists who have broken with defensism to hold on nevertheless to the concept of degenerated workers' statism, on the ground that out of the monstrous society "nothing new and stable has yet come out." It is true that nothing "new and stable" has yet come of the Stalinist society but that is not because it is still a degenerated workers' state. But because Stalinist Russia is part of decadent world capitalism and is destined for no longer life span than world capitalism in its death agony.

Our analysis has shown that Soviet planning is no more than a brutal bureaucratic consumption of the fundamental movement of capitalist production toward statification. As Johnson wrote in the International Resolution presented to the last convention of the party in the name of the Johnson Minority, with which this writer is associated:

"The experience of Stalinist Russia since 1936 has exploded the idea that planning by any class other than the proletariat can ever reverse the laws of motion of capitalist production. Planning becomes merely the statified instead of the spontaneous submission to these laws. . . . Stalinist Russia, driven by the internal contradictions of value production, i.e., capitalist production, has defeated Germany only to embark upon the same imperialist program, reproducing in peace the economic and political methods of German imperialism, direct annexation, looting men and material, formation of chains of companies in which the conquering imperialism holds the largest share."<sup>34</sup>

The only section of the Fourth International that has been able clearly to emerge from Trotsky's method of analysis of the Russian state has been the Spanish section in Mexico. G. Munis, the leader of that section, has come out in his recent pamphlet,<sup>35</sup> squarely for the analysis of Russia as a capitalist state. His economic analysis may not be adequate, but in his attempt to grap-

34. Cf. *Bulletin of the Workers Party*, Vol. I, No. 11, April 27, 1946. It contains also the official party position on the International Situation.

35. Cf. *Los Revolucionarios ante Rusia y el Stalinismo Mundial*, published by Editorial Revolucion, Apartado 8942, Mexico, D. F.

ple with the problem of planning in terms of the categories, c, v, s, and the social groups which control them, he has made the decisive step of breaking with the concept of degenerated workers statism and initiating within the Fourth International the development of a theory adequate to the analysis of Stalinist totalitarianism and the present stage of world development.

The Johnson Minority has successfully corrected the false Russian position of Trotsky by revising it in terms of the Leninist-Trotskyist analysis of our epoch. For us the Russian experience has made concrete the fundamental truth of Marxism, that in any contemporary society there can be no progressive economy, in any sense of the term, except an economy based on the emancipated proletariat. Proletarian democracy is an economic category, rooted in the control over production by the workers. So long as the workers are chained by wage slavery, the laws of capitalism are inescapable.

The Fourth International does grievous harm to the very doctrine of socialism when it teaches that a society can be progressive with labor enslaved. It handcuffs itself politically as well as organizationally in the task of gaining leadership of the European proletarian movement.

Statified property equals workers state is a fetishism which has disoriented the whole Fourth International. If in the early stages of the war when the impulse of revolution seemed to come from the march of the Red Army, there was some shred of excuse for a political policy which disoriented the movement and led to its being split, by what rhyme or reason can the Fourth International justify the position that revolutionists must "tolerate the presence of the Red Army"<sup>36</sup> at a time when Stalinism proved to be the greatest counter-revolutionary force in Europe? To tolerate the presence

of the Red Army in Europe is to doom the European revolution to be still-born!

The recent turn in the position of the Fourth International, calling for the withdrawal of all occupation armies, including the Red Army,<sup>37</sup> is the first necessary step in the right direction. But it is only the first, and a very halting and belated step it is, precisely because it has been arrived at empirically and not through a fundamental understanding of the class nature of the Russian state. It is high time to take stock, to reexamine not merely the policy flowing from the false theory of the class nature of the Russian state, but to reexamine the theory itself. It is the urgent pre-requisite for rearming the Fourth International and making it possible for it to take its rightful place as the vanguard of the world revolutionary forces.

37. *Ibid.*, Aug. 1946.

36. *Fourth International*, June 1946.

F. FOREST.

## POLITICS OF THE INTERNATIONAL WORKING CLASS

The resurrected German Social Democracy has, as is well known, achieved astounding electoral victories in Germany—Berlin elections, British zone, American zone and—in terms of popular support—even in the largely conservative, Catholic French zone. Its leaders have become the principal administrators in Berlin and, now, the British zone; Germany's most industrialized and proletarian center.

Its vote in recent elections (see *Post-Stuttgart Germany* in a forthcoming issue of *THE NEW INTERNATIONAL*) has been impressive indeed. There is no question that, as a mass electoral machine, the Social Democratic Party has indeed revived. Its greater significance lies in its transformation into a popular mass movement expressing the general dissatisfaction with Allied occupation policies (that is, the grinding starvation of the people), as well as a bitter antagonism to Russia and its quisling Socialist Unity Party. The recent visit of Dr. Kurt Schumacher to London, where he hobnobbed with Attlee and his Labor cabinet, symbolized the increasing alliance between the British occupation forces and the Social Democratic leadership.

But has the Social Democratic leadership changed from its pre-Hitler character? In what sense has the Social Democratic Party become a meeting place for revolutionary, semi-revolutionary and other valuable material for the rebuilding of Germany's revolutionary movement? We print below, in full, the letter, as originally written in English, of a young member of the German Social Democracy. Its genuineness and sincerity speak for itself, in addition to furnishing us with, at least, partial answers to the problems of politics in ruined Germany. The letter appeared in the early November issue of *Socialist Appeal*, English Trotskyist bi-monthly.

British Zone, Germany

First of all I've to say, that all following is my own opinion, but that all that I write, can be regarded as the German public opinion for every German in my age and with the same ideas than me. I don't write in bribery by cigarettes, money, or anything else, but I write in strong hope to see a real socialistic world-regulation in the next future.

### The Real Attitude of the SPD

What means SPD? It means: social-democratic party of Germany. When you hear that, you'll think, that the SPD is a socialistic party on a democratic basis; but that is not true. The SPD is very far of a real socialism, for its leadership are non-socialists, but materialists. The more they speak of socialism, the more they mean materialism. They only are party-members for to get something extra. I think, it will be very interesting for you to be told, that the party-functionaries get extra food—rations from Sweden, as well as chocolate, what another German, except on the black market, can't get. Farther they look for very good jobs in their profession, and they get them. Some work for a fantastic wage in the party-offices as officials. When you look more and more into the interior of the SPD, you think it is nearly the same than the passed Nazi-party: the same hypocrisy towards the outside—and the same pompous life of the party-bosses, in the inside. The old members don't concern with all that—but we, the youth, know, what the only one way-out for us is: An international-socialism on the democratic base of Marx and Engels.

The fundament for the left wing in our party is the youth. The same youth, which fought with the biggest enthusiasm for the nazis and capitalists against the socialistic revolution during the last war, fights for a better Europe, for a better world, for a real

international-socialism with the same enthusiasm. We have been on the wrong way once, but once only, that cannot happen to us a second time again. We will not suffer, that the people of the world will be told lies and will be deceived again by the capitalism or their tools, the ruling classes. We will put the words: Workers of the world, unite! in golden letters on our red banner.

The left wing, the real socialists put forward the Ideas of Marx and Engels, of Lenin and Trotsky. The leadership of the SPD exclusive is the right wing, but the first part of the election, which took place at the 15th of September, showed us, that the SPD didn't get the majority. I think it necessary, to replace the present leadership by young, active members with socialist ideas.

### Our Attitude Towards the Communism

When you use in Germany the word communism, everybody will see in that the Stalinism. Nobody will remember the real communism of Lenin and Trotsky. The reasons for that are:

1. During the nazi regiment in Germany it was strictly forbidden to circulate any anti-nazi-political papers, and the nazi-propaganda didn't tell us any more than terrible lies about the Russians and their cruelty. The nazis said, that the communists are the worst enemies of the working class, and that the communism means nothing more than blood-regiment, and that the native-country of the communism is Russia.

2. The German PoW's coming back from Russia now; tell us something about the real attitude of the Soviet Union, about the conditions of life of the Russians, and about the Stalinism, short, they tell us, that it looks in Russia quite as in Germany during the Hitlerism.

And when the German population hears

all that, they believe all the worst of the communism. Another reason is, that the right-wing leadership of the SPD doesn't want any real communist ideas put forward, for these ideas are socialistic ideas they don't like, and that our leaders don't support the union-idea, and so they don't circulate any real communistic papers of Trotsky or Lenin.

I myself don't like the communism like it is in Russia, and I also don't like the KPD, for all that is nothing more than Stalinism; but I am a follower of the Trotsky-ideas, and these ideas are the ideas of the left wing of the SPD.

A YOUNG SOCIALIST.

#### Ceylon Trotskyist Parties Head General Strike:

According to a report in the *British Socialist Appeal*, the Ceylon Trotskyists stood in the leadership of a mass general strike that swept the island early in November of this year. The leadership of the strike was in the hands of the Lanka Sama Samaj Party and the Ceylon Unit of the Bolshevik-Leninist Party of India. At this writing, few of the details of the strike are known, nor is the final outcome. The American

press, after reporting a few details of the intensity of the strike action (including the beating of the Mayor of Colombo by strikers) lapsed into complete silence, indicating a censorship clamp had been placed on news by the British. Hundreds of thousands of workers were involved, and the city of Colombo was entirely tied up. The strikes affected transport, harbor, tea plantation, etc., workers—in fact, the entire proletariat of the island. The top strike committee refused to negotiate with the authorities until N. M. Perera, head of the Lanka Sama Samaj Party, had been released from arrest for his part in the strike. This is the first mass, general strike to have been headed by Trotskyists in any part of the world—an historic event in itself.

It is likewise reported in the *Socialist Appeal* that the two Trotskyist movements in Ceylon have begun negotiations for reunification of their separate organizations. A future issue of THE NEW INTERNATIONAL will publish a thesis of the Ceylon Unit of the Fourth International, dealing with the revolutionary perspectives of their country. We expect to publish further details on the strike development referred to above.

H. J.

## Correspondence . . .

If one dismisses a few irrelevancies in Meyer Schapiro's *A Note on The Open City*, one is likely to be surprised by the discovery that he disagrees with my interpretation less than he realizes, and that his criticism of my article contains little point. His comments on how the film "assumes the pattern of a familiar Christian legend" are, to me, utterly without significance. Here he was trying to write a political article but the art historian overcame the man of political interest. It is surprising to read in the opening of his note that he is going to write a more political analysis of the film than I did, and then to read that the character of the priest, Pietro, suggests Saint Peter because of the fact that Saint Peter was crucified upside down, and, in the film, the priest was shot in the back. And how does the connection of Manfredi with Saint Paul add to our political understanding of this film? Also, at one point in his note, he disproves me by pointing out that reviews of the film in Italian and American magazines do not agree with my review. This is merely an irrelevant appeal to authority.

If we strip aside such features of his note, the real question becomes the following: Is or is not what Meyer Schapiro writes consistent with my analysis? Those who have read my review, his note, and have seen the film will be able to answer this question themselves. I venture to remark that a number of them may be surprised to discover that there really isn't much of an issue here. Meyer Schapiro says that I insist "that the film neither contains nor implies a political program." He must have misread my article. At one point I stated: "Formally, the film embodies the

idea of national unity: more intimately, it establishes the leadership principle." At another point, I wrote that for its interpretation, the film "relies on historic events in terms of their presentation and interpretation from the standpoint of an all-class, Popular Front, National-Liberation conception of fascism." I was writing for an audience of Marxists, which, I assumed, understood the character of the Popular-Front, National-Liberation politics as well as I might. Hence, after indicating that the film had this as a general character, I attempted to analyze it by emphasizing what I considered to be the significance of the main protagonist, Manfredi. He is a Stalinist and a leader. The worldwide Stalinist movement is hierarchically organized in terms of leadership. The zigzags of the Stalinist line are familiar political events. But at the same time, their leadership remains and this leadership is constantly built up in the public eye. For years, in fact, Stalinists in America and elsewhere, have striven to have Stalinist heroes, leaders and apparatus men, introduced into art. I don't know why Schapiro should be surprised that I discussed this phenomenon when it occurs in a motion picture.

Meyer Schapiro raised the question—who made this film? While interesting in itself, this is a question to which I am indifferent insofar as my analysis is concerned. We must judge here not by the intentions of the film makers, but by the content of what they do. And except for the points I have made above, as well as for one or two small details, what Schapiro writes is interesting in itself, and not at all a contradiction of my analysis.

JAMES T. FARRELL.

Editor:

In my article on the Jewish Question in the November issue of THE NEW INTERNATIONAL there is a rather serious error. The words "conditional" and "conditionally" were substituted for "unconditional" and "unconditionally."

In the paragraph under the subhead "Relations to Arab Revolt" in line 9, the sentence should read, "We will have to support it [the Arab struggle for national liberation] unconditionally. . . ." In the final paragraph, the sentence should read, "To call not only *abstractly* to the Jewish workers now in Palestine to fraternize with the Arabs, but *concretely* to share fraternally with the Arabs their land and improvement, their knowledge and skills, their hospitals and cultural institutions and any advantage whatsoever flowing from their better equipment, better education and the funds which have flowed and will flow in the future into the country from abroad; to lend to the Arabs their (the Jewish workers) unconditional support of the right of the exclusive use of the Arab language in all institutions which the Arabs will hereby acquire."

I used the word "unconditionally" in the sense defined by Leon Trotsky in the excellent article in the September issue of THE NEW INTERNATIONAL, "The Church Struggle Under Fascism," where, in speaking of unconditional support to the church opposition against fascism, he defines it as meaning that "we must fulfill our duty toward the opposition movement, without imposing any kind of conditions on the participating organizations." In relation to Palestine, the participating organizations would refer to the Arabs.

To be sure it is just a question of terminology. But this terminological controversy has been settled once and for all by the above mentioned excellent article.

I would appreciate your printing this correction.

Fraternally yours,  
W. BROOKS.

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# Book Reviews . . .

**THE TRAGEDY OF A PEOPLE. RACIALISM IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA. With an appeal by John Dewey, Sidney Hook, etc. Published by the American Friends of Democratic Sudetens. Twenty-five cents. New York**

This pamphlet\* is one of the first published documents to cast some light on the unbelievable atrocities which are now turning Europe into an inferno. Some material has appeared in the British press; virtually none in this country. Here an infamous conspiracy of silence withholds information from the American public on the planned, gruesome sequel to Potsdam where the principle was laid down of holding a people "collectively responsible" for the oceans of misery created by "their" government.

The present "democratic" government of Czechoslovakia provided that "all persons of German or Hungarian race" were to be expelled with the exception of those "who took an active part in the fight for the maintenance of the integrity and for the liberation of the Republic." Children, the sick, and the aged are therefore not exempted (for reason of their inability to take any "active part"), nor are those anti-Nazis who had no opportunity to take an "active part." Moreover, anyone who desires exemption must prove his "active part," and this is rarely possible. Practically all members of the German and Hungarian "race" fell victim to this infamous law, and, for reasons of some fine definitions, a considerable portion of the surviving Jews.

The conditions of deportation are reminiscent of Hitler. A clergyman reported "... 4200 women, children and aged people were counted before the transport departed from Troppau. 1350 were left when the transport arrived in Berlin." The others had died of disease and starvation. Before their deportation the victims were forced to wear an equivalent of the yellow badge with which the Nazis had branded the Jews. A large number have been incarcerated in former Nazi horror camps or similar Czech institutions; food rations are as meagre as those given the Jews by the Nazis. As a result almost all of the infants have died. The law confiscated the property of these people without compensation, and in consequence they have been forced to leave their homes with only a few articles of clothing and a few pounds of luggage.

Under the deportations about one-quarter of the population of Czechoslovakia has been expelled. The author of the pamphlet exposes the propaganda-distorted figures of the Czech government. According to the official census of 1930 3,300,000 Germans were counted in Czechoslovakia. In January 1945 the Czech Minister, Dr. Ripka, put the number of Germans to be deported at 800,000 to 1,000,000. Shortly after President Benes declared that 300,000 to 500,000 would be allowed to remain, Minister Ko-

\*The pamphlet, although unsigned, was probably written by Wenzel Jaksch, a former Sudeten social-democrat and M. P. now living in London.

petzky (Stalinist) on July 25, 1945 stated that not even a hundred thousand would be permitted to stay. By the end of August, Premier Fierlinger's organ put the exemptions at 30,000. The total number of Germans to be expelled (not to mention the three-quarter of a million Hungarians) equals the German population of Switzerland and is greater than the whole population of Norway.

In a letter to the New York Times the Czech Minister Papanek attempted to justify the expulsions by arguing that 92 per cent of the Sudetens in June 1938 voted for Hitler's henchman, Conrad Henlein, and were, therefore, Nazis. In trying to deny this contention, the liberal and social-democratic viewpoint of the author, only serves to weaken the Sudeten case. He states: Not all pro-Henlein voters were Nazis inasmuch as Henlein's program at that time was not for unification with Germany but for autonomy. The number of Czech-Germans who voted Communist is not shown in the above figure as the Communist ticket comprised all nationalities of the Republic. By 1938 the Western Powers had abandoned the Czech cause, thus throwing fear into the hearts of the Czech authorities. In their anxiety not to "provoke" Hitler they conciliated and worked for Henlein. The author produces numerous quotations wherein highly-placed Czech officials acknowledge that, in the area of Munich, the great majority of Sudetens did not want to join Hitler. (Hitler later put 42,000 Sudeten anti-Nazis into concentration camps.)

The pamphlet, however, omits the main issue. Why did a large number of Sudetens turn Nazi? Why did many of these unhappy people throw themselves into Hitler's arms? Among them were the cream of the pre-1918 Austrian revolutionary labor movement. They formed the backbone of the trade union and parliamentary organizations led by the Austrian socialist leaders since Victor Adler. The answer is simple. First, there was the swinish policy of the Stalinists who, having failed in the competition with Hitler for first place as German nationalists, became the most stupid Czech chauvinists after Hitler came to power in Germany. Second, and more important, there was the abject policy of the Sudeten social-democratic leaders. They appealed to the clubs of the dreaded Czech police for protection against the Nazis and to the government for a more lenient attitude toward themselves. The fruits of this policy left the exploited, half-starved, nationally-oppressed German workers, peasants and petty-bourgeois defenseless, faced with the choice either of the Czech devil or the Hitler Beelzebub. In desperation they chose the latter.

The Czech premier, Fierlinger, a member of the Second International, presents his apologia for the recent expulsions in an historical form: "... thus [by the expulsion of the Germans] the injustice which our nation suffered after the Battle of the White

Mountain [1620]... will be wiped out..." Here it is necessary to remark that at the battle of the White Mountain—almost two hundred years before the development of a modern national consciousness—the Protestant, decentralized, feudal Bohemian Estates were defeated by the Catholic, centralizing power of the Hapsburgs, who consolidated their victory by the extermination of the revolting Czech and German feudal lords, replacing them by obedient creatures. This was followed by the burning of the Protestant Czech and German Bibles as had been done in the German Tyrol, Salzburg and in other non-Czech Protestant regions.

The section of the pamphlet which deals with what the author calls the "pre-war grievances" of the Sudetens against their Czech masters is a masterpiece of understatement. An expert in the art of swallowing "accomplished facts," the author does not even dare to question seriously Czechoslovakia's crazy frontier lines which were drawn by feudal robberies, historic accidents and the rascals of Versailles. The author emphasizes the ideal unit which he says Bohemia represents with respect to economy (a plane ride from Prague to Paris takes two hours); to culture (why?); to strategy (Bear Mountain in New York State is a more serious strategic obstacle than most of Bohemia's border ranges!); and to history (which adorned the frontiers with bizarre ornaments, such as the remainders of feuds, unredeemed pawns, marriages, forgeries, etc.).

Most annoying are the continuous bows to the late Thomas G. Masaryk, whom the author considers a great humanitarian, philosopher and statesman, and whose spirit had been allegedly shared by his devout pupil, Benes, before the latter, as the author states, abandoned it. Surely Masaryk was not only a shrewd but also a "successful" politician, and it is the "success" that impresses the petty-bourgeois. But what impresses him more is the admittedly excellent advertising which blew this incarnated commonplace up into a gigantic figure and his republic, a cancerous growth artfully implanted by Versailles in Europe's tissue, into a "model democracy." Just read some lines of Masaryk's philosophy. His book *World Revolution* implies that the world revolution culminated at . . . Versailles! Trotsky's *My Life* recounts the atrocities committed in Russia by Masaryk's counter-revolutionary legions, acts which he never disavowed. These legions later served as honor guards in front of the Presidential palace.

The pamphlet is well written and full of useful data. There is valuable information on the destruction of Czechoslovakia's wealth and the bloody wounds inflicted on European economy by the extermination of the highly skilled inhabitants of one of Europe's most industrialized regions. In spite of the social-democratic point of view which tends to water down some of the arguments, *The Tragedy of a People* exposes the tyrannical rule of the victorious "democracies" against minority peoples and highlights an important aspect of the national question in Europe.

W. WILLIAMS.